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## ЛЕВ ТОЛСТОЙ В ДОКУМЕНТАЛЬНОМ КИНО

### АННОТАЦИЯ

Статья посвящена детальному разбору документальных фильмов, посвященных Льву Толстому, начиная от прижизненных кинохроник до работ современных кинодокументалистов. В работе проблематизируется вопрос о различии документального кино- и кинодокументального материала, отснятого операторами-современниками Толстого, которые зафиксировали на пленку события последних лет его жизни. Отснятые ими хроникальные материалы легли в основу многочисленных документальных фильмов, созданных режиссерами последующих поколений (от Э. И. Шуб до Г. М. Евтушенко). Наиболее востребованным в современном документальном кинематографе становится жанр двойного портрета, который позволяет придать документальному фильму драматическое напряжение и по-новому осмыслить уже давно знакомые зрителю кадры. Многочисленные аспекты складываются в единый и обширный обзор темы взаимоотношения писателя с кинематографом.

**КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА:** документальное кино, русский кинематограф, массовая культура, Лев Толстой, А. О. Дранков, А. А. Ханжонков, Э. И. Шуб.

## LEO TOLSTOY IN THE DOCUMENTARY FILMS

There is, they say, in the archive of old films,  
now blinking blindly one shot  
from Yasnaya Polyana a moving one:  
plain old man, not high,  
with a beard blown by wind,  
walks by in short steps,  
looking angrily at the operator. And we  
are happy. He is close and understandable to us.  
We visited him, sat with him.  
He is not terrible genius, speaking  
about marriage or peasant schools...  
And feeling him equal to us with whom  
you can argue, and calling him  
by name and second name, with a  
respectful smile, we discuss together,  
how he consider this or that...  
V. Nabokov. Tolstoy. 1928

### ABSTRACT

The article deals with the detailed research of the documentary shootings connected with Leo Tolstoy. Starting with the life chronicles up to works of modern documentary film directors. The question of difference between the documentary cinema and documentary files that was made by the operators-contemporaries of Tolstoy is set as a main problem. They fixed the last years of writer's life. Their shootings became the basis to many documentaries made by the foregoing directors (starting from E. I. Shub to G. M. Evtushenko). The genre of the double portrait that is mostly demanded in nowadays documentary cinema add the dramatic tension to the film and helps to rethink already well observed materials. Numerous aspects are summing into the common and vast review of the writer and cinema relations.

**KEYWORDS:** documentary films, Russian cinema, mass culture, Leo Tolstoy, A. O. Drankov, A. A. Khanzhonkov, E. I. Shub.

The theme of “Leo Tolstoy in the documentary film” is an obvious one and already is well researched<sup>1</sup>. All the authors working with this subject were taking into account the concept of meeting of the two grands: “grand old man” Tolstoy and “baby grand” – the film (especially vividly expressed in L. A. Annenskiy works). We are interested in two questions that were not actually covered in the literature. The first question relates to the definition of the nature of documentary film and its place in modern popular culture. The second one is about the difference between intravital documentary film about Tolstoy and post-mortem, which helps to identify the legitimate advantages and the inevitable imperfections of both.

If we look at Tolstoy’s judgments about cinema, we can easily notice that the writer was interested and attracted to documentary cinema, not fiction. Though in 1910 he returned several times to the idea to write stories specially for the cinema in the spirit of “Posrednik” books. D. P. Makovitskiy wrote that that on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April in 1910 L. N. Andreev told about “Chukovskiy who wrote about the changes both artistic and moral, that the cinema gives to the people, and about his opinion of the film industry”. Tolstoy thought: “Why do writers do not take on writing plays for the cinema?”

“And L. N. then said that he had the intention to write for cinema.

And the next day he said to Andreev:

– Yesterday you about cinema... I will certainly write whether I have time” [8, p. 233].

A week later, on April the 29th, Tolstoy said, “I still think of composing to cinema. After all, the Chinese, the Korean will understand. a play to write. Recently Andreev told me what he saw in Amsterdam the show of wife’s deception. Instead of these plays, there could be moral plays, you never know. May be the life of Christ” [8, p. 238]. Andreev himself told the same episode: “You know, I always thought of the cinema. I woke up at night and thought. I decided to write for the cinema. of course, the reader is needed like in Amsterdam, who would transmit the text. And without the text it is impossible” [9]. Moreover, about the same Tolstoy spoke almost a month later, on May 27: “Chertkov writes that Orlenov is interested in what I’m talking about with Andreev – an essay for cinema. I will write if I can. It is necessary that it must be clear, understandable. What a huge audience is here: both Tatar and Chinese...” [8, p. 264].

<sup>1</sup> I will name only the literature that I do not use in the future: [1, p. 48; 2, p. 9–63; 3; 4]. The article is based upon the reports read in the State museum of L. N. Tolstoy as a part of the lectorium “Leo Tolstoy and cinema” (Moscow, 2016) and on the conference “Actual cinema classics. Form of the dialogue with the audience” (Saratov, November, 2016). In recent years, a number of works on the same topic have appeared, written in part on the same material [5–7].

As we see, Tolstoy thinks about works of art, but persistently emphasizes in them the didactic ground, which means direct influence and usefulness. The late Tolstoy did not go beyond the pragmatic benchmark of his creativity. However, precisely such works most adequately met the tasks that contemporary for the Tolstoy documentaries set.

## 1.

We live in the era of the author's culture, when every word, every idea, every work has an author. Moreover, the author has juridically fixed right for their word, the idea, the product. It is not surprising that in an era of the author's culture people are interested in a man, and first of all – in the author. When we read *War and Peace*, we want to understand its author, Leo Tolstoy. When we watch a screen version of “*War and peace*”, we want to understand how the film director reflected our understanding of the heroes of the book and of its author. Therefore, it can be said about each work, about each author. It means that reading books, listening to music, viewing paintings, watching films – is always getting close to their authors.

In mass culture the situation is somehow different. The readers of the novels by A. Marinina or D. Dontsova are interested not so much in the authors as in the plots. However, this does not mean that the reader of this type has no interest in the author's problem it is simply realized differently. For the reader (viewer or listener) of this type is more important not mediated acquaintance with the author through his work, but the acquaintance with the author directly via reading his diaries, letters, through acquaintance with his biography. In this situation, the documentary materials role in the understanding of the author is constantly growing, and popular culture is constantly speculating on this. Many people remember how popular they were in the 1960s the portraits of actors, which were published in the form of cards and that the fans (they were women) were purchased for their private collections. Today in the “*Life of Remarkable People*” series, there are books dedicated to Arina Rodionovna, Anna Kern, Natalia Goncharova – women, remarkable for a man of mass culture only by the fact that they were intimately connected with Pushkin. And in the newspapers, magazines and on the net, and every now and then there are “sensations”: exposure and revelation of the “figures” of the culture, because for the modern man it is not enough to listen to the Pugacheva's songs, it is important to take part in her personal life.

Clearly that we have sharpened the problem, but our (quite natural) interest in the personality of the writer is in the same row. Although we are not looking everywhere for the hot facts, we are still interested in non-fiction and documentary films. In this regard it is recalled the letter written by A. S. Pushkin to P. A. Vyazemsky from the second half of November, 1825: “Why do you regret the loss of Byron’s notes? Devil with them! Thank god, they are lost. He confessed in his poems, unwittingly, fascinated by the delight of poetry. In cold-blooded prose, he would lie and sly, then trying to shine with sincerity, pouring dirty upon his enemies. He would have been caught as Rousseau – and their anger and slander would triumph again. Leave the curiosity to the crowd and be at one with the Genius. Moore’s act is better than his Lallah-Rook (in his poetic attitude). We know Byron pretty. They saw him on the throne of glory, they saw him in the torments of a great soul, and they saw him in the tomb in the middle of the resurrection of Greece. – Would you like to see him on board? The crowd eagerly reads confessions, notes, etc., because in its meanness rejoices at the humiliation of the high, the weaknesses of the powerful. At the revealing of all abominations, the crowd is delighted. *He is small, as we are; he is disgusting, as we are!* You’re lying, scoundrels: he is small and disgusting – not like you – otherwise” [10, p. 243 – 244].

Mostly, the words of Pushkin explain to us why we are so interested in documentary and first in biographical cinema, based on real documents. This film satisfies our interest in the author’s identity, it satisfies our aspirations to know something that equates the author with us, ordinary people. At the same time this approach still does not prejudice the assessment of each film, so in every separate case it must be proven by the time. To clarify my point, I will give the following example.

In 1912 I. A. Protazanov (1881 – 1945) made a 30-minute long feature film “The departure of the great old man”<sup>2</sup>. In addition to the film about Tolstoy Protazanov in the same year also made a feature film about I. S. Turgenev “How fair, how fresh were the roses...”. Apparently, it was a certain project – biopics about great writers.

“Departure of a Grand Old Man” was decided to be very unusual. It was a fiction film, and all the material was played, for which the twenty-eight-year-old actor V. Shaternikov was invited to play the role of Tolstoy. He had nothing in common with Tolstoy so the sculptor I. Kavalieridze with the make-up artist

2 The other title is “The Life of Leo Tolstoy”, the cinema factory “P. Timan, F. Reinhardt and S. Osipov”, Moscow; Teneromo script (I. Feynerman), operators A. Levitsky, G.-L. Mundviler, second director E. Timan – the wife of P. Timan, but her role in making of the film is incomprehensible.

were working on the Count's face. But in the film it was included one "Documentary shot: Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy on his deathbed" from the documentary chronicles made by operator J. Meyer (company "Pate brothers"). Without knowing the exact shots of Meyer's chronicle, it is impossible to distinguish it from the films played scenes.

The film was not shown in Russia but aroused great interest. For censorship, the final scene of the film must be impossible: Tolstoy meets Jesus in heaven (here, as in the scene where Tolstoy sees Sister Maria Nikolaevna, the operator A. Levitsky first use double exposure). But it did not come to censorship. The family and the close ones were against including in the film Meyer's shots of dead Tolstoy. The main reproach laid in another. The newspapers repeated the family word saying that in the film there are "irreal scenes, absolutely false ones and those that are true are shot in a wild and false light. Countess S. N. Tolstaya, V. G. Chertkov and other persons close to Tolstoy have been reproduced on the screen, in caricature and humiliating versions" [11, p. 7]. Newspaper "Petersburgskiy listok" wrote: "Presented at the showing of the film came to resentment from those absurdities, disgusting lies, ugly absurdities defaming the memory and good name of L. N. Tolstoy, who was full of disgusting "product" of speculators. For sure the involvement of relatives and friends of the great writer in such a messy fudge mustn't be questioned" [12]. "In fact, do the ideal of cinematography and higher voltage of her interest lies in showing how Leo Tolstoy makes a loop from a towel, hang it on the hook, and (we are ashamed to write it!) pushes through this a loop his head, or how Sofia Andreevna runs to the pond with the intention of drowning and then falls to the ground, jerking her legs? Is the screen creativity lies in depicting misleading scene of the rendezvous of Sofia Andreevna with the dying Tolstoy, who blesses her and kisses her? And for such a very bad "cinematic" tone of the scene they dress the actor under the great writer to the great similarity of putting on his own nose a second one of the special patch? It is due to the fact that our magazine is always trying to follow the idea, not the narrow commercial "interests" of cinematography, we could not otherwise respond to the phenomenon like this "forty thousand" movies" [13]. The newspaper "Petersburgskiy listok" quoted L. L. Tolstoy word: "Unfortunately, we must note that circulating rumors about the outrageous abuse of the name of my late father are the purest truth. I witnessed all this horrifying film from start to finish and, of course, made every effort to ensure that it would never saw the light in Russia, the picture will not be shown. I can say that with confidence" [12].

The only thing that in defense of the film was published in “Cine-Fono” magazine saying: “Do not look for any fashionable tricks now, nor a plot that beats your nerves. There is simplicity itself in the plot, as well as in action, but it is the simplicity that is on the screen, there is already a world tragedy and causes in the audience quiet, but hot tears, fills the soul with something warm, but at the same time gentle, clear...” [14]. S. V. Lurie, who was the publisher of “Kine-Fono” and, possibly, the author of this assessment (review was not signed), later recalled: “Made with such love for the memory of Tolstoy the film however, wasn’t shown. As soon as it was completed and shown to the censor and the family of Lev Nikolayevich, it was immediately banned at the insistence of Sofia Andreevna. I cannot now recall the full plot of the film, but in my memory there is an enormous impression that it made on me with its reality, credibility and excellently shown logics of the following one another circumstances, that have led Tolstoy’s decision of leaving the family. Interesting to mention that the family and friends of Tolstoy mostly were agreed to cancel the prohibition of screening the film if few frames would be cut, such as the scene of Tolstoy attempt to commit suicide” [15, p. 719].

The film director Protazanov recalled this: “From my earliest works, this film was for me, perhaps, the most exciting intention. <...> I remember this episode in my life without shame. <...> Then everything seemed simpler: youth and thirst for sensation pushed on brave decisions. <...> To Tiemann came Teneromo, the writer, and offered to do the script of life of Tolstoy based on the very interesting material. Tiemann immediately realized that in case of success such a film could bring the company more popularity and high income. The script was ordered, written and edited by people who knew Lev Nikolaevich closely. This one was already a pledge that not only would the script not be allowed for stinginess and vulgarity, but that the family chronicle of Tolstoy was quite tactfully interpreted in the script. <...> However since the plot was based on the chronicle of the last period of Tolstoy’s life and tried to explain the reasons for his departure from Yasnaya Polyana, one only news about the upcoming film caused terrible excitement among relatives, close friends of Tolstoy and in the literary world. Tiemann showed the film to Lev Lvovich, son of the late L. N. Tolstoy, and two or three of his relatives. They asked Tiemann not to release the film. To the honor of the company it should be noted that the Tiemann has not taken any steps to secure the release the picture, either totally or in shortened form, although the right to showing was pre-sold to Rostov screening company “Trading house Ermoliev, Zarkhin and Segel”. <...> It is easy to imagine how much turmoil and grief caused me all this fuss about the film” [16, p. 242–244].

Now you won't surprise anyone with this movie. Moreover, now this film is quite accessible and does not cause absolutely no protests. Though in the film actually there are scenes that must have caused the rage of the family members. S. A. Tolstaya and V. G. Chertkovare shown in a quarrel for the "Tolstoy inheritance". Sofia Andreevna after another quarrel runs to the pond, and the episode is accompanied by the titles "S. Tolstaya feigns suicide" and "Countess with changes in her face runs to the pond", but the actress interpretation however, does not suppose that her character is contemplating suicide. Tolstoy himself, realizing that he has no way out conceives suicide. Tolstoy comes to the Shamordin monastery to his sister Maria Nikolayevna. And all this is in fact precisely and strictly documented, that now, after the publication of documents it is quite obvious. We find only one contradiction against historical facts: Alexandra Lvovna calls her mother to dying father, and Tolstoy dies at the hands of Sophia Andreevna. This was a violation of historical fact, and most of his contemporaries knew perfectly well that Sofia Andreevna was not allowed to see her dying husband (the episode of Sofia Andreevna looking into the windows of the house where her dying husband was lying is presented in chronicles). But this was the intentional decision of the authors.

Tiemann, who was a producer, showed the finished film to the relatives and closest friends of Tolstoy and when they rebelled against the showing of the film, he immediately agreed with them and the film wasn't shown in Russia. However, he sold the film with a big profit abroad, but refused from the Russian public. Therefore, the reproach that this whole project serves only "narrow commercial "interests" of the cinematography" is unfair. We absolutely agree with Protazanov for whom this project was a creative work.

Another thing is that the release of such a film it is difficult not to recognize, of course indelicate. It is possible, of course to agree with the "Utro Rossii" newspaper that wrote: "To protest against the fact that the intimate life of Leo Tolstoy became the property of the society Sofia Tolstaya has the least rights. She personally sold to newspaper the memoirs about the intimate details of her and Tolstoy life, dedicated to the 50th anniversary of their wedding" [17]. From a legal point of view, the newspaper was absolutely right, but the human truth remained with S. A. Tolstaya. The same thing we see in the situation with the Protazanov's film, that was made two years after Tolstoy's death, when all the participants of the on-screen story (except for the Tolstoy) were still alive. In this situation, it was absolutely unimportant adequately or not were the widow and children showed on screen, along with the relatives and friends of Tolstoy. The other thing was important: in their life

which was still continuing some people were interfering and interpreted it in public. They legitimately perceived this film not as a special artistic product but as an everyday rudeness.

## 2.

For our further conversation it should be mentioned that film documentary material and the documentary films itself are in fact different phenomena. Film documentary materials nowadays can make everyone who has a video in their cell phone (and it is embedded in all cell phones). Film documentary materials – it's just a sketch for the memory (no matter who is the author: amateur or professional), they just fix this or that phenomenon, and not intend to represent and rethink the life. Documentary cinema is an art, tools and secrets of which are given either to highly gifted or well-learned people.

Tolstoy, like most of his contemporaries appreciated the cinema in the first place because he was the keeper of documentary information, and said about it this way: "In Russian cinematography should catch especially Russian life in its most diverse just as it is – not chasing imaginary plots" [Cit. from: 15, p. 716]. However, in spite of these words, when all the representatives of the film industry wanted to save the life of a writer as a documentary film, Tolstoy refused to pose in front of the camera (and also in front of the camera).

More than twenty films about Tolstoy, which were created in 1908–1913, are now known [18]. From the current point of view these films about Tolstoy cannot be called strictly documentaries, they are rather just documentary materials. But their value is even increased, because thanks to them we see Tolstoy not from the director's point of view but as he was in life. These tapes themselves, saying in modern terms, are completely non-cinematographic. First of all, because in all of them there is no plot, which could reveal a certain idea. If we take into account that all these are more documentary materials, we will not be surprised by the fact that the same shots film authors combined in various ways and produced different versions of the film, giving them different names. There were not so many materials with Tolstoy and it was not enough, and so it was more important than the plot.

A. O. Drankov (Company "A. Drankov and C°") produced 4 films about Tolstoy; all of them were preserved almost entirely.

His first film "80th anniversary of count. L. Tolstoy" had the success at documentary cinema. It was hard to believe that someone shot Tolstoy



in the film, so “Petersburgskiy listok” wrote: “The authenticity of some of the tapes is highly questionable. It is possible, that some of them are made not with Tolstoy but with the artist, made-up Tolstoy, with appropriate setting”. Drankov filmed the material on August 27th and 28th, 1908 [Cit. from: 15, p. 713]. (144 m., two author’s variants). Tolstoy in a chair is moved to the balcony, and the operator should stand under it. Good shootings in such position is impossible, and the operator asked for Tolstoy’s permission to put the camera on the balcony. And Tolstoy first refusing from any shootings agreed to this. He was shot only in one position – in the chair. in addition, some shootings were made in Yasnaya Polyana. Tolstoy was interested in the process of shooting, as often happens, and in a time of the shooting, and he began to talk about it with the operator.

Film “Leo Tolstoy at Chertkov’s and Moscow” Drankov shot in 18th – 19th September 1909 in Krekshino and Moscow (two author’s variants). Drankov described the tape in the following way: “We took a large number of pictures with Tolstoy, making his lonely morning walk in the village, and then, successively, step by step, following Tolstoy, and showing him with family, walking in a century-old grove, waiting for the train at the station at Krekshino and departing to Moscow. Fully presented the shootings of his arrival to Moscow, his moving to the Khamovniki to his house, than moving out of the house, his fans that came to wave him goodbye, the arrival to the station, where the great mass of people was already waiting for him with the deputy of city Duma V. A. Maklakov, the enthusiastic applause of a colossal crowd of people, coming to the station after Tolstoy, and the departure of Tolstoy, accompanied by a great number of admirers of the great old man” [19]. All this we actually see in the footage.

Film “Last days of L. Tolstoy in Yasnaya Polyana” Drankov made on the 6th – 7th January in Yasnaya Polyana and 7th – 9th September, 1910 in Kocheti. Drankov reported: “From 2000 meters, 200 <meters> of the best shots were selected: L. N. Tolstoy at literary work; L. N. Tolstoy riding beloved horse, accompanied by Dr. Makovitsky; L. N. Tolstoy on a walk with Sophia Andreevna; L. N. Tolstoy on a sledge; L. N. Tolstoy sawing wood; L. N. Tolstoy talks with the peasants; L. N. Tolstoy and his daughter A. L. Tolstaya (acting as his secretary); L. N. Tolstoy in the circle of his family and with his beloved grandchildren, and much more” [20]. According to Drankov he threw 1,800 meters of footage, which he had never done before, and that is hard to believe: it is too expensive and extremely unwise. Most likely, this hyperbole should certify the quality of the presented material.

Film “Tolstoy’s funerals” Drankov made on 19th of November 1910 (length is unknown). Other Drankov’s films were successfully shown at screens, but this one was banned, as well as other films about Tolstoy’s funerals, since their demonstration caused a manifestation [21, p. 17]. Therefore its preservation is unknown.

In 1911 Drankov sold his negatives with Tolstoy shootings to an Italian company “Chines”. This company from two shootings – “Leo Tolstoy at the town of Chertkov and Moscow” and “The Last Days of staying of L. N. Tolstoy in Yasnaya Polyana” – made the film “Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy”. The announcement for the film said: “In the last days of February “Chines” company produces an exceptional film “Leo Tolstoy”, representing a number of images from the life of a brilliant writer in his estate at Yasnaya Polyana and in Moscow. <...> Note that this tape is exclusive property of “Chines” company, and only one in the world. <...>...and soon the whole world will see Lev Nikolayevich’s on screen: how he walked, talked, worked, rested” [22]<sup>3</sup>. All the titles in the film have number markers and censorship numbers.

Stock Company A. A. Khanzhonkov “Khanzhonkov and K<sup>o</sup>” released 4 films about the death of Tolstoy: “The last days of Count L. N. Tolstoy”, “Yasnaya Polyana before the funeral L. Tolstoy”, “Funeral of L. N. Tolstoy”, “Events at Astapovo station”. All of them were assembled from a material shot on November 7th to 9th, 1910 by the accountant of the company V. N. Martinov and director of the company A. I. Ivanov-Guy. “They arrived there <in Yasnaya Polyana> on the eve of the funeral, they immediately made shootings of all the favorite places of Lev Nikolayevich: a pond, a large tree, under which the writer and the peasants would usually stand, and so on, shot the place chosen for the grave” [23, p. 44–45].

There is evidence that “Pate Brothers” company produced 9 films about Tolstoy and one short film for the “Pate-Journal” number 86. The film “Departure of L. Tolstoy [Yasnaya Polyana] to Moscow” was made on September the 3rd, 1909 by operator J. Meyer and V. Konenko

and was released in two versions with approximately equal length (130 and 135 m), but under different names. The history of these shootings described in detail V. Konenko [24, p. 6–7]. D. P. Makovitsky recorded on the day of the shooting: “L. N. asked the filmmakers not to shot, but they continued. Standing at the pillars in front of the station, on the platform. Asked whether L. N. permit to shot him walking at the garden. He refused them, but they were

3 V. E. Vishnevsky [18, p. 137] wrote that Chines company produced the film “From the Life of L. N. Tolstoy” (1912). But the film is unknown, and the length (1,500 m) is under question.

not ashamed to shot him after all, when he went to walk from the station" [8, p. 59]. D. P. Makovitskiy is frankly hypocrite: he himself wrote every Tolstoy's word secretly from him. Another five films about last days of Tolstoy and his funeral were made by "Pate Brothers" company from the same material: "Events at the station Astapovo", "The Last Days of Tolstoy staying at Astapovo", "Moving L. Tolstoy's body from Astapovo to Yasnaya Polyana", "Tolstoy's funeral", "Events on the Astapovo station and Tolstoy's funeral". The films "L. N. Tolstoy" and "In memory of the death of L. N. Tolstoy" are not preserved in the archives.

Two documentary films are made by other companies. One is made by Ekaterinburg cinema theatre "Cometa" on the 10th of March in 1910 from the shootings by American operator Thomas Tapsel in Krekshino and Moscow in September 1909<sup>4</sup>. Tapsel was patronaged by V. G. Chertkov, and therefore Tolstoy did not refuse to shoot him. There was much more material shot, but it is not known. The film "At the Count Tolstoy's place" (1909) by "Union" corporation (Frankfurt) was made by German operator under the supervision of R. Perskiy, it also cannot be found. In addition, it is known that company "Éclair" made shootings "At the grave of Leo Tolstoy. November 7th, 1912", but there is no information about the film.

These are lifetime documentary films about Tolstoy. As we can see, the operators come to the writer, wherever he is, and to different places after his death, to shoot the chronicle. The idea that a film in the modern sense should be made from this material has not yet been formed. Material – real Tolstoy – suppresses creative experiment of the filmmaker. The main goal of the operators was to capture Tolstoy, and the ideological composition retreated to the second plan or was completely absent. Here is a distinctive evidence of V. Konenko who participated in the filming of the "Pate Brothers" company in 1909: "We should note the complete sympathy with which the countess reacted to our request. She herself desires the shots aimed to keep in history moments of Tolstoy's life. And both during this our trip to Yasnaya Polyana, and during the next ones the Countess gave us every assistance in the production of shots, and all negotiations with Tolstoy regarding its agreement to pose in front of the camera were almost exclusively provided by her.

<...> The first of our works were the shots of Leo Tolstoy's trip to Shchekino station, where he went passing Moscow to V. G. Chertkov.

Needless to say that we were on time in the position. The last minutes of waiting... They're coming...

<sup>4</sup> On the release of this film see: [25; 26]. T. Tapsel lived with V. G. Chertkov in Telyatyunki, near Yasnaya Polyana, and made a large number of Tolstoy's photographic portraits, which are kept in the Leo Tolstoy State Museum [27, p. 462].

Slowly, almost rolling out of the gate of the estate steam carriage with Tolstoy and his spouse accompanying him. Followed by the trio of horses with Alexandra Lvovna and others accompanying...

But we are in a hurry. No sooner had the carriage passed the camera, we need to overtake them on our horses to be able to shoot the arrival to the station.

Here, on the Shchekin platform we work also successfully. Arrival, entering the station, Leo Tolstoy walking along the platform waiting for the train, meeting with the relatives arrived on the same train and, finally, the last point of departure in the way – everything shot on the camera” [28, p. 6].

As we see, the journalist writes only about the collection of material, and all this footage we see now on the screen most often in the order in which it was filmed. No specific creative task and decision is set. The goal of Tolstoy’s trip lies beyond the interests both of the documentary filmmaker and the audience, which he sees in front of him. It is important that we see Tolstoy on the screen. That is quite enough.

Residents of Yasnaya Polyana: Tolstoy and his entourage – perceived cinema, apparently, in the same way. D. P. Makovitskiy wrote on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, 1910: “Cinematic shooting of L. N. riding and in the evening showed the cinematic pictures” [8, p. 150]. Filmed and showed pictures – further this interest of cinema has not yet spread.

Though the composition of the frames is determined not by the art logic, but the material, the filmmakers combined the captured frames in any sequence. So it is now quite difficult to distinguish the funeral shooting of Tolstoy made by one operator, from the shooting made by another.

### 3.

Further development of the documentary films about Tolstoy should go (and went) towards the creation of a feature ideological story about the writer. E. I. Shub created apparently the first documentary film about Tolstoy – “Russia under Nicholas II and Leo Tolstoy”. In the scenery synopsis she formulated her goals and tasks: “The attempt on the ground of the chronicle to display one of the periods of time in which Tolstoy acted, organically connected with the epoch associated with its epoch, and give the characteristics of him as a thinker – this attempt is new and extremely important” [29, p. 253]. Even judging by this synopsis can be seen how far was Shub from the fact that in the year

of the 100th anniversary of Tolstoy the feature cinema presented: two films with the same title and plot “The Cossacks” – in the USSR (director Vladimir Barsky, script V. Barsky, V. Shklovsky, with the premier on 4th September) and in the USA (director George W. Hill, Clarence Brown, script Cedric Gibbons, David Cox, Alexander Toluboff premiere on June, the 23d). It is clear that regardless of the desire of their authors, exotic material was put in the forefront.

Her first feature documentary film “The Falling of Romanovs” (1927) Shub totally made from the prerevolutionary chronicles documentaries, which she found in different archives. The film became the beginning of documentary-historical films. in the same way of the montage archival newsreel Shub made the film “Russia under Nicholas II and Leo Tolstoy”. Shub reinterpreted historical film documents for propaganda purposes. Author’s interpretation was seen in the satirical nature of the titles that gave a certain ideological meaning of the documentary material. Shub had always remained, since the times of LEF, a supporter of the “literature of fact” and was skeptical of fiction cinema. in the article “Non-fiction films” (1929) she wrote: “We do not need the atelier studio, actors, decorators and prop workshops, we do not need a script. Fiction literature doesn’t teach us anything, color and compositional techniques of artists”. And there Shub claimed: “Set on the fact, not just showing the fact, but also giving time to consider it, having considered – remember it, having remembered – to understand, to give space, give the place, to show a person in this space and the place with the utmost clarity, working with facts, to join this material in such meaningful, associative and common series that can easily show the viewer author’s attitude to the facts shown. These are the main challenges that the workers of non-fiction or intellectual cinema face” [Ibid. p. 263, 268].

Unfortunately, the film “Russia under Nicholas II and Leo Tolstoy” was not preserved up to now. Only the titles made by the screenwriter M. Z. Zeitlin. However, these titles allow you to reconstruct at least the intention of the film. in any case, the title credits well reveal the nature of the work of the film’s authors: “Montage of the authentic film documents. / Work by Esther Shub. / Inscriptions M. Tseitlin. / Editional shootings by Schneider, Blum, Feldman operators”. Shub, as we see, considers the shootings made by her predecessors, not as independent films, but merely as “authentic film documents”. And then with the screenwriter, they say: “In this film, which includes pieces of old chronicles and new filming, everything – from beginning to the end – is *real*, truly *authentic*” [30, p. 50].

The viewer is suggested strongly that the material has super documentary nature. However, the movie itself is not a documentary, and it has predetermined structure and is practically staged. Let's see several titles following each other:

“18. The family estate Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy who was rejecting any property had transferred into the ownership of his wife.

19. The landowner – Countess Sofia Andreevna.

20. Condemning the landlord lifestyle, Tolstoy though remained among the people he criticized.

21. Saying about “non-resistance to evil by violence” Tolstoy, an opponent of revolutions, tried to help people by addressing the tzar...

22. “... a third part of Russian was in a position of enhanced protection, i.e., outside the law. The army of policemen, overt and covert, is increasing. Prisons, places of exile and penal servitude are full...”

23. “... My dear brother, you have only one life and you can delve into the to the needs and desires of the people... safely and joyfully live it serving to God and people. Loving you, Tolstoy...” [Ibid. p. 52].

Shub learned articles wrote by V. Lenin about Tolstoy, and her film directly embodies the Leninist concept of “screaming contradiction”. Everything in this concept is based on the dichotomy: *yes / no*. And especially suffers A. L. Tolstaya, who had just left Soviet Russia: “42. Alexandra Lvovna – Tolstoy’s daughter – with sweets for peasants”. V. B. Shklovsky immediately noted this in his review: “Cinematographically Shub bound

the garden of Tolstoy with the court of Nicholas II through the costumes of the ladies and the coat of arms of the count. She extended the borders of Yasnaya Polyana, giving the village of that time. And that is why the documentary inscription sounds so ironic: “Alexandra Lvovna is bringing sweets to Yasnaya Polyana children”. She was really carrying sweets from Georges Bormann, and yet it is very offensive and very well set” [31, p. 34]<sup>5</sup>.

Shub used, as you may guess, the material from the first film of Drankov where appropriate scene had the following inscription: “The daughter of Tolstoy carries gifts to peasant children”. in the credits of Drankov, it is very significant to comprehend the word *peasant*: Drankov does not make a fiction film, but strictly documentary, so he is not concentrated on the beauty (including the beauty of syllable). For Shub and Zeitlin the syllable beauty is very

**5** Reprinting this article Shklovsky had significantly changed the text, so here it is to compare: “Shub via cinema linked Tolstoy’s garden with Nikolay’s courtyard by the ladies’ costumes ladies and Count’s emblem. She showed Yasnaya Polyana by moving it’s borders, showing the village of that time. That is why the documentary inscription sounds so ironic: “Alexandra Lvovna is bringing sweets to Yasnaya Polyana children”. The last sentence is absent [32, p. 112].

important, so they replaced the word of *gifts* with the word *sweets* (but not on an outdated form of *sweets* as Shklovsky wrote), and write the name of Tolstoy's daughter reinforcing the satire.

V. Shklovsky exaggerated some facts, but in general he rightly wrote: "We can't argue with Shub via the material, but we can do it through the methods. <...> The fact without date is aestheticized and distorted" [Ibid. P. 34–35]<sup>6</sup>; "At the heart of the dispute about the documentary art is extremely complex, and it cannot be solved except without taking into account the dialectic of art form. Certain method, which is entered as not aesthetic, is aestheticized, i. e. changing its function" [Ibid. P. 35]<sup>7</sup>.

In other words, Shklovsky said that the documentary is not just documentary materials, not paper, but a great art research of Life. And like in the fiction cinema, there are certain artistic techniques in documentaries. Thus at that stage began the perception of a documentary film as the film art.

What was made after that in Soviet Russia was extremely boring. One of the most typical was the film "Leo Tolstoy" (1953, TSSDF), directed by S. D. Bubrik, the cinematographic equivalent of fashionable ones in those years series "Exhibition at School". Bubrik was the author of many biographies of the writers on the screen: "Vladimir Mayakovsky" (1940, new edition 1955), "Maxim Gorky" (1940, new edition 1958), "Vissarion Belinsky" (1948), "Pushkin" (1948), "Chekhov" (1954, new edition 1960), "Dostoevsky" (1956), "Bernard Shaw" (1956), "Robert Burns" (1958), "Rabindranath Tagore" (1961). The film gives the impression of a series of photos stretched in time. The camera is usually static, immobile, shooting each person; the landscape is always the same position in the same angle.

The film "Yasnaya Polyana" in all descriptions is called "Yasnaya Polyana. Leo Tolstoy" (1999, channel "Culture", directed by E. E. Potievskiy). This film makes a more complex impression. as if different people make parts. The first part is made as if back in 1953. There is evidence that E. E. Potievsky was the cameraman for the film "Yasnaya Polyana in the life of Leo Tolstoy" (1981) [See: 33], and it possibly influenced on the style of the first part of the film in 1999. But closer to the final there began to appear new methods: play with light and shadow (the story of the "Arzamas horror"), moving camera. That is why the film does not have an integral impression, and it is difficult to talk about it.

6 Compare: "To argue with Shub you must use not the material, but the method of using it. <...> a fact without data is aestheticized and distorted" [32, p. 112].

7 In the book "For forty years" [32] this piece of text is missing.

100 years after Tolstoy's death, the material of the old filmmakers turned out to be extremely popular. Here are two promotional descriptions of the film "Leo Tolstoy: Living Genius" (2010, ETS Hermitage Bridge, RGAKFD, director Sergei Selyanov, producer Sergey Selyanov, Andrey Deryabin, composer Sergey Yevtushenko): "Film will tell the real story of the last two years of life of the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy and national mourning over his demise" [34]; "Working title of the film – "Leo Tolstoy: a living genius". It will include newsreels, which were shot during the life of the writer and philosopher, more than 100 years ago. The filmmakers are going to show it in many cinemas in the world, as it is designed for a wide audience.

The film "Leo Tolstoy: a living genius" will tell about the writer's life in the last two years of his life. It will include unique shots of Tolstoy's funeral, they haven't been shown before to the audience and they were kept in the Russian State Archive of Film documentary photographs.

The first shootings of the philosopher were held in Yasnaya Polyana in secret, then the operators made shootings at the 80th anniversary of Tolstoy. Today we have an opportunity to see the writer in his authentic surroundings, his life, his family, whose members are joyfully posing for the photographers" [35].

The most interesting thing is that in the credits and descriptions of the film, Alexander Drankov and Alexander Khanzhonkov are named as operators of it. The director of the film S. Selyanov is considering the predecessors only as bearers of the raw material from which he makes a real movie, claiming to become a "true story".

Two other films had less broadcast advertising, which is understandable: they both are about the Tolstoy's attitude to young cinematography and film adaptations of Tolstoy's stories. The film "Tolstoy through the eyes of the movie / Tolstoi mit den Augen des Films" was filmed in Germany (2010, director Artem Demenok). In his description the emphasis was made on the fact that "the great writer was captured in a newsreel in early years of the new art" and "that Tolstoy was thinking of the possibility to write something for a film, Tolstoy managed to relate without bias and assess the potential of its expressive possibilities" [36; 37].

On the same theme is made a film, which was based on the program by L. Annenskiy about Tolstoy and cinema: "Hunting on the Lion (Leo Tolstoy)" (2011, Studio DD (God deeds), "Kultura" channel, director – Maksim Palashenko). Since the film consists of four series, it is inevitably too long. For the presentation of this film, there is no need in advertising descriptions, the name of the film says for itself.



It is quite obvious that in these three films it is used the same materials, since there are no others. No matter how you combine them, you will not get anything fundamentally new from them. Anniversary film made in 2010 with all these authors did not create a new image of Tolstoy, but only in all ways varied the image that has already formed in Drankov's, "Brothers Pate" and Khanzhonkov's shootings. Therefore, with all the ineptitude of their directing, it is better to watch their original films, whose innocence emphasizes their authenticity.

It seems like the modern documentary cinema has forgotten Shub's lessons in the interpretation that Shklovskiy gave. And the only exception to this general rule and the only heir of Shub is G. M. Yevtushenko, who is the author of the script and director the four documentary films about Tolstoy: "Polustanok" (2007, script A. Basov and co-director L. Grishin), "Stained image, or Leo Tolstoy and Ilya Ginzburg: a double portrait in the interior of the epoch" (2014), "Leo Tolstoy and Dziga Vertov: double portrait in the interior of the epoch" and "Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi: double portrait in the interior of the epoch" (both 2015; co-director of the last three – A. M. Yevtushenko, co-writer V. S. Listov).

Film "Polustanok" about Tolstoy's death at Astapov station was made on the internal dynamics and in this sense continued the tradition of "obituary" films, which were made a lot in 1910. The fate of Leo Tolstoy himself, the fate of Sofia Andreevna was shown in the film without exaggeration and iron. That's why the same materials that were used also by other filmmakers looked differently in this film. But the genre of "Polustanok" did not become the main one in Yevtushenko's works.

Historical documentary cinema, like cinema in general (fiction and documentary) is based on movement. However, the pre cinematography era does not gives the filmmaker documentary material, full of movement. Only statutory paintings and photography keep the appearance of people, places and objects of past eras. And the task of historical documentaries filmmaker is to set in motion all this static material to make a stopped (fixed) moment once again become a fast flowing (sliding from fixation) moment.

That's why it is necessary to pay attention to the second part in the titles of the second, the third and fourth films. For most, G. M. Yevtushenko there is nothing surprising in such titles. She has already had films with this expression in titles: "Woe to wit, or Eisenstein and Meyerhold: Double portrait in the interior of the epoch" (2004) and "They keep so many dear things... or Erdman and Stepanova: Double portrait in the interior of the epoch" (2006). Here are the new "double portraits". But the method is not new. We have already seen such a "double portrait" of Esther Shub: "Russia under Nicholas II and Leo Tolstoy";

just now the words *double portrait* and *interior of the era* are not in the title of her film.

The words *interior of the era* do not cause any questions because without this interior and out of time – it is impossible to show the human. In her films even judging only by the titles of her film, “the interior of the era” was also predetermined. Why the concept of “double portrait” has become so important both for Shub, and G. and A. Evtushenko? What does it give to historical documentarist presentation of more than one character? – The answer, of course, is obvious. It creates dialogue, conflict, and ultimately movement. Along with these title characters are placed a lot of minor characters: Vladimir Stasov, Ilya Repin, Sophia, Tatiana and Alexandra Tolstie, Vladimir Chertkov. And it turns out into the movie.

This explains to us why modern documentary films are dedicated, according to the authors, not to Leo Tolstoy in the perception of Ilya Ginzburg, Dziga Vertov, or Mahatma Gandhi and not to Ilya Ginzburg, Dziga Vertov, or Mahatma Gandhi as propagandists or interlocutors of Leo Tolstoy. Not to each of them separately but both of them and their era. “Double portrait” must creators the dynamics. The point is not that Tolstoy really appreciated the sculptor Ginzburg, and not that Ginzburg was a follower of Tolstoy (he was not at all a Tolstoy an). The fact is that these two people loved each other humanly and so on and accept each other, despite the differences in their views and beliefs. But in this case there is some external basis for such a “double portrait”. There were a lot of painters and sculptors around Tolstoy. But none of them wrote so much about Tolstoy. Ginzburg left a very large number of documents and about his relationship with Tolstoy, and these documents were in the basis for the script.

Boris Evseev wrote about the film “The Captured Image”<sup>8</sup>, that “fast changing pictures are not ruining the film”, “and make the cloth of the film fragmentary in a good way”<sup>9</sup>. And further he referred to Y. N. Tynyanov as a film theorist. I think that everything happens exactly the opposite. The starting material of historical documentary filmmaker is inevitably parted. These are portraits, group photos, paintings or the pieces of documentary chronicles and films. In all the movies, with Tolstoy as a hero – it is also the interior of his house in Yasnaya Polyana. But the interiors of the house can be shot now on the camera – there will appear movement. And how to revive the photo? – Of course, via editing. Authors of the film

8 The basis of this part of the article about “The Captured image, or Leo Tolstoy and Ilya Ginzburg: a double portrait in the interior of the epoch” is the author’s review [38, p. 8].

9 Evseev B. *The cosmos of Yasnaya Polyana and the relief of the epoch: on the premiere of the documentary film “The Captured Image”* // *Nezavisimaya Gazeta. Ex libris*. 2014. August, 13th.

perfectly combine large and general plans in a single frame, representing the close-ups (especially the portraits of various people) in motion on as the background of the general plan. They are greatly combining contrasting frames with each other, thus creating a great emotional stress. Successful used (full of real drama) in “Captured image” is the photo of the banquet after the anniversary celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of Tolstoy (1928), where all are posing for the camera, and only Sophia Tolstaya-Esenina is sitting, not looking at the camera, and it seems she is so far from it all. From different fragments, fragments of past life – from frozen frames, the historical documentary filmmaker creates a chronicle, a long narration. This is a very big advantage of this film. It lasts 82 minutes for you! For documentary films this is too much. During this time you will lose interest and get tired of watching. It was a big risk – to make a documentary on the historical material with a length of a feature film. But as I can understand, this risk just if I edit self.

Historical and documentary basis for the film is strictly observed, the scientific staff of Yasnaya Polyana and the Tolstoy Museum in Moscow were responsible for that. They helped to select photos and consulted the filmmakers. But that is very special that the documentary film “The Captured image, or Leo Tolstoy and Ilya Ginzburg: a double portrait in the interior of the era”, does not seek any enlightenment. By asking the question about the film theme – you can only say that it is about Tolstoy and Ginzburg and their era. Tolstoy answered the same way when he was asked: what was the novel War and Peace written about? He replied that to answer this question, he must write a whole novel again.

The much shorter films about Dziga Vertov and Mahatma Gandhi (both 57 minutes) make a more controversial impression. First, they lack even external dramaturgy: the off-screen text is read by one actor, which removes the necessary tension. Secondly (it mostly deals with the film about Vertov), there is no dialogue. The entire Vertov’s life and public life of Ghandi was after Tolstoy’s death. The authors of the films can, of course, say that Vertov and Gandhi talked in absentia with Tolstoy. in the case of Vertov, this is even hypothetically difficult to pretend.

That’s why the film “Leo Tolstoy and Dziga Vertov: double portrait in the interior of the epoch” is not actually a “double portrait”, it is more about Vertov, although showed through Tolstoy. This cause many errors. First of all ideological ones. The authors of the film are pulling Vertov, following Tolstoy, against the authorities. The great Vertov was not the Soviet regime, he supported it, he wanted to serve the people and the Soviet authorities, but he had too cinematic and free language so he was considered dangerous. Vertov’s showing through Tolstoy

also leads to fact errors. The film repeats the old legend that the first shooting of Drankov in Yasnaya Polyana was made against the will of Tolstoy and Sophia Andreevna from the toilet in the park. This shooting has disappeared while all the other Drankov's materials were preserved and known. Secondly, in the Yasnaya Polyana manor as a privately owned place there were no any public outdoor toilets. But even externally, the film was too monologic: behind the scenes there is only one narrator, so the voices do not collide, there is no conflict.

To a lesser extent this also applies to film about Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi. They were in correspondence with each other, it means that there is a real basis for comparison. But these comparisons are sometimes too external in nature, without affecting the substance of the matter. For example, at the beginning of the film two scenes go in parallel: in the first one, the life of monkeys with their guides in an Indian city is depicted, in the second one in Yasnaya Polyana people play with dogs. It is clear that this parallel, interesting in itself, is fraught with deep meanings. It does not work in the film and the film parallel is soon forgotten. The authors do not pay any attention to the most complex, the most problematic facts. For example, in the film it is not mentioned that Gandhi as the participant of the political life in India in 1930-1940s can't keep the rule of "nonresistance to evil with violence". Could Tolstoy accept this? We know that since 1881 he lived in constant compromise with his convictions, which led him into that dead end, the only way out of which was to escape from Yasnaya Polyana and death. It should be mentioned that neither the Sofya Andreevna, nor Chertkov, by and large, should not be blamed for painful life which Tolstoy lived. Both they were consistent personalities, and both bent their line. Tolstoy's line, his "non-resistance", did not provide him with strength. It was a brilliant idea, but could it be implemented in life?

But despite all these comments the films by G. and A. Yevtushenko and their colleagues should be recognized as very productive. It is the "double portrait against the background of the epoch" that provides the plot and emotional core of the historical documentary film. And it makes the films very important for the cinematography.

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