

# SPECIFICITY OF THE USE OF A MEMOIR INHERITANCE OF EVGEN S. MATVEYEV FOR THE STUDING OF THE HISTORY OF UKRAINIAN CINEMA

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**Summary.** In this article have been analyzed of the use of the memoirs of the famous domestic actor of theatre and cinema, film director, cinema teacher Evgen Semenovich Matveyev for the studying of the little-known page of the history of Ukrainian cinema and Screen Arts education: the introduction of tuition fees at the USSR and the assistance of Oleksandr Dovzhenko in the life of poor students of the School of Movie Actors at the Kyiv Film Studio of Feature Films, including Evgen Matveyev. The author showed the specificity of the selection and the use of information from his publications of different years.

*Keywords:* Evgen Matveyev, Oleksandr Dovzhenko, memoirs, the introduction of tuition fees, cinema, School of Movie Actors, Kyiv Film Studio of Feature Films.

**Problem formulation.** The use of a memoir inheritance during the research is very important, especially when working on the reconstruction of little-known or forgotten pages of the history of Ukrainian culture. Sometimes the memoirs of the direct participants of the events are the only source of information. However, even in the memoirs of the same artists there are conflicting facts. Therefore, we must carefully treat any information by revising important things (dates, facts, interpretation of events) from other sources, preferably archival documents and materials from newspapers and magazines of that time.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Despite the scientific investigations of V. Gorpenko [2], I. Zubavina [4], T. Kohan [6], T. Derevyanko [3], M. Kazmirchuk [5], S. Marchenko [7], O. Bezruchko [1] it can be stated that modern scientific cinema critics still do not pay enough attention to the methodology of scientific research.

**The scientific tasks** of this article are to study the methodology of using the memoir inheritance

of the Ukrainian Soviet actor of theater and cinema, film director, cinema teacher, People's Artist of the USSR, Professor, winner of the State (Lenin) Prize of the USSR, Evgen Semenovich Matveyev by modern Ukrainian scientists; with the help of the important information found in the memoirs of E. S. Matveyev to draw attention to the introduction of tuition fees at the USSR; to demonstrate the assistance of Oleksandr Dovzhenko in the life of poor students of the School of Movie Actors at the Kyiv Film Studio of Feature Films, including Evgen Matveyev; to analyze common features and differences from his publications of different years.

**The summary.** The Ukrainian Soviet actor of theater and cinema, film director, cinema teacher, People's Artist of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (1974), Professor (1985), winner of the State (Lenin) Prize of the USSR (1977), Evgen Semenovich Matveyev, State Prize Laureate of the Russian Federal Soviet Socialistic Republic studied at the School of Movie Actors at

the Kyiv Film Studio of Feature Films in the academic year 1940–1941.

Let's consider the inconsistencies in the main episode of his memories about the study: the introduction of tuition fees and the assistance of Oleksandr Dovzhenko in the life of poor students, including Evgen Matveyev.

It was declared in the Soviet Union that the tuition was free. So they tried not to mention the period between October 26, 1940 and May 10, 1956 when at the initiative of Stalin pupils and students (except for cadets of military institutes) paid for their own education.

In the memoirs about the study at the School of Movie Actors at the Kyiv Film Studio of Feature Films dated 1963 year E. Matveyev told about the introduction of tuition fees, but in 1983 this episode was removed and appeared again in the memoirs of E. Matveyev in 2000. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that in 1963 it was possible to say about the tuition fees since at that time M. S. Khrushchev was at the head of the USSR who came to power after the death of J. V. Stalin and canceled the tuition fee. The exclusion of this information in 1983 can be explained by the fact that during the "Brezhnev stagnation" it was assumed that education in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was always free of charge. In 2000 when the Soviet Union did not exist so it became already possible to write about it.

O. Dovzhenko taught his students "to understand the beautiful, pure, holy art and life... of the aesthetics that he himself confessed... to be sensitive to human grief, to understand those who are near" [9].

Dovzhenko showed his own aspirations not only in words but also in practice: when his students from the acting school appeared to be in a difficult situation after the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics made a decree for tuition payment of 500 rubles per year to students of humanitarian institutes. The average monthly salary in the USSR at that time was 400 rubles so not everyone would be able to pay.

Students of the acting school who could not pay were subject to deduction. The number of such students also varies in the memoirs of E. Matveyev of different years. In the article of 1966 it was mentioned about five such students: "Dovzhenko noticed immediately our unhappy faces: besides me, there were four others in the group, in which cases were just as bad as mine" [10].

In the memoirs of 2000 the students who had to be deducted fell to four: "We ran in the classroom — all the students were already sitting in the expectation of the Teacher ... I looked at my classmates: those who already paid 500 rubles looked at us, four hopeless, with sympathy and fear...

He entered the classroom! We got up...

"Sit down, please!" — said Oleksandr Petrovich Dovzhenko in a hurry. And so hurriedly he sat in the chair. It was clear: "We will not spend time on the ceremonies".

Lidia Rudik (later she will become Honored Artist of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) as the head of the course had to inform briefly who is in the class and who is absent and why. But Lida was sitting nervously rubbing her handkerchief and was silent. This silence of hers was dragging out and unnaturally long. Oleksandr Petrovich Dovzhenko, feeling the tension in the class, glanced at the head of the course.

— What happened? — he asked and as it seemed to me the fear appeared on his face.

Lidia closed her mouth with a handkerchief and left the classroom. From there came her silent sobbing.

Oleksandr Petrovich Dovzhenko bowed to the stick which was always with him. He was thinking or maybe listening as we were rubbing our noses and sighed somberly... Suddenly he pushed the stick loudly and cried:

— What happened?!

Our "old man" Pavlo Indickul jumped up — he was at that time 27–28 years old — and after collecting all his courage reported:

— There is trouble, Oleksandr Petrovich Dovzhenko... Four from our course were excluded ... for non-payment" [8, p. 24].

Among those poor people who were unable to pay tuition were Lidia Rudik (future Honored Artist of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics), Petr Lysytsia, Gregory Polishchuk (killed during the Second World war) and Evgen Matveyev [8, p. 24], who did not have a father and whose mother “worked as a cleaner in school” [10], and therefore he lived only on a scholarship.

In the memoirs of 2000 it is written that the head of the course (Lidia Rudik — *O. B.*) could not tell the teacher about the trouble with the payment. But as for the article of 1966 the head of the course (he — *O. B.*) told everything to Dovzhenko: “What happened? — asked Oleksandr Petrovich Dovzhenko. The head of the course replied” [10].

It is possible that the employee of the Ukrainian film magazine “News of the movie screen” in 1966 listened to the story of E. Matveyev and freely interpreted the memoirs, uniting the head of the course Lidia Rudik, who could not tell the problem, with Pavlo Indickul, who eventually told O. P. Dovzhenko about the problem with the group-mates. As a result of this “union” there appeared a man head of the group (he). Maybe this happened in the memory of the E. S. Matveyev after forty-four years since the first publication.

Also in different memoirs there are described different ways of solving this problem. For example, in 2000 that’s how it is described the development of events after Oleksandr Dovzhenko learned about the troubles of his students: “We were still in a sinister silence. Then the Master got up and almost whispered:

— Sorry, kids! ... — and left the class.

We waited for his return till the call which symbolized the end of the lesson. He did not come back. None of us went out for a break: everyone was hoping that just now he would go in...

Instead, the director of School of Movie Actors Grishin appeared. His face was red. He breathed heavily. With reproach he said:

— There will be no lesson...

The girls cried. Grisha Polishchuk squeezed out “oh!” and also cried... The director obviously did

not expect such a reaction of the students and softened a little: having named the names of the four deputies ordered them to come to him. In his office Grishin invited us to sit down which usually never happen. Then he said:

— Well, boys and girls, forget about this sad day... You do not have to pay money for tuition...

— ???

— Oleksandr Petrovich Dovzhenko solved this matter.

Later we learned that O. Dovzhenko paid his own money for us. And a little later it became known that on this day a beloved Master had a heart attack...” [8, p. 20].

At the same time in the article of 1966, the same story is significantly different in details, which sometimes contradict each other: “Our teacher sat for a long time, raising his eyebrows and was silent. Suddenly he got up, said goodbye to us and went away. And on the second day, I learned that I and my friends can continue our study freely. I still do not know if this is true, but I’m sure that Dovzhenko paid the money for us” [10].

Despite all the inconsistencies the memoir inheritance of Evgen Semenovich Matveyev is very important for the studying of the little-known page of the history of Ukrainian cinema and Screen Arts education.

**Conclusions.** Summing up the above, it can be noted that the scientific tasks set at the beginning of the article have been fulfilled: the method of using the memoir inheritance of the Ukrainian Soviet actor of theater and cinema, film director, cinema teacher, People’s Artist of the USSR, Professor, winner of the State (Lenin) Prize of the USSR, Evgen Semenovich Matveyev by modern Ukrainian scientists has been researched; with the help of the important information found in the memoirs of E. S. Matveyev we draw attention to the introduction of tuition fees at the USSR; the assistance of Oleksandr Dovzhenko in the life of poor students of the School of Movie Actors at the Kyiv Film Studio of Feature Films, including Evgen Matveyev is shown; analyzed common features and differences from his publications of different years.

Nevertheless, the **perspectives** for scientific research remain huge as this work requires a multi-level and interdisciplinary study by modern

Ukrainian specialists from various fields of science.

*Translated by Katerina Sapiton*

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**Безручко О. В. Специфіка використання мемуарної спадщини Євгена Семеновича Матвеева  
для вивчення історії українського кінематографа**

**Анотація.** Проаналізовано використання мемуарної спадщини видатного вітчизняного актора театру і кіно, кінорежисера, кінопедагога, Євгена Семеновича Матвеева для вивчення маловідомих сторінок історії українського кінематографа і кіноосвіти: введення плати за навчання в СРСР та допомогу Олександра Довженка малозабезпеченим студентам Школи кіноакторів при Київській кіностудії художніх фільмів, у тому числі й Євгену Матвееву. Показано специфіку відбору та використання інформації із його публікацій різних років.

*Ключові слова:* Євген Матвеев, Олександр Довженко, мемуари, введення плати за навчання, кінематограф, Школа кіноакторів, Київська кіностудія художніх фільмів.

**Безручко А. В. Специфіка использования мемуарного наследия Евгения Семеновича Матвеева  
для изучения истории украинского кинематографа**

**Аннотация.** Проанализировано использование мемуарного наследия известного отечественного актера театра и кино, кинорежиссера, кинопедагога, Евгения Семеновича Матвеева для изучения малоизвестных страниц истории украинского кинематографа и кинообразования: введение платы за учебу в СССР и помощь Александра Довженко малообеспеченным студентам Школы киноактеров при Киевской киностудии художественных фильмов, в том числе и Евгению Матвееву. Показана специфика отбора и использования информации из его публикаций разных лет.

*Ключевые слова:* Евгений Матвеев, Александр Довженко, мемуары, введение платы за учебу, кинематограф, Школа киноактеров, Киевская киностудия художественных фильмов.