

Non-fiction cinema of independent Ukraine

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The article covers the thematic and genre diversity of non-fiction cinema in Ukraine, which following the country’s regaining its independence in 1991, launched a reflection on previously hushed-up topics that were prohibited or covered in a tendentious manner in the Soviet period. The number of films and TV series grew, and the ideological gap between film artists and political elites (partly pro-Russian) resulted in their mass distribution being prevented. This was especially evident in the several-year delay and limits placed on showing the long-awaited series “Unknown Ukraine. Essays of Our History” (1993, NKU-Kyivnaukfilm, 144 films). Quantitative and qualitative changes in this type of cinema over the last three decades are analyzed in this article, presenting periods of its ups and downs, which are synchronized with changes in political processes in Ukraine. It shows how after the mass protests of the Euromaidan Revolution in 2014 and the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the number of such films increased significantly, providing a considerable informative and educational impact.

KEYWORDS: non-fiction cinema, documentary film, popular science film, historical and cognitive film, film biography, cinematography genres, audiovisual art, film production, media, mass media, manipulation of mass consciousness, film education

Non-fiction cinema as a genre that exists and is developing in Ukraine today combines documentary, popular science and educational films. The proposed analysis of its development comes at a time when the Russian-Ukrainian war is still ongoing. One of the latent phases of this war dates back to the Soviet era, which defined this type of cinema exclusively as propaganda. Almost all Soviet cinema was overwhelmed with ideology, which was imposed by cinematographic and party congresses. But some documentary makers were quite brave and did not follow those prescriptions, so documentary films appeared that were officially banned, for example, such positive and enlightening films as *Sonata about an Artist* (1966, directed by Viktor Shkurin), about Ivan Honchar, a painter, sculptor and collector of Ukrainian antiquities.[1] In the film *Discover Yourself* (1972) by Roland Serhienko, “[...] the philosophical reflections of Hryhorii Skovoroda sounded so modern, bold, and murderous,” recalled the screenwriter Mykola Shudria, “that those who were supposed to approve the film were frightened and... covered it up.”[2]

[1] D. Dzhalui, *10 Ukrainian documentaries banned in the USSR*, Radio Liberty, 20.09.2019, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/desiat-zaboronennysh-film-iv-v-srsr/30173041.html> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[2] A. Melnychuk, *Researcher by God’s Grace. About Mykola Arkhypovych Shudria*, “Day”, no. 110, 27.06.2012, <https://day.kyiv.ua/article/poshta-dnya/doslidnyk-bozhoyu-mylistyu> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

In the late 1980s, censorship was relaxed slightly. The documentary filmmakers touched upon a national trauma that had been silenced for decades – the topic of the Holodomor of 1933 – of which there were very few witnesses at that time. This is how the film *Oh no, these are my guests* (1989, directed by Pavlo Farenjuk) was created: the film crew learned that an octogenarian woman who had survived the Holodomor lived in a dugout near Kyiv. They immediately went there to film her painful memories, and then began to work on the script and editing the film (from a private interview with Oleksandr Koval, the film's cameraman). The filming of *The 33rd, eyewitness testimonies* (1989) was also voluntarily delayed. Its director, Mykola Laktionov-Stezenko, began shooting the film in 1987 as a memorial to his parents (who had harvested a good crop, the director said at his anniversary party at the Cinema House, but the authorities took everything away, and his parents died of starvation). Although these films were accepted and not banned by the state cinema, they did not receive proper publicity.

This brief excursion into the specifics of Soviet documentary filmmaking demonstrates the principles of “film inhibition” that were applied later, when censorship disappeared but “censors” were still alive. It was a time when “special storages” were opened, and the pages of the periodicals showed a terrible picture of the past that asked to be shown on the screen as satisfaction. Scriptwriters could no longer be forbidden to touch on traumatic pages, but directors lacked visual material, which was mostly categorized as ‘Soviet’ in the archives. It was collected bit by bit, from the diaspora, from private collections. The production capacities of state studios were still sufficient, and despite insufficient funding, dozens of documentaries and TV series appeared that touched upon topics that had been silenced for decades. These films were admired and mostly screened in clubs, but not seen by the masses.

Perhaps the most striking example of that time is the series “Unknown Ukraine. Sketches of our history”: 144 short films on the history of Ukraine (104 titles), the history of law, the military, and medicine, produced in 1993 by the National Cinematheque of Ukraine – “Kyivnaukfilm”. These short films impartially revealed the pages of history from ancient times to Ukraine’s independence. At the premiere in the Cinema House, the assurance was given that the films of “Unknown Ukraine” would be translated into the languages of national minorities and distributed. The state commissioned the series, but something invisible hindered its distribution. Only three years later, “Unknown Ukraine” was quietly shown on one of the private TV channels ICTV, without proper advertising, deliberately at an unfavorable time, and later only in the middle of the night (in particular, on the TV channel “Novy”). The social impact of “Unknown Ukraine” was minimized and the series was subsequently forgotten.[3]

[3] S. Marchenko, *Why is “Unknown Ukraine” blocked?*, “Kino-Teatr” 2008, no. 3, pp. 3–5; idem, *The*

forgotten anniversary of the series “Unknown Ukraine: Essays on Our History” as an indicator of the state of

“What’s happening to your cinema?” Peter Wagner, an employee of the Czech Embassy, founder (2001) of the well-known Prague-based online publication *The Russian Question* (which covers the problems of the past and present of the countries that emerged from the ruins of the USSR), asked me in 2008. Peter passed away last year, as this publication sadly reports; he was a diplomat, a professional historian, and a great connoisseur of Czech documentary cinema, which contributed to the formation of the Czechs as a nation – cinema that was well supported by the State Film Fund. At the time, he sincerely wondered why, having such a variety of historical and educational documentaries, Ukrainians do not see them. Why are these films shown in the middle of the night? He commissioned me to write an article,[4] which revealed the panorama of Ukrainian documentary cinema. Almost fifteen years have passed since that publication, during which hundreds of new films have been produced: let’s identify the trends.

In order to get an idea of the parameters of Ukrainian documentary cinema during the three decades of independence, we need to collect (ideally) the titles of all these films in chronological order with annotations. This work is performed by film archives. In Ukraine, there is the Central State Film and Photo Archive of Ukraine named after H.S. Pshenychnyi (1932)[5] and the National Oleksandr Dovzhenko Center (Dovzhenko Center), established in 1994 (which is now, unfortunately, on the verge of voluntary reform, which is strongly opposed by filmmakers and the public). These film archives are united, in particular, by the Law of Ukraine on Cinematography (1998, and a newer draft law), which obliges the preservation of only “state” films. However, in the mid-1990s, private studios and TV channels began to emerge, producing strong documentary content – they account for a third, if not half, of the total Ukrainian film output – but, according to the law, these films are not included in either state film archives or catalogs. The state should be interested in preserving all “films so that the integrity of national memory is not lost, because their lifelong storage is unaffordable for individuals and producers.”[6]

Realizing that Wikisources can be used quite accurately in scientific research, let’s consider the Wikipedia article *Filmography of*

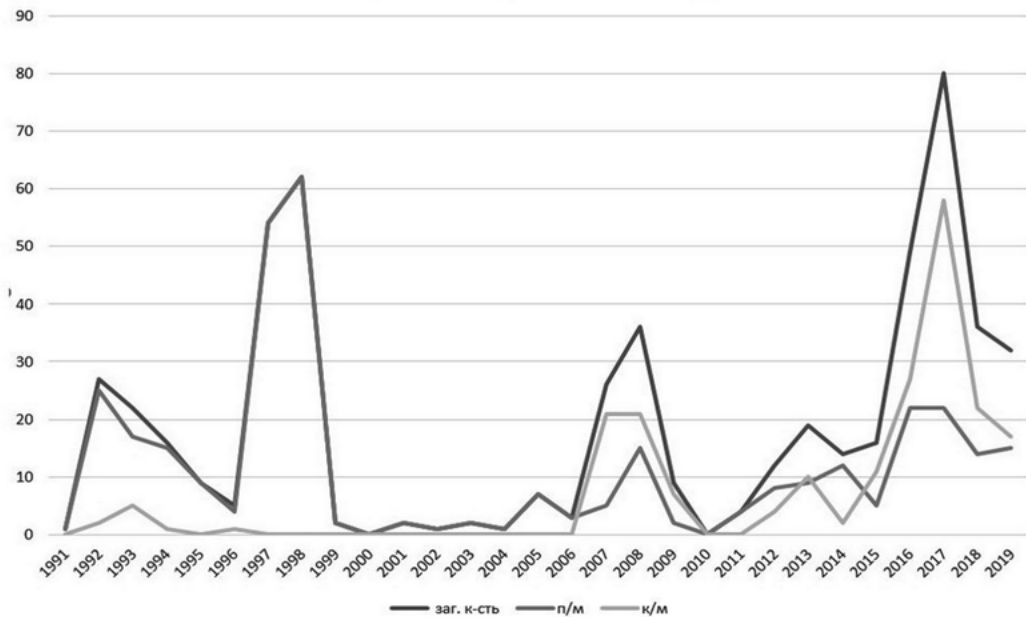
non-fiction cinema, media, film education, and society, “Scientific Bulletin of the I.K. Karpenko-Karyi Kyiv National University of Theater, Cinema and Television: Collection of scientific works” 2019, no. 25, pp. 50–60, <http://nv.knutkt.edu.ua/article/view/188208> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[4] S. Marchenko, *History as an image: material and image. Aspects of cinematography of the history of Ukraine*, “Russian question” 2008, no. 3, <http://www.russkiivopros.com/index.php?csl=38> (accessed: 29.09.2022); *Detector media*, 16.01.2009, <https://detector.media/withoutsection/arti->

<cle/42639/2009-01-16-istoriya-yak-zobrazhennya-material-ta-obraz/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[5] S. Topishko, *Archive of cinematographic and photographic documents of Ukraine Central State (CDKFPA)*, [in:] *Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine: in 30 vols*, eds. I.M. Dziuba et al., vol. 1: A, http://esu.com.ua/search_articles.php?id=44806 (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[6] L. Kozlenko, *Cinema and the Germans: How Ukraine neglects its film heritage*, *LB.ua*, 3.12.2015, https://lb.ua/culture/2015/12/03/322505_kino_i_nimtsi_yak_ukraina_nehtuie.html (accessed: 29.09.2022).



Graph 1. Ukrainian non-fiction cinema of the 1990–2019 period
Source: own research.

Ukrainian Nonfiction Cinema of the 1990s – 2010s, which was compiled on the basis of film catalogs. Let's assume that the properties of the whole are present in its parts, and supplement our analysis with missing documentaries from other open sources. The year 2010 appears in the title, but in fact the filmography ends in 2019, with films from 1991 till 2019. In the previous edition, there were 547 titles (337 feature-length films; the second and third columns contain the name of the director and the name of the studio). [7] Let's trace the trends in the development of non-fiction cinema in Ukraine on the basis of the table of films taken from this article. Let's arrange (using Excel – on Graph 1) these 547 films by year and get a graph of the dynamics of film release by year, where the darker line represents all non-feature films, the gray line represents feature films (f/m), and the lightest line represents short films (shorts).

Growth of non-fiction film production in 1991–1992 and decline of the film industry in 1993–1996

This is the first peak in non-fiction film production that occurred in the early years of independence. The main producers were the state-owned studios Ukrkinokhronika, Ukrtefilm, and Kyivnaukfilm, when they still had some funding and resources. In fact, this peak should be much higher if we take into account the 144 films of the Unknown Ukraine series that have not been mentioned. The historical and edu-

[7] *Filmography of Ukrainian non-fiction cinema of the 1990s – 2010s*. Ukrainian Wikipedia. Previous version on November 6, 2020, which serves as the basis of the graph; last version on October 20, 2022. The article has references to the “Films of Ukraine” catalogs by year: 1992–1996; 1997–2000; 2001–2004; 2005–2008; 2009–2012; Ukrainian films 2008–2009;

Annual Catalogue of Film Production / Ukrainian Cinema Foundation, Ukrainian Film Guide 2011–2012, Berlinale, 2012; Ukrainian films 2012–2013 Catalogue / Ukrainian State Film Agency; Ukrainian Documentary Films 2013–2015. Catalog; Ukrainian films 2015–2016.

cational trilogy *Who Are We?* (dir. Volodymyr Horpenko, NTCU, 1995) is not included here either.

The topics of documentaries from this period include a fresh look at the history of the Scythians and the origins of Slavism, addressing national traumas (the UPA, Babyn Yar, the migrants to Green Ukraine), and the humanitarian consequences of the Chernobyl accident. These include biographical portraits of such prominent figures (who were either ignored or presented in a biased way in Soviet documentaries) as Pavlo Chubynskyi, Mykhailo Drahomanov, Oleksandr Dovzhenko, Mykola Vinhranovskyi, Borys Liatoshynskyi, Yevhen Stankovych, Volodymyr Ivasiuk, Panas Zalyvakha, and the film about the reburial of Vasyl Stus's ashes *The Dark Candle of the Joyous Road* (1992, directed by S. Chernilevskyi).

In 1995, the world celebrated the 100th anniversary of cinema, and Ukrainian filmmakers sounded the alarm, declaring the death of cinema in their country. Due to inflation, most projects were halted. This is how Lubomyr Hoseiko, a dedicated French film expert of Ukrainian origin and the author of the *History of Ukrainian Cinema*, characterized this period: "Film production has fallen to the level of the darkest years of its history. The film press has disappeared. Film festivals are practically non-existent. Cinematography has been on a decline. Professionals are leaving the studios."^[8]

Slight economic stabilization (after the introduction of the hryvnia in 1996) facilitated the emergence of private TV channels and non-state-owned film producers: TRC "Studio 1+1" in 1995, "Kontakt", LLC "Telekon", LLC "Viatel", LLC "Kinematohrafist", "Internews Network Ukraine", "Danapris-Film", Collective small enterprise "Lavra", "Halychyna-Film", "Yalta-Film", "AV-TV Production", "Ars Planetarium", and others. Television channels needed something to fill the airwaves with, and as a result, in 1997–1999 there was an increase in film production. The most accessible material came from the historical environment: films about the history of prominent Ukrainian cities such as Kyiv, Chernihiv, Dnipro, Vinnytsia, Feodosia, Novhorod-Siverskyi, and Sofiiivka (about the famous park in Uman). The on-screen biographies of iconic personalities were updated, such as Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, Samiilo Velychko, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, Vikentiy Khvoika, Oleh Olzhych, Oleksandr Arkhypenko, Vladyslav Horodetskyi, Solomiia Krushelnyska, Serge Lifar, Mykola Bernados, Andrii Melenskyi, Oleksandr Verbytskyi, Serhiyi Paradzhanov, Anatoliyi Solovianenko, Artur Voitetskyi, Ivan Mykolaichuk, Bohdan Stupka, Kostiantyn Stepankov, Boryslav Brondukov, Felix Soboliev, Ivan Marchuk, Yuliia Tkachenko and Bohodar Kotorovych. Little-known positive examples

Growth of film production in 1997–1999

[8] L. Hoseiko, *History of Ukrainian Cinema 1896–1995*, Kyiv 2005, p. 412.

of Ukrainian-Polish relations are depicted in the Polish documentary film *Difficult Brotherhood* (1998) by Jerzy Lubach.

It was during this period that I, as a filmmaker, was lucky enough to finish the production of the 30-minute film *Echoes of a Forgotten Sky* (1998, National Film University of Kyiv, Kyivnaukfilm), the main shooting of which was carried out in my student days, in 1992. The film was stopped in January 1993. It took six years to finish the production of this half-hour film.

A new crisis in the film industry in 1999–2004

In 1999–2004, the film industry experienced another decline, the consequences of which were emotionally summarized by the director Oleh Biima: “We are living through the most stagnant time since the times of stagnation.”^[9] Just like ten years ago, if you missed the premiere of a documentary at the Cinema House, there was nowhere else to see it. No one could ban films officially, as in Soviet times. Prime time was mostly given over to pop or political shows. Commercial TV channels mostly showed non-fiction films not at prime time, being guided by the categories of “viewer rating.” It was almost impossible to find the right movie, because instead of its title, TV schedules mostly stated “Documentary”. It looked as if films were deliberately hidden from the viewer.^[10] As a consequence of the lack of a proper cultural and educational policy, there was no channel to popularize documentary films or distribute them, in particular, among educational institutions.

This crisis occurred during Kuchma’s second term in office, with its characteristic “multi-vector” approach, flirting with both the Ukrainian electorate and Russian authoritarianism (widely present in Russian films, TV series, periodicals, and pop music). Some media outlets that were influenced by the Russian narrative produced films that were humiliating to Ukrainians and were shown on prime time, both in Ukraine and abroad. For example, on Saturday evening, April 21, 2001, a documentary video “March 9” was shown at a favorable evening time (Inter, 2001, a channel that still exists in Ukraine today). That same evening, the film was broadcast not only in Ukraine, but also on television in Italy, as I later learned from a colleague in Rome. The movie is without commentaries, with a short title at the end that says: “The Modern History of Ukraine”; the names of the authors are unreadable, they can be seen during a second, and the font is small. In the style of a clip montage, President Kuchma puts flowers on the monument to Shevchenko. Someone unknown tramples on the flowers and tears off the yellow and blue ribbons. A fight breaks out, which is montaged with typical Ukrainian faces, mostly of older people, who are singing. At the same time, footage of a torchlit procession, filmed

[9] A. Lemysh, *Oleh Biima: “We are in the most stagnant time since stagnation”*, Day, 20.02.1990, <https://day.kyiv.ua/uk/article/osobistist/oleg-biyma-u-nas-naybilsh-zastiyinyi-chas-iz-chasiv-zastoyu> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[10] L. Briukhovetska, *Hidden Films: Ukrainian Cinema of the 1990s*, Kyiv 2003, p. 384.

at night, is edited in an unknown location and time. In the background, there is cheerful Ukrainian music, a la hopachok. One of the people in the crowd confesses: “Our goal is to build a state from the English Channel to the Urals.” The ending – the color image is smoothly replaced by a brown one. According to the authors, the color technique and excessive emphasis on the torches were intended to unambiguously encourage Ukrainian and European viewers to think that fascism was emerging in Ukraine. It should be noted that this was the first year of the presidency of the leader of a neighboring state that is currently at war with Ukraine. Two months earlier, on January 26, 2001, the same pro-Russian Inter TV channel, which still exists in Ukraine, reported that Julian Henty’s film *SS in Britain*, about the participation of the Galician Division on the German side, had been broadcast on English television. Ukraine was deliberately falsified before the eyes of the world, and Ukrainian historians published their objections only in the Polish newspaper “Gazeta Wyborcza” (Warsaw, January 27–28, 2001), which is unlikely to be read by Europeans attentive to political events. This article begins with an observation by Norman Davies (from his *History of Europe*): “Ukrainians are remembered only when they have done something wrong. If they have done something good, it is probably either the Russians or the Soviets.” It would have been nice to respond to a deceptive movie with a movie, but the Ukrainian film industry was once again in decline.^[11]

Other private studios created unbiased films that were respected. The most notable cinematic phenomenon of that small-scale cinema is the 9-episode series *War. The Ukrainian Account* (2002, directed by Serhii Bukovskiy, Studio 1+1; aired in April–June 2003). Each of the episodes touches on different issues, but they are all united by the question: What did the Second World War mean for Ukrainians? The filmmaker gives the floor to eyewitnesses, whose non-ideological opinions contradicted the Soviet officialdom, which at that time felt quite confident in Ukraine. The author presents an unknown chronicle and interprets the “old” one in a new way, expressing his own credo: “Man and totalitarianism... The authorities buried millions of people in the name of saving themselves. And we are still settling scores with each other. I would really like the viewer to feel this by watching the series to the end.”^[12] For this series, director Serhii Bukovskiy was awarded the Taras Shevchenko National Prize in 2004.

In 2004, after the vivid events of the Orange Revolution, the world started talking about Ukraine for the first time. This became a leading motive for the prominent Polish director Jerzy Hoffman,

**Growth of film
production:
2004–2010**

[11] S. Marchenko, *Prejudice. What image of the Ukrainian is “sculpted” by some masters?*, “Ukrainian Culture” 2001, no. 8, p. 4.

[12] S. Bukovsky, *A documentary account of Serhii Bukovsky*: [interview] / Serhii Bukovsky; the conversation was led by Volodymyr Voytenko, “Kino-Kolo”, no. 18, pp. 6–10.

who launched the project “Ukraine. The Birth of a Nation” (in three languages: Ukrainian, Polish “Ukraina: Narodziny narodu”; and in English “Ukraine. The Birth of a Nation”). One of the reasons, as the author admitted, was Leonid Kuchma’s book with the problematic title “Ukraine is not Russia”, as well as Hoffmann’s personal and family piety for Ukraine. The material grew to 4 series: 1 – From Rus to Ukraine, 2 – Ukraine or Little Russia, 3 – Together Forever, 4 – Independence, with each episode lasting 50 minutes. Ukrainian admirers of Hoffman’s talent expressed a wish to recognize his ascetic work at the state level.[13] Unfortunately, the state did not buy this series, it did not have the proper publicity, it did not become part of the visual encyclopedia of the history of Ukraine, it is not even in the mentioned Wikicatlog: present-day Ukrainian young people, for whom it was actually created, have not seen this film series.

2006: the film *Spell Your Name* by S. Bukovskiy was released in Ukraine[14] – the video testimonies that form the basis of the film are from fourteen Holocaust survivors (out of three and a half thousand witnesses recorded in Ukraine in 1994–1998 with the support of the Shoah Foundation Institute for Video History and Education at the University of Southern California). The production of the film was financially supported by Viktor Pinchuk with the participation of Steven Spielberg and the American foundation, which preserves and provides access to its archive and develops educational programs based on the foundation’s testimonies.[15]

The work of historians provided new script material every time. With the assistance of Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, a bolder look at the Holodomor became possible, and new films were released to mark the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor. 2008: *The Bread Guillotine (Silent Chime)* (dir. Ihor Kobryn, Telekon, Ukrainian State Film Agency); *Landscape after the Pestilence (Pestilence)* (dir. Yurii Tereshchenko, Inspiration Films, Ukrainian State Film Agency). Ukrkinokhronika released five films of the “Fates” series, which are biographies-confessions of typical ordinary people who survived the Holodomor and the war. *The Living* (2008, directed by Serhii Bukovskiy) is a feature-length documentary about the tragedy of Ukrainians, eyewitness accounts in the context of diary entries by British journalist Gareth Jones, who traveled to Ukraine in March 1933 and brought his own testimony of the horrors of the Holodomor to the West. The name of this brave journalist should be mentioned here once again, as well as the feature film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland *The Price of Truth (Obywatel Jones,*

[13] A. Novak, *Jerzy Hoffman brought the film “Ukraine. The Birth of a Nation” to Odesa*, Ukrinform, 28.10.2008, <http://photo.ukrinform.ua/ukr/current/photo.php?id=234161> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[14] “*Spell Your Name*” (2006) is now in Ukrainian cinema distribution. Directed by Serhii Bukovski, produced by Steven Spielberg and Viktor Pinchuk,

Kino-Kolo, 21.10.2006, <https://web.archive.org/web/20180716141448/http://www.kinokolo.ua/news/2468/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[15] O. Verhelis, “*I still have addresses...*” Steven Spielberg will come to Ukraine for the first time. To the premiere of Serhii Bukovskiy’s film “*Spell Your Name*”, “Dzerkalo Tyzhnia”, iss. 39, 20.10.2006.

working title *Gareth Jones*, co-production of Poland, Ukraine, Great Britain), whose world premiere took place on February 19, 2019 in the competition program of the 69th Berlin International Film Festival.

The event marking the date of the Holodomor in the history of independent Ukraine was first publicized internationally only in 2008. Moreover, when President Yushchenko and numerous foreign guests were speaking at the National Opera, the television broadcast was brazenly interrupted: the leading television company “Closed Joint Stock Company – Volya Cable” chose this moment to switch from the analog to digital television format, apparently to reduce the resonance of the event in such an “innocent” way.[16]

The topic of the Ukrainian liberation struggle was revived: *OUN-UPA. War on Two Fronts* (directed by Andrii Sanchenko), *UPA. Tactics of Struggle, UPA. The Third Force* (directed by Serhii Bratishko, Vitalii Zahoruiko). In 2007, *The Unforgiven* series about Nestor Makhno, Pavlo Skoropadskiy, and Symon Petliura was released (dir. Oleksandr Frolov, Viktor Shkurin, Contact, TRC Studio 1+1). The director Mykhailo Tkachuk completed the series with *The Mysteries of the Norilsk Uprising* (2007): *Behind the Bars of the North, The Virus of Disobedience, The Rebellion of the Spirit* – stories of prisoners of the Norilsk camps. For this trilogy, the director was awarded the Taras Shevchenko National Prize (2008). In the previous version of the aforementioned Wikipedia article, this film cycle was not mentioned, *Happy Nastunia* (directed by M. Tkachuk, Ukrkinokhronika, 2008) was only mentioned there.

The genre of film biographies expanded, with the following characters becoming its newest additions: Petro Mohyla, Ivan Drach, the Yakutovychs, Valentyn Sylvestrov, Yevhen Deslav, Serhii Koroliiov, Yukhym Mykhailiv, Mykhailo Bulhakov, James Mace, Oleksandr Bohomolets, Vasyi Tsvirkunov, Oleh Pinchuk, Mariia Kapnist, Kostiantyn Stepankov, and Sviatoslav Hordynskiy.

2009: The film *Paradise Lost* (directed by Rostyslav Plakhov-Modestov, 2008, National Film University-Kyivnaukfilm) was released on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Mykola Hohol's birth (Nikolai Gogol). A philosophical and social film appeared: *Where Are You, Ukraine?* (dir. Kostyantyn Krainyi, 2008, NKU-Kyivnaukfilm).

Let's also mention the respected series of films directed by Iryna Shatokhina, produced by the National Television Company of Ukraine in collaboration with the famous historian Yurii Shapoval: *Ukrainian Dream* (2008); *The King and the Slave of Tricks. Mykola Khvyliovyi* (2009), *Solovetskyi Labyrinth* (2010), *Three Secrets of Shumskiyi* (2010), *Vynnychenko (without bromine)* (2011), *Text as Fate. Mykhailo Volobuiev* (2011), *Lonely Traveler. Viktor Petrov* (2011), *A 15-year journey* (2011), *On the threshold of history. Mykhailo Hrushevskiyi* (2012), *Yevhen Sverstiuk: Those Ten Years. 1981–1991* (2012), *Two Capitals* (2013), *Maksym's World*

[16] S. Marchenko, *Media aberrations as an urgent problem*, “Kino-Teatr” 2016, no. 3, pp. 13–15.

(Maksym Rylskyi) (2013), *Bykivnia Memory Place* (2013), *Dovzhenko on Fire* (2014), *An Unexpected Date* (2015), *General of Victory. Kuzma Derevianko* (2015), *Silence and Thunder. Vasyl Symonenko* (2015), *Jerzy Giedroyc. The Magic Power of Words* (2016), *Ivan Drach. In Search of Maroika* (2016).[17]

The restoration of the cathedral depicted in the film *St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery. 900 Years* (2008, directed by Vasyl Viter) became a national cultural event. Between 2005 and 2016, VIATEL studio (founded by V. Viter in 1994) released 99 films in *The Game of Fate. Love Stories of Famous Ukrainians* series. "Each film is the story of a famous hero or heroine: a prince, a warrior, a cultural figure, a philanthropist, a scientist, a writer, an actor, a musician... Mysterious, intriguing stories from the private lives of famous people who lived in Ukrainian lands and of Ukrainians who are scattered around the world. Love stories. Stories of climbing to the Olympus of fame, or unexpected twists and turns of fate..." Over the past two years, 12 new films were released. The series was a documentary-fiction story with a female presenter in the shot. The Ukrainian Cultural Foundation helped the studio launch its own bilingual (Ukrainian and English) YouTube channel.[18]

Decline in film production: 2010–2013

There was another decline in documentary filmmaking during the presidency of Yanukovich. Nevertheless, a new film by Serhii Bukovskiy and Svitlana Zaloha, *Ukraine. The Starting Point* (2011, Film.UA Group, Perspective Ukraine Foundation) was released on the 20th anniversary of Independence. A slight increase in film production began in 2012 with a series of short films *Beyond Euro* made by young directors for the Euro 2012 event.[19] At this time, the film *Dnipro Ballad* (Ukrkinokhronika, directed by Leonid Muzhuk) was released. It is about the silenced military operations at the Bukryn bridgehead during the liberation of Kyiv in 1943.

The topic of on-screen biographies continued (with interruptions): Oleksandr Dovzhenko, Volodymyr Denysenko, Ihor Shamo, Kostiantyn Stepankov, Larysa Kadochnykova, Valerii Lobanovskiy, physicist Lukian Anatychuk, artist Valerii Lamakh... On the 200th anniversary of the national genius (2014): *Taras Shevchenko. Identification* (dir. Serhii Proskurnia, Ukrkinokhronika), *Kobzar. The Story of One Book* (dir. Taras Tkachenko, LLC Prodaksh No. 1, Ukrainian State Film Agency).

[17] Y. Shapoval, *Shapoval Yurii Ivanovych*. Documentary film. Ukrainian Wikipedia: https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Шаповал_Юрій_Іванович.

[18] V. Viter, *The game of fate as a television phenomenon*, [in:] *The energy of revival. Ukrainian cinema 2014–2020*. Cinematographic studios. Issue thirteen. Collective monograph, compiler and scientific editor L. Bryukhovetska, Kyiv 2022, pp. 141–160.

[19] Cinema room "Magika-film", "Beyond the Euro". *Films by Ukrainian directors are already on the website*, Facebook, 27.10.2012, <https://www.facebook.com/magikafilm/posts/2958996834373986> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

Fundamental changes in non-fiction cinema occurred at the beginning of the Maidan protests and the beatings administered to young people in late November 2013. The mental resistance of Ukrainians to any manifestation of totalitarianism led to an unprecedented increase in the number and variety of exposé video content as non-fiction film material. The emergence of fast mobile Internet and smartphones with the ability to capture and transmit high-quality (Full HD, and later 4K) video images and sound contributed to its widespread distribution. Thousands of Maidan participants filmed video every day, broadcasting it on Facebook and other Internet resources (which was not possible during the previous Orange Maidan in 2004). The “library” of moving images multiplied, grew in quality, and became more and more realized. The performance of smartphones and office laptops was enough for the simplest editing and distribution of images in networks.

Perhaps the most expressive form of this film movement was an informal film association producing Ukrainian documentaries called “Babylon’13”. Here is a fragment of its Manifesto:

The Ukrainian film community could not stay away from the events that are currently taking place in Ukraine. Our most important task is to show the birth and first decisive steps of the civil society... We are united by the belief that documentary films can change people’s perceptions of the surrounding reality and the state of things. We call on all those who care to support our initiative and distribute this video free of charge by all possible means, without changing its content and form.[20]

In total, “Babylon’13” (the last version of the article about this association on Wikipedia is from July 21, 2022) mentions 152 films produced between November 2013 and January 2015. As a detailed analysis of this film diversity is a separate task, let us mention the most significant topics: the moment of the storming of Kyiv City Hall, agony near the Christmas tree, Maidan is singing, fighting on Hrushevskiy Street, address to the people, truce, memorial service, prayer, glory to the heroes, terrorists under siege, berkut riot police, ashes, checkpoint, women, right sector, “green men”... The first cycle of “Babylon’13” films combined separate chronicles and was entitled as “The Winter That Changed Us”. The Babylon’13 Film Association received the Scythian Stag award at the 44th Molodist International Film Festival for its significant contribution to Ukrainian cinema. Most of the films are several-minute chronicles, usually without commentary, with the original sounds of the filmed action, conveying the meaning and spirit of the depicted events as briefly and expressively as possible.[21]

The short films of Babylon’13 needed to be summarized, which was done by the director of this association, Volodymyr Tykhyi. He produced the film “Euromaidan. Rough cut” (2014, 60 minutes, production: Docudays UA). The creators address the audience through their websites:

[20] *Babylon’13* (2013). <https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Вавилон%2713> (accessed: 29.09.2022). [21] *Ibidem*.

The episodes of the upcoming films about Euromaidan have formed a kaleidoscope of revolution that needs no comment. We offer you a chronicle of the Ukrainian protest. Live with us these three months of struggle, feel and see the revolution through our eyes.[22]

The annexation of Crimea is a sensitive topic: *Crimea. How It Was* (2016, dir. Konstantyn Kliatskin).[23] “This film is a story of officers, soldiers and sailors who did not betray their oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine during the seizure of Crimea. The film was screened in Belgium, Poland, Israel, Germany, Canada, Spain, Lithuania, and Portugal”.[24]

To make the film *Whose is Crimea? A Celebration of Annexation* (2016, dir. Ksenia Marchenko), the author traveled to Crimea as a tourist and took pictures because the image “shows and conveys the atmosphere of annexation better than stories.” She explored the public space of the occupied peninsula, in particular, the celebrations of the first anniversary after the “referendum,” as if she were spying on something comical and tragic at the same time. In 2018, the screening took place at the Ukrainian House in Warsaw. Presenting it in the Polish capital, Ksenia said that all the people she interviewed said the same thing: they came here in 1990–1991 to establish justice and return the peninsula to Russia. The director generalized that “art is unpredictable because it affects emotions that provoke a reaction, and it was important for me to record these interviews because this position characterizes the time...”[25]

Crimea is annexed. The east of Ukraine is occupied. And it was at this time when the aggressive war actually began, Oles Donii, a former member of the Verkhovna Rada, emphasized that “Certain Ukrainian channels are officially recognized for their ‘patriotism,’ but in reality, these channels are still helping Russia by showing Russian military films aimed at demoralizing Ukrainians. He addresses this issue of not-so-hidden collaboration to the top managers of these Ukrainian channels: “(1) Are you pretending to be stupid? (2) Has money blinded your eyes? (3) Is the Russian Embassy paying you extra?”[26] By the way, there is no link to this material now, which indicates that interested parties are “cleaning up” and removing accusatory texts from the networks. Simi-

[22] *Euromaidan. Rough cut* (2014). Directors: Volodymyr Tykhyi, Andrii Lytvynenko, Kateryna Hornostai, Roman Bondarchuk, Yulia Hontaruk, Andrii Kiselev, Roman Liubyi, Oleksandr Techynskyi, Oleksiy Solodunov, Dmytro Stoikov. Ukrainian Doc: Favorite. Docuspace.org, <https://docuspace.org/project/yevromaydan-chornoviy-montazh> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[23] *Crimea as It Was* (2016), directed by Konstantyn Kliatskin, <https://www.cinema.in.ua/krym-iak-tse-bulo/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[24] Y. Virlych, “*Crimea, as It Was*”: the film is now freely available, Kavun City, 18.02.2020, [\[vilnomu-dostupi\]\(https://kavun.city/articles/65495/krim-yak-ce-bulo-vidteper-film-u-vilnomu-dostupi\) \(accessed: 29.09.2022\).](https://kavun.city/articles/65495/krim-yak-ce-bulo-vidteper-film-u-</p>
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[25] Y. Lashchuk, “*Whose is Crimea? A Celebration of Annexation*”, a conversation with director Ksenia Marchenko, Our choice, 27.06.2018, <https://naszwybir.pl/chyj-krym-svyato-aneksiyi-rozmo-va-z-rezhyserkoyu-kseniyeu-marchenko/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[26] O. Doniy, *Poisoned tangerines: how Ukrainian TV workers continue to help Russian propaganda*, Ukrainian realities, 1.02.2016, <http://ukrreal.info/ua/suspilstvo/87213-oleksandr-doniy-otrueni-mandarini-yak-ukrainski-teyleyniki-prodovzhuyut-dopomagati-rosiyskiy-propagandi> (accessed: 2.02.2016).

larly, access to the long-term archive of numerous publications of the online publication *Telekrytyka*, which ceased to exist on November 26, 2020, suddenly disappeared. In particular, the link (cited in scientific publications) to my article *History as an Image: Material and Image. Aspects of Cinematography of the History of Ukraine*, dated January 16, 2009, which was reprinted from the Czech online publication “Russian Question” disappeared as well. These facts demonstrate the complexity, fluidity and unreliability of Internet sources, most of which a documentary film researcher has to use. This also applies to the aforementioned article about non-fiction films (from the Ukrainian Wikipedia), which, with many inaccuracies, has not been edited for almost two years (the last edit was made on October 20, 2022).

To mark the 25th anniversary of Ukraine’s Independence (2016), an educational documentary trilogy of feature-length films was released: *Ukrainian Symbols. Coat of Arms* dir. Taras Tkachenko, *Ukrainian Symbols. Anthem* dir. Yevhen Kovalenko and *Ukrainian symbols. Flag* dir. Serhii Sotnychenko, Insight Media LLC, Ukrainian State Film Agency (*Ukrainian Symbolism*, 2020). Typologically, these are three lecture films, with a narrator in the frame (Yevhen Nyshchuk), showing documents (photographs, newsreels, certificates, texts of resolutions), material memorabilia (coins, seals, graffiti, murals, drawings). It is a “chronicle of the highest manifestation of the freedom-loving aspirations of the Ukrainian people, spiritual and patriotic.” The film features expert historians, museum workers, journalists, and collectors. Costumed reenactment scenes unfold with the participation of actors who embody Hrushevskyy, Skoropadskyy, Chubynskyy, Krychevskyy, Narbut, and other historical characters who have important conversations on the screen. For the film, the corresponding reconstructions of Kyivan Rus and the Cossack era were also created. These three films (which are freely available) cost more than 5 million hryvnias, which indicates state support.[27]

An artistic event in documentary cinema in 2017 was the film *The Slovo Building*. The director Taras Tomenko artistically reconstructed one of the most tragic pages of the history of the “Executed Renaissance.”[28] The film was released nationwide on November 9, 2017, which is a rare occurrence for documentaries. Its success was evidenced by the full houses of cinemas in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Sumy, Zaporizhzhia, Mariupol... The film made a huge impression on viewers and many people could not hold back their tears. The world premiere took place in the competition of the 33rd Warsaw Film Festival. This event became a landmark for Ukraine because it opened a new level

[27] “Ukrainian Symbols” (2020): a trilogy about the *Coat of Arms*, the *Anthem*, and the *Flag* is now online, *Movie News*, 23.08.2020, <https://www.cinema.in.ua/ukrainska-symvolika/> (accessed: 28.09.2022).

[28] S. Marchenko, *The film “The Slovo Building” as a change of the state attitude to documentary cinema*, “Kino-Teatr” 2018, no. 3, pp. 4–8, http://archive-ktm.ukma.edu.ua/show_content.php?id=2163 (accessed: 29.09.2022).

of dialogue with European society. The film was selected for the Five Continents competition program at the Gothenburg International Film Festival. The film was created by Fresh Production Group with the support of the Ministry of Information Policy, the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Freedom of Speech, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Science, which proved a new, national and state approach to documentary cinema.[29]

It is also worth mentioning the exquisitely produced series by Leonid Anichkin, which is thematically similar to *The Slovo Building*, *My Address is Solovki* (1991, based on the script by T. Kuziakina), *The Trap* (about Les Kurbas), *The Burden of Silence* (about Mykola Kulisha), *Do not hit a woman even with a flower* (about women victims of repression), *Why translate Virgil?* (about Mykola Zerov). This is an almost unknown film cycle from the first years of independence with a voiceover by the unforgettable Bohdan Stupka.[30]

Another film that had a theatrical release: *Ivano-Frankivskteplocomunenergo Sings* (2019), a debut documentary and music film by Nadiia Parfan (produced by Phalanstery Films, Ukrainian State Film Agency). The film received the Kinokolo Award from the Ukrainian Union of Film Critics as the best documentary film of 2019. “This is the most successful documentary release we have ever made on wide screens”, comments Illia Hladshtein, the director of the distribution company. “Despite the stereotypes, Ukrainian viewers are ready to watch documentaries and pay for them.”[31]

Let’s also mention the film by Iryna Tsilyk *The Earth Is Blue as an Orange* (2020, production: “Albatros Communicos”, “Moonmakers”), which received recognition at international film festivals and had a limited distribution, unfortunately. The unexpected title is an allusion to Eluar line, which is in tune with the absurdity of the family’s existence (36-year-old mother Hanna and her four children) in the frontline zone, in the town of Krasnohorivka. The picture received an award for the best direction in the World Documentary category at the Sundance Film Festival in the United States; two awards at the Ukrainian DocuDays in the national and international competition categories; it is ranked 34th in the list of the 100 best films in the history of Ukrainian cinema.[32]

A significant number of documentaries about the war in eastern Ukraine were produced by various studios: *Ilovaïsk: Report from Hell* (2014), *To the second anniversary of the Ilovaïsk tragedy* (2016) dir. Bohdan Pilenko, Channel 112; *The Ukrainians* (2015) dir. Leonid

[29] *The Slovo Building*. World premiere of the film by Taras Tomenko, Ukrinform, 13.10.2017, <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-presshall/2323222-budinok-slovo-svitova-premera-filmu.html> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[30] S. Marchenko, *Once again about “The Trap” – a film about Les Kurbas* “Kino-Teatr” 2007, no. 6, p. 23.

[31] “*Ivano-Frankivskteplocomunenergo Sings*” (2019) became one of the most successful documentaries in the Ukrainian box office, 86 rentals, www.86.org.ua/iftke-success/ (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[32] A. Kanivets, *On the crest of the Ukrainian “new wave”*. Iryna Tsilyk, “Kino-Teatr” 2021, no. 5, pp. 16–20.

Kanter, Ivan Yasnii; *When I am Silent* (2015), UA: FirstTV Channel, dir. Snizhana Potapchuk and Svitlana Koval; *SBU vs. FSB* (2019) – Pro Zahid. Films produced by the studio of Military Television of Ukraine: *Debaltseve* (2019), 93; *Battle for Ukraine* part 1: *The first days of the Russian-Ukrainian war* (2018, General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine).

In 2017, one of the first online films, *The First Hundred* (LLC “Albatros Comunicos Ukraine”, Ukrainian State Film Agency), directed by Yaroslav Pilunskyi, Yurii Hruzinov, and Yuliia Shashkova, was released.[33] The film *Brothers in Arms* (2018, directed by Serhii Lysenko) tells the story of the everyday life of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the sadness of losses, and the joy of meetings – the laconic stories of three volunteers who travel along the front line year after year, carrying humanitarian supplies.[34] *The Iron Hundred* (2019, directed by Yuliia Hontaruk, Cinema Directorate studio) – interviews with soldiers of the Azov Regiment about life during the war and after demobilization.[35]

A new documentary-historical series *Secrets of Great Ukrainians* (2021), created with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine. The budget is UAH 13.7 million. Besides Ukraine, filming took place in France, Italy, Romania, Moldova, Poland, Turkey, Austria, and Hungary. 150 experts from Ukraine and the world were involved, and interesting facts were found that allow us to take a fresh look at history. The first episode, *Bohdan Khmelnytskyi*, was broadcast on 1+1 TV channel on February 7, 2021. Subsequent episodes were broadcast weekly, each telling the story of a historical figure who significantly influenced the development of Ukraine and other countries: Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, Anna Kyivska, Ivan Mazepa, Symon Petliura, King Danylo, Roksolana, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, and Andrei Sheptytskyi.[36]

The galaxy of Ukrainian non-fiction cinema is huge, under-researched and little-known. Ukrainians have little knowledge of their own non-fiction films, let alone foreign audiences. Hundreds of films, depending on the moment and the political situation, appeared on TV screens once or twice and disappeared from the cinematic horizon, and access to them is still difficult. The bright rise of film production in 1992–1993, and its almost complete halt in the mid-1990s, the ignoring of documentaries by TV channels in the early 2000s, their being shown in the middle of the night, the prevalence of entertainment content over non-fiction content – all of this combined to create a not-so-hidden

Instead of conclusions

[33] I. Grabovych, «*The First Hundred*» – no propaganda, only life. *Movie of the day*. Ukrinform, 25.03.2019, <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-culture/2666749-persa-sotna-zodnoi-propagandi-lise-zitta-kino-dna.html> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[34] *Brothers in Arms* (2018), directed by Serhii Lysenko, Docudays.UA, 2019, <https://docudays.ua/2019/movies/docu-ukraina-2019/brati-po-zbroi/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[35] *The Iron Hundred* (2019), directed by Yuliia Hontaruk, <https://ufa.gov.ua/movie-catalog/zalizna-sotnya-i8824> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[36] *Secrets of Great Ukrainians. Bohdan Khmelnytsky* (2022), 1+1 TV channel, premiere on 7.02.2021. Author of the idea and host Akim Halimov, director Dariia Sarycheva, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7a-LaSBxPa4> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

information war that has never stopped against Ukraine. The leading non-fiction film studios, “Ukrkinokhronika” and the National Cinematheque of Ukraine “Kyivnaukfilm”, have been on the verge of collapse all these years and are now almost out of business.[37]

“The state seems to be our main ‘liquidator’ rather than a protectionist,” said Oleksandr Koval, then director of the Ukrkinokhronika studio, “The State Program for the Development of the National Film Industry did not mention us until 2005. In this situation, we have to rely on sponsors. However, documentary cinema all over the world is financed from the budget, because it cannot be profitable.”[38]

Some filmmakers made films in Ukraine without sufficient resources while others, especially in the early 2000s, having no work at home, moved to Moscow and worked (and were well paid) for Russian cinema, which was already intensifying its anti-Ukrainian propaganda. “Our filmmakers paved the way for Russian tanks by voluntarily participating in the aggressor’s conquest of our cultural space. The goal is to urge the younger generation of Ukrainian patriots to study filmmaking so that we can repel Russia’s next attempt to seize Ukraine.”[39]

The connection between cinema and education, which should involve documentary films, was also broken, as was emphasized at a roundtable discussion on February 8, 2005, entitled “How to Reconcile Commercial Interests with the Needs of Ukrainian Culture.”[40] The leading masters of Ukrainian cinema, many of whom are no longer alive, spoke, but the authorities did not hear them. The artists subsequently appealed to the Minister of Education, offering to organize a website that would allow teachers to show at least iconic Ukrainian films in Ukrainian literature and history classes. For some reason, this elementary task was always delayed. Only in the last days of work of the previous Ministry of Education and Science (July 2019) did a message appear on its website about the creation of an online platform to promote documentaries in schools.

But this, as it turned out, was just another formality, not the real steps in film education that should have happened in the first years of independence. In summer 2021, during the exams for feature film directing at M.H. Illienko film studio, we had to listen to 180 applicants born in the twenty-first century. One of the basic questions was: What films have you seen? They named mostly foreign films, not many Ukrainian ones! Schools don’t show such films, not to mention historical and educational films, which were originally intended for education. Where, then, can schoolchildren see classic and contempo-

[37] S. Marchenko, *Ukrainian non-fiction cinema and its prospects*, [in:] *The energy of revival. Ukrainian cinema 2014–2020*. Cinematographic studios. Issue thirteen. Collective monograph, compiler and scientific editor L. Bryukhovetska, Kyiv 2022, pp. 122–135.

[38] N. Khmelnychenko, *Ukrkinokhronika – 70 years*, “Kino-Teatr” 2002, no. 1, p. 62.

[39] I. Kanivets, *Where Ukrainian cinema should move after the war*, “Kino-Teatr” 2022, no. 4, pp. 16–17.

[40] S. Marchenko, *Who will protect non-fiction cinema?*, [in:] *How to reconcile commercial interests with the needs of Ukrainian culture. Materials of the round table on 8.02.2005*, Kyiv 2005, pp. 98–101.

rary Ukrainian films? If the hidden goal of the enemies is to prevent the younger generation from knowing their own cinema, this goal has, unfortunately, almost been achieved.

It is surprising how Italy, poor and broken, in the third year after the end of the war, was able to demonstrate the phenomenon of neorealism to the world, while Ukraine, after thirty years of independence, is only now, in a time of war, finding its own voice. The world sympathized with the Italian hero of *The Bicycle Thieves*, but the world knew little about the theft of Ukrainian national cinema: it is the same genocide, only at the level of culture and education. “Unfortunately, the voices of enslaved nations do not always reach the world’s media”, says Eva Thompson, the author of *Troubadours of Empire*, “and this applies not only to Ukraine but also to other countries in this part of Europe.”^[41]

The cinematic future of my colleagues who received their film education in the first decade of independence was also stolen. There are dozens of talented young directors and cameramen who received numerous festival awards and believed in the future. But, having no job, they lost their motivation, and because the film industry was shut down, they were unable to make their films. In the best case scenario, film school graduates ended up working in television, on shows, on the radio, or even left cinema altogether, which in the long run was very damaging to the film industry.

Documentary cinema only gained a new lease of life in early 2014, during the Revolution of Dignity and the heroic deeds of the Heavenly Hundred. If we imagine such cinema as a living organism, or as a Jungian archetype that intervenes in events in a Godardian way, responding to social demands, then that moment happened. Obviously, the annexation of Crimea and the current war had to happen before the authorities could finally think about the fact that saving on culture and cinema leads to fatal consequences that are also too expensive. “If we are now looking at ourselves with new eyes, then this is probably the decisive stage of the transformation that began in the torn experience of our parents.” Such observations were shared with the participants of Britain’s Sheffield DocFest by Mariia Stoianova, Ukrainian director of the still-unfinished film *Fragments of Ice*, which she is shooting in the context of war.^[42]

Documentary films are finally taking center stage in the Ukrainian film industry, as evidenced by the Kharkiv MeetDocs Documentary Film Festival, which has been held in Kharkiv since 2016, and this year it was held in Kyiv, from October 1 to 6, 2022, at the Zhovten Cinema. Festival organizer Yevheniia Kriegsheim claims that this festival is a form of resistance to the cultural and information offensive. The films *Escape*, *Eurodonbass*, *Day of the Ukrainian Volunteer*, *Educators*.

[41] Y. Makarov, *After the Colony*. Ava Thompson suggests reviewing the history of the Russian Empire through modern eyes, *The Week*, 25.06.2008, <https://tyzhden.ua/Publication/2610> (accessed: 10.21.2022).

[42] M. Stoianova, *Director of the film “Fragments of Ice”*. Interview, *Docudays.UA*, 27.06.2022, <https://docudays.ua/2022/news/intervyu/if-we-look-at-ourselves-with-a-different-set-of-eyes/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

Vacations in Occupation, and *Terykony* are the weapons that will help us fight against info-fakes. And not only here, but also abroad, where people are also interested in documentaries about events in Ukraine.[43]

I would like to end on this positive note. But, unfortunately, as I finish this article, the takeover of the Dovzhenko Center, an extremely important cultural institution, a cinematographic entity, a member of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), where more than seven thousand films are stored, is still underway![44] Dovzhenko Center employees state:

The actions of the State Film Agency resemble the actions of the aggressor state – manipulating information, seizing territory and appointing puppet managers... The remains of the center will simply be pulled apart, and the buildings will be privatized... This is a slap in the face to the cultural community and a clear message from the state: “Nothing has changed, there will be no transparent rules of the game...”[45]

This shameful raid is not stopped by numerous public appeals, statements by the Ukrainian Film Academy or the National Union of Cinematographers, which once again shows the gap between society and the government, which, instead of supporting Ukrainian cinema, looks at it as something secondary. We are pleased to see the rapid maturation of Ukrainian society over the last last year of the war. We hope that the renewed society will build a new Ukraine, where non-fiction cinema will be honored.

Translation: Olga Grabar

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[43] I. Holizdra, “Documentary has taken the main place in the Ukrainian film industry”: organizers of the Kharkiv MeetDocs festival, *Ukrainska Pravda*, 2.10.2022, <https://life.pravda.com.ua/culture/2022/10/2/250633/> (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[44] *Dovzhenko Foundation: Catalog of films 1910–2016*, http://edu-post-diploma.kharkov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/filmofond_centre_Dovzhenko.pdf (accessed: 29.09.2022).

[45] A. Platonova, *Eaten in pieces. What the “reorganization” of the Dovzhenko Center really means*, Detector Media, 9.11.2022, <https://detector.media/infospace/article/204700/2022-11-09-zisty-po-sh-matkakh-pro-shcho-naspravdi-govoryt-reorganizatsiya-dovzhenko-tsentru/> (accessed: 9.11.2022).

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