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Textual features of Ukrainian poetic cinema (based on the film «Earth» by O. Dovzhenko)

Драчова О. П. Текстологічні особливості українського поетичного кіно (за мотивами фільму «Земля» О. Довженка). Фільм О. Довженка «Земля» став відправною точкою у формуванні напрямку українського поетичного кіно, основними принципами якого є алегорія, відмова від літературної традиції і виразність. Фільм є прикладом кінематографічної поезії як творчого відображення нелогічних емоційних образів.

Ключові слова: поетичне кіно, зображення на екрані, текстологія, ритмічної організації.

Драчева А. П. Текстологические особенности украинского поэтического кино (по мотивам фильма «Земля» А. Довженко). Фильм А. Довженко «Земля» стал отправной точкой в формировании направления украинского поэтического кино, основными принципами которого являются аллегория, отказ от литературной традиции и выразительность. Фильм является примером кинематографической поэзии как творческого отображения нелогичных эмоциональных образов.

Ключевые слова: поэтическое кино, изображения на экране, текстология, ритмической организации.

Drachova O. Textual features of Ukrainian poetic cinema (based on the film «Earth» by O. Dovzhenko). Dovzhenko's film «Earth» became the starting point in shaping the direction of Ukrainian poetic cinema, the main principles of which are allegory, the rejection of literary tradition and expressiveness. The film is an example of cinematic poetry as a creative display of illogical emotional images.

Keywords: poetic movie, the images on the screen, textual, rhythmic organization.

The poetic tradition in Ukrainian cinema started in the 1930s by O. Dovzhenko and was used in many works, including documentaries. The reason of this lies in the correlation of cinematic poetics with the principles of documentary reflection of reality. O. Dovzhenko tried to create on-screen reality as close to documentary as possible. He preferred shooting in the nature, not in a pavilion, limited involvement of professional actors to the film-making process, so in his works there were many documentary elements. The author showed a large number of broad social lives, using the principle of synthetic display of things. He created new structural elements, which are relevant to studying this phenomenon in the discourse of social communications.

V. Shklovsky in his article «Poetry and prose in the film» argued that there are «prosaic» and «poetic» films. According to his work, this is the main partition of genres in this area. These genres differ from each other not because of the rhythm (or the rhythm only), but the predominance of technical and formal elements in «poetic» structure of the film over the content ones [11]. This article was written in the late 30s of the twentieth century, around the same time when O. Dovzhenko created a cinematic masterpiece «Earth», which would become a model of poetic cinema.

L. Bryukhovetska defined the direction of Ukrainian poetic cinema as an artistic phenomenon using such words: «an expression of clearly defined ideology, growing from the native land that feeds people. So this film means resistance to assimilation (in the case of Ukraine Russification) and other process of cultural degradation» [1:92]. According to her work, the films in this trend present ethical and aesthetic models of national psychology, life as an inalienable character of the natural universe, the natural cycle of life: love to the motherland, loyalty to ancient traditions, customs and rituals, the creation of material culture, music and folklore. You can trace the original interpretative chain from motive of motherland and entering the natural cycle to the creation of national culture, the functioning of which depends on many factors, including political [1:92].

In Ukrainian poetic cinema, its problems and poetics each of these elements can be reflected, however, in our opinion, they are not decisive characteristic features of cinematic poetics. We believe that the film «Earth» by O. Dovzhenko still remains the first and the most definite. Moreover it initiated aesthetic principles of this trend.

A. Musienko emphasized on undeniable influence of the avant-garde movements on the work by Olexander Dovzhenko and identified the following aspects of the author's targeting in avant-garde works: 1) the artistic arrangement of the material in accordance with the internal motivation of the author but not reflected realities; 2) the creation of new forms of reflection as opposed to the old ones; 3) reflection in the frame of the subjective view of the reality by the author as opposed to of adequate expression; 4) rejection of traditional plots [9:43].

However, the author is guided by concepts of Western cinema critics, but they do not fully reflect the realities of the Ukrainian school of cinema direction. These concepts are revealed in the last silent film by Dovzhenko «Earth» and have considerable influence on the overall development of the national cinema, especially documentary. So the purpose of the article is to identify the conceptual basis of the work relying on the general philosophical tendencies and author's guidelines and to define the characteristic features of his poetic textual approach.

On April 8, 1930 «Earth» was released in Kyiv. But a film was withdrawn on April 17 because of accusations in nationalism. Thus ended the triumph of non-durable film, which had a considerable influence on French, British, Italian and Japanese filmmakers. O. Dovzhenko found out with surprise that his films received huge appraisal in Europe, where they think of him as impartial and indifferent to the cause of socialism filmmaker. Immediately after the Berlin premiere 48 articles were released, Italian filmmakers called O. Dovzhenko «Homer in the cinema», while in the Soviet Union, the film was discharged only in 1958 as a result of international referendum in Brussels, where they named «Earth» among 12 best films in the World film history [2:66].

Author's rejection of traditional montage aesthetics of the time defined internal harmony and poetics of film. Every movement, every event imbued with unity of content, pace and cinematic techniques. The film starts as a Ukrainian song. There is a wheat fields over which the wind blows

and shakes the ears. There are the branches of apple trees, in a close-up, large, increasing so that the viewer feels emotional force of that poured fruit. Next – a grandfather, as strong as an apple, slowly turns his head. Then we see him in the sea of apples – he is going to die. He is surrounded by children who are eating apples. The old man slowly rises, he also wants to have something to eat, but he falls asleep – he's dead.

A smile on the face of the deceased, as reveals the author's point of view on the death, appears in the film again at the funeral of the hero. In the second time death is not a natural and innate thing, but a cruel intervention of old ideas (which Khoma represents) in the process of restructuring the world.

The quiet death of the old man is opposed to the reaction of Khoma and his followers to the revolutionary processes in agriculture. For this reason the author uses unusual angles of shooting, intraframe expression, dynamics in frame sequences. It is also reflected in the construction of subtitles: «I won't let you! I'll kill you! I'll peel your skin off!».

Thus, features of poetic structure are revealed not only in narrative intentions, but in the rhythmic organization as well. The slowdown also contributed to the surfacing of special senses, which are tangible, almost materialistic when it seems fully submerged in the reality of screen life through every formal solution. It is expressed through the perspective and the light.

The viewer is immersed in visual analogy between plants, animals and humans as living beings on the Earth. For example, in some shots O. Dovzhenko shows a narrow strip of land at the bottom, on the edge of the frame, and cows and bulls that almost run into the sky, and in the next frame there are farmers. This visual effects lead to the belief that the farmers just rooted into the ground, like plants or animals. Thus not only the author notes the similarities in the movement and growth of all living things, but also he has a special ability to generate new structural impression. For example, when you look at the long shots, which reflect the harvest process, you can feel that behind tractor ears sprinkle like water; corn, when sifted, slips and sparkles like fish. Even watermelons in the rain at the end of the film begin to shine and change their surfaces.

So, thanks to rhythmic reorganization of displayed features the on-screen reality becomes virtual, but there is no impression of artificiality, it happens naturally and creates a new dimension of existence, its mystery dimension, and the legend lives on.

representation of dialectical Noting materialism in Soviet cinematography tradition, G. Deleuze identifies the specific dialectics of Dovzhenko's narrative, «he is relentlessly pursued by the relationship of the triad part – multitude – whole. If there is a director who can make that multiple parts immersed in a whole, and that gives them depth and length, it is Dovzhenko...» [3:84]. Philosopher discovers in these features fantastic and mystery source of films by this director and introduces the term «abstract installation» that allows filmmakers to create images of expression that exist outside of space and time, through a set or its fragments. In the film we analyzed the image is being faced also with the concept of the Earth, its existential essence, so the time dimension here is also a fantastic character.

The interaction and interpenetration of the part and multitude appears with great intensity in the scene where tractor arrives into the country. The difference between part (reaction of a person that is reflected in the close-up of her face) and multitude (when the flow of people heading towards the strange machine) creates not only associative-shaped component, but also dialectical identity. As a result of this emerges the pathos of formation of a new social reality.

The man in the existential paradigm also acquires the status of universality, since he has the ability to deal with the ancient past and the distant future, such as the image of an Old man, who appears at the beginning of the film: «I do not know really how it was, whether I dreamed or maybe dreams intertwined with memories or memories of memories – I no longer remember. I only remember that my grandfather was very old and that he looked like the image of one of the gods guarding and decorating our old house. Wherever I looked in the garden I could see his white beard somewhere – maybe between apples, pears, currants or gooseberry bushes» [6:111].

The concept of cinematic time has become a major field of theoretical and creative research in the 1920s. Linking the concept of «Photogénie» with the motion and constantly deepening the understanding of this phenomenon, the French director and film theorist Jean Epstein formulated the theory of cinematic space-time continuum as fluid and changeable, convertible and relative. Thus, for J. Epstein close-up is not just a way of enlargement of the detail, facial expressions or emotions, but a qualitative change in the existence itself of the object.

This concept was very close to the artistic views of Dovzhenko, as he also sought the truth and integrity of on-screen reality, its photographic

essence: «We are working to fix our art through photography and the nature of photography strives to give us something authentic» [5:464]. That is why the master gleaned details and preferred filming in the open air than in pavilion, but also sought to create a kind of rhythmic accordance of depicted reality.

A striking example of this approach to create a cinematic reality is so-called night romantic scene from the movie «Earth». In a dark frame facing the audience pairs of lovers stay still. Frames change, and there are different pairs of the same size and stillness, who are stressing the monumental features of cinematic reality. At the end the viewer sees a figure of the main hero, Vasyl, who hugs his beloved one. This distinguishes them among other pairs as they seem to merge into one another, creating one figure.

Following this is the famous dance scene by Vasyl. It starts with a hero in a long walk, filmed from different angles, but the author doesn't apply methods of reducing on-screen time (i.e., the angle changes, but the time doesn't). Using this tip Dovzhenko shows the rejection to montage or interfere in textual authenticity of the film as opposed to living material.

Suddenly the hero does stop and think. «Should I dance?» – Dovzhenko writes about this moment in his script [6:131]. But, according to the author, during a movie the viewer should come up with this phrase himself, because delving into the image of the hero, caring about natural rhythms of his existence, the audience should identify itself with him.

After stopping Vasyl just keeps going slowly and suddenly begins to dance. To display this cinematic dance director uses the same technique of representation – change of angles while maintaining the reality of time. But action has already saturated with other internal emotional dynamics that is emphasized by the soundtrack of the film. Thus, spectator's attention attracted not only to the act itself, but is combined with its emotional deepness.

At the highest note of the emotional stress you hear a shot and the hero falls dead, «Shot! And ... no Vasyl. It fell just dancing on the road – in the death. Some dust appeared over his corpse in the moonlight. Something ran in the distance between the willows. Horses snorted» [6:132]. Vasyl lied on the road. Then the frame is obscured.

In the next scene we see Vasyl, lying on a bed with a smile frozen on his face. Then a field appears with the clouds above it. Then, again, Vasyl. After that the mother of the hero appears in the frame, frozen with grief, and the father in silent

meditation. Vasyl's beloved girl bustles about him. But she only makes child uneasy, who at this time was calmly eating watermelon. The author's attitude towards death is just adjacent to the continuity and fundamentality of existence.

In the climactic scene of the hero's funeral, the bottom edge of the frame moves hearse with a dead through the sea of sunflowers and the branch of apple touches his face. Then we see the people walking behind the coffin. We can see only deceased or only mourners, but not an ordinary funeral procession. The deceased is merged in a landscape and becomes part of the nature itself. Dovzhenko explained this image in the principle: «The film must go through two deaths and talk about the future and lead to life, optimism. When there is a coffin on screen with people who carry it - it's disgusting. I wash the dead, comb, make delighted face and remove the frame so as carrying people are not seen. And we must show either an apple or a sunflower and then the dead is seen without physiological sensation. Touches? Touches. Apples at the beginning and apples at the end» [7:268].

Filmmakers are usually afraid of subtitles in a silent film, Dovzhenko submits them, as if the poet submits his own poems: «He thinks not only about stingy dialogue, but also about strengthening of the phonetic aspects of speech. That is needed, in his opinion, to specify poetic montage» [2:62]. After Vasyl's father learns about his son's death, he goes into the field. His figure, taken from the lower angle, looks like a monument, and the rhythm of titles reflecting his cry is like expression of music and thus likened to poetic rhetoric.

Dovzhenko shoot ordinary people and if there were professional actors he prepared them in a special way for the filming process: «The actors in my films do not play, I try all their work to build on the fact that they do not play. I noted with great joy the fact that I was able to master this principle. I do not want actors to play, but to do, which is why they seem real, living people with blood and flesh» [4:260].

The artist wanted to depict physical, almost physiological embodiment of life on screen. This served as the basis for allegations of excessive naturalism of Dovzhenko's narrative. Caring about life processes and active artistic impulse to change reality contributed to the formation of a special kind of outlook, which couldn't leave him indifferent to the development of cinematic art in general. He argued that «in art film a keen young eyes to the truth, for accuracy are somehow lost, but that is something that allows invisible things to live in the picture, to fill a huge story with an

interdisciplinary content» [8:185].

In its relation to the expression of the actor on screen Dovzhenko is significantly ahead of the artistic trends of his time. He often invited theatre actors to play in his films. But the specifics of the play sometimes didn't meet the on-screen requirements and eventually destroyed most subtle psychological subtext. Thus, in 1945, the actor Mikhail Chekhov, while in the US, wrote about this issue to Soviet filmmakers: «I am missing a play of actor, the maximum emotion of living, of feeling. My impression is: an actor knows very well that he plays, he knows – and that damages his feelings. He knows that he is angry, is jealous, is fearful, that he is in love, but does not feel it. He thinks that he feels. And he is fooled by this illusion» [10:165].

So, Chekhov concludes that employees in art cinema should learn from documentary films, because «it is interesting because it sharpens the mind and teaches the vision of things, teaches the expression, teaches to depict the behavior of people precisely and accurately on the screen. Without that a work of art can not be convincing» [8:186].

However. conceptually complicated, ideologically adjusted author images, interpreted through the prism of audience perception, may take a different paradigm of comprehension, since large-scale images combine many connotations: «Do not say, Symbols and Naturalism. The words have not yet been found, and those that come to mind are rude. Image goes without metaphor. The screen summarizes and defines. This is not about nights in general, but about this night, and your night is a part of it. I see a face and I find all the faces I have ever seen in it, a ghost of memories. Life is divided into new people ... The new nature is in the different world. Close-up transforms a man. In ten seconds all my thoughts revolve around a smile. It is so magnificent in its miracle and silence, and it, too, thinks and lives» [12].

Thus, in the film «Earth» we see not only tendency to symbolism but the aspirations of the «poetic realism» that has become a trait of the French avant-garde of the 1930-s. Distinctive characteristics of it were poetic eminence of intraframe reality. However Dovzhenko is several years ahead of French school, although the implementation of socialist realism did not allow Ukrainian poetic cinema to evolve naturally.

Despite the fact that the film is permeated with a revolutionary ideology, the desire to master accurate representation of collective everyday life essentially provokes appearance of semantic layers, unplanned by the author. The most typical one is manifested in objections of religious component, both in the national environment and in the outlook of the author.

Thus, in the scene of the arrival of the tractor when a machine unexpectedly stops men find a way out in an unusual and somewhat physiological deed: driver urinates in the radiator, when old ladies quietly cross themselves. Or when a drunken Khoma's friend danced at crossroad, frame stops for a moment to show the crossroad. The author fixes this symbol for the viewer. At the protagonist's funeral old people cross themselves despite there is a new, communist, ceremony.

A scene when a priest comes to the house of the murdered Vasyl also reveals some unconscious author's connotations, which surprise the audience today. For example, we see how long the Vasyl's father is sitting in the shadows of the room. This immobility is emphasized by changing the frame through obscuration, which at that time was already the usual signal for the audience of changing the episode in the film. However, in this case, the viewer again and again saw the same frame – father is sitting motionless in a dim room.

Suddenly something distracts him from his meditation and he raises his head, then he goes to the door. Somebody knocks it vigorously, but the old man couldn't dare to open it. When he opens the door at last beam of light comes to the room outside. There is a priest, and the scene is already separated from the previous one through the daylight. Thus, the light here is a characteristic factor and points to the difference between the two characters.

The priest and the father are looking at each other for a long time. Father's face is closed-up three times, but the face of the priest remains unchanged in the frame. A title appears on the screen with the words of his father: «There is no God». But the priest is still real. The father then said, «And there is no you». The priest lowers his head.

In terms of today's perception it seems logical that, being in great shock, the father denies the existence of God, which he cannot see. But he denies a person who is actually standing in front of him, that for common sense is already illogical.

O. Dovzhenko sought to create such cinematic stories that would have infinite value as masterpieces of painting: «We need to ameliorate cinema, enhance its relevance, importance and monumentality so it is equal to all the other arts» [7:265]. That author seeks actualization of enduring, eternal values. Thus, the artist generated a contradiction in itself, because on the one hand, he claimed immutability of existential processes,

and on the other he praised revolutionary changes that this static obviously violated.

The expression of revolutionary sentiment somehow turned into a kind of phantasmagoria. Dovzhenko could not even explain this as allegory, but we can view and understand this because the time passed. We can combine this director's statement of the reality with general human values. That's why the film «Earth» can be described as the most controversial masterpiece of Dovzhenko as well. Features of poetic structure are revealed

here not only in narrative intentions, but also in the rhythmic organization. Dovzhenko did not only favor filming in the open air in contrast to filming in the pavilion, but also sought to create a kind of rhythmic images in accordance to reality. Thus, the «Earth» is made according to a new method of presentation and submited a new representative model of cinematic reality, which correlates with the existential essence of reality itself subordinated to the ideological and philosophical vision of the author.

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