

THE IMAGES OF UKRAINE IN THE FOREIGN FILM INDUSTRY

Introduction. No matter how much we talk about the development of European or Ukrainian cinema, we all know that the birthplace of movies is Hollywood. Over the course of more than a century, America has produced hundreds of thousands of films and TV series, and some of them explicitly mention Ukraine.

There are an incredible number of references to Ukraine in American films, and it's impossible to cover them all. **The purpose of the paper** is to outline the general trend of how Ukraine and Ukrainians are portrayed in American cinema in a historical context, from the beginning of cinema to the present day.

Formulation of the main material. One of the first films that can be found on the internet that mentions Ukraine is the film «Mazepa: National Hero of Ukraine», released in 1919, but it was directed by German director Martin Berger, and it's worth noting that at that time, European films were being made about Ukraine and its national heroes while it was under Soviet control.

The first Hollywood movie about Ukraine was the silent film «The Cossacks» by Volodymyr Barsky in 1928. However, American filmmakers moved the action from the Caucasus to the west, so Ukrainian Cossacks had to fight not with Chechens, but with Turks. Carpathian Roma visited them, and the scene of writing a letter to the Turkish Sultan was meticulously reproduced from Ilya Repin's painting «The Cossacks». Interestingly, the style of Cossack life was quite restrained, and even special stunt performers demonstrated Cossack tricks on horses, which was impressive.

The topic of Cossack culture was picked up by the movie «Exiled

Cossacks» in 1939, which was an American adaptation of the opera «Zaporozhets beyond the Danube» by Semen Hulak-Artemovsky. It took place in Ukraine in 1775. Moscow troops burnt down the Zaporizhzhian Sich. The Cossacks travelled to a territory under the control of the Ottoman Empire and established the Danube Sich. They fought for the Sultan and wanted to return to Ukraine. The film belongs to the so-called diaspora cinema, mostly made by Ukrainian immigrants. The characters speak and sing in Ukrainian, and there are accusations against Moscow and jokes about family, drinking, etc.

These two films told the story of Ukraine quite fully, but with the development of cinema.

There are more and more situations when the heroes mention Ukraine in some dialogues or cinematographers shoot films in Ukrainian locations

During the time when Ukraine was a part of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was mentioned quite a bit. After all, it was not considered something separate. But when Ukraine managed to win its own independence, mini-conflicts with misunderstandings began to appear more and more often in the movies, and isn't Ukraine Russia? In such films as «The Wire» (2003), «25th Hour» (2003), «Transporter 3», «Vamps» (1997), the characters conflicted because they were attributed to Russians.

Ukraine, as well as something connected with Ukraine, were mentioned in the bad manner tonality. One of the characters from a well-known TV series «Friends» said:

- *They are showing a Ukrainian film in Anzhelika, they say, it's a strong thing, let's go?*

- *No, but I will watch a normal movie with you.*

The bandit image became a favorite among Americans. The Ukrainian mafia was shown in the following works: «Be Cool» (2005) and «Banshee». This is how the life of the Ukrainian diaspora was shown in his crime drama by director Andrew Nicol in the film «Armed Baron». The heroes of the film are a family of Ukrainian emigrants who moved from Odessa to Brighton Beach, a

street known as a refuge for residents of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Particular attention was drawn to the scene of Vitaliy (Zharet Leto) shows knowledge of Ukrainian geography in an original way.

The Chernobyl disaster had a great influence on the perception of Ukraine. Artworks dedicated to the disaster began to appear in 1987, which was an unprecedented example of glasnost in the history of the USSR, which usually kept silent about many tragic events on its territory.

One of them was the documentary «The Call of Chernobyl» directed by Rolland Sergienko, which entered the Guinness Book of Records for the fact that it was shown in all countries where there was television.

For American filmmakers, Chernobyl and Pripjat often become the scenery of a post-apocalyptic landscape, and their content plays a more symbolic role: radiation, cannibal mutants, anomalies and everything that befits an average horror film.

Here, the Russians trade in arms («Strong Nut. A Good Day to Die» by John Moore, 2013), the reactor is seized by terrorists («Universal Soldier 3: Rebirth», action film by John Hymes, 2009), secret scientific experiments are conducted («Forbidden Zone» or «Chernobyl Diaries», a horror film by Bradley Parker, 2012).

But such an idea about Chernobyl, as well as the cliché about Ukraine as an «unknown country somewhere in Western Europe», is collapsing. In recent years, the most attention to the tragedy was probably drawn by the series «Chernobyl», which was released on the HBO channel in 2019. The show became a worldwide sensation and won ten Emmy Awards and two Golden Globe Awards.

It was 2014 that became a landmark year, because it made the whole world understand that Ukraine is not Russia and, accordingly, references began to change, although, again, not in our favor due to the fact that we are critically losing the information war, as well as in ourselves in the country, as well as in the states, where, for example, in one of the episodes of the series about

Sherlock Holmes, a case related to the war in Donbas, where former Ukrainian soldiers are suspected of dozens of murders in Eastern Europe, is being investigated.

Another series called «Homeland» in the fifth season mentioned the conflict in Donbas, as well as the most popular slander against Ukrainian soldiers.

There are also films made entirely on the topic of Ukraine. This is Agnieszka Holland's Polish film «The Price of Truth», which tells the story of a Welsh reporter who, for the first time in the Western press, declared under his own name about Holodomor-genocide against Ukrainians and the Canadian film «Bitter Harvest», which is the first English-language feature film about the Holodomor and begins a series of films about the identity of Ukraine.

But there were also pleasant memories. Thus, in the movie «Corner Gas» (2005), the heroes analyzed the topic of spelling:

- *Listen, they don't speak Ukraine. Everyone says in Ukraine!*
- *Unbelievable.*
- *Would you say in Canada? or in Portugal?*
- *No, I wouldn't say so.*

There are many famous people in Hollywood whose ancestors come from Ukraine, such as Lev Schreiber, a famous Hollywood actor and screenwriter with Ukrainian blood in his veins.

Perhaps it was this circumstance that influenced his desire to make a film about Ukraine and show Americans his vision of our mentality and picturesque spaces.

In the sentimental film «Everything Is Illuminated» Elijah Wood got the role of a young American of Ukrainian origin, who goes on an adventurous journey through Ukraine to find the woman who once became his savior, his grandfather in Odessa, where the main character arrives. He is met by a cheerful and eccentric boy who agreed to become his guide. This boy was played by the front man of the band «Gogol Bordello» Evgeniy Hudz. In the tape, our country

appears as a motley gypsy, simple-minded and one that does not speak English well.

In connection with the recent events in Ukraine, society began to distinguish between it and Russia, because many people in the world either did not know it at all, or considered it to be some kind of appendage. Now, having paid a terrible price, our country has become a real-world trend, and with this, the image of an average Ukrainian has changed for people outside its borders. Now this is not the image of a bandit, but rather a revolutionary and indomitable soldier striving to defend his homeland. For example, director Sean Penn, who has already visited Ukraine more than once and met with President Zelenskyi, made a documentary about the events in our country called «Superpower», which tells about the Russian invasion and our country's struggle for independence.

Conclusions. In fact, it is rather unfortunate that Ukraine was usually mentioned only as mafia, bandits, victims of Chernobyl, murderers, war and so on. Public opinion is changing, and it's a pity that such reasons are needed for this. We want to be talked about as a leading state that is independent of no one.

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