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IN THE SEARCH OF REALITY:
THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF DOCUMENTARY FILMS

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Abstract

The perception of reality is embodied into enigma of multi-layered philosophical and ideological entities. There's a constant attempt to put these entities into forms, into adequate representations in order to present reality in credible and unequivocally acceptable form. Since the beginning of cinematography, documentary film has been taking exceptional place, seated in the front line of this struggle. The research conducted in this paper aims to expose philosophical and ideological grounds relating to reality and truth and their correspondence in representations in documentary films. The study envelops classical perspectives of scholars on documentaries and the emergence of the new landscape of documentary films through expansion of technological possibilities like computer-generated imagery. It touches the prolific notions of expansion of codes and conventions of documentaries, as well as their credibility values in terms of representations of reality. The study analyses three cases (documentary films) representing sub-genres of documentary genre and assesses all above mentioned entities on the basis of specified techniques of representation of reality. Additionally, it indicates the tendencies for further development of these new documentary categories and conducts an attempt to address the issue of fact and fiction relations.

Introduction

The leading thought

It is crucial for this study to formulate a proper leading thought, or rather a question that would lead through the whole process of the analysis. First of all, the general question is stated:

How is the reality constructed and represented in emerging sub-genres of documentary films?

The more direct version of the same question:

What are the techniques used to produce representations of reality in documentary films?

Destination points

The primary objective is to answer the main questions stated in this chapter, as well as to find answers for sub-questions presented in the further part of this section. It includes philosophical research in determining what “reality” is and what does it consist of. This is explicably important as to indicate from what perspective, that is interpretation, and which layers of reality concern its representations in documentary films. However, before the theory about reality is presented, the notion of “truth” is pondered as it is intrinsically corresponding component of reality, deriving from the assumption that what is “true” is also “real”. The study also incorporates the theory about documentary film since its origins. The intention here is to reveal this “perspective” on reality taken by filmmakers through all epochs of documentary film. Subsequently, there are internal and external factors that affected the shifts and changes in documentary films’ codes and conventions. The study concentrates on the most influential ones, namely technological advancement and its consequences on ideological paradigms of documentary cinematography which incorporated various degrees of fiction into existing sub-genres. The most expanding sub-genres in terms of conventions are: drama-documentary, mock-documentary and animated documentary. The overall stated questions in the paper are to be answered on the basis of the analysis of adequately selected cases (documentary films). The distinguished sub-questions are as follows:

- What are the classical approaches towards representation of reality in documentary films?
- How has the technological advancement impacted those approaches?

- How is the landscape of documentary films presenting today?
- What are the tendencies for further development of the documentary genre?
- Where are the merits for fact and fiction?

The chosen approach and methodology

For the needs of the research the qualitative case study approach has been chosen, as a proper mean that enables to adequately analyse the selected material and present it in coherent form. The approach allows the topic to be studied, as Baxter and Jack suggest, through “[...] a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood.” (2008:544) The selected approach is grounded on “constructivist paradigm” what facilitates the social perspective on reality. (2008: 545) The cases to be analysed are meticulously chosen documentary films which embody a specific socially formed perspective on reality. Furthermore, Baxter and Jack determine (on the basis of other scholars’ theories) several factors: “(a) the focus of the study is to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions;” as it was presented before this research includes several questions stated in the specified form; “(b) you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study;” it is obvious that captured and edited video material which is produced as a film cannot be affected in a manipulative way; “(c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study;” the whole ideological framework that concerns the cases of the research is fully described in order to reveal the overall picture of the issue; “(d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context;” representations in documentary films directly relate to what is true in reality and what is not.

Consequently, it is vital to enclose and asses what is exactly the case. The research analysis part concentrates on the recent most developing three sub-genres of the documentary genre; these are: drama-documentary, mock-documentary and animated documentary which are seen as documentary categories that strongly indicate the expanding boundaries of documentary genre as a whole. Typical and traditional documentary productions are not to be analysed due to the fact their content strictly adheres to classical codes and conventions, whereas this study relates only to contemporary tendencies in terms of technological and ideological shifts in representation of reality in documentary films.

According to Baxter’s and Jack’s (2008:548) table of “definitions and examples of different types of case studies”, this research is identified as “exploratory” case study as the presented research may possess complex and indistinctive results.

The methodology of analysis applied to selected cases includes a set of techniques (editing, camerawork and movement) which are fully presented and described in the following chapters.

These standard and non-standard techniques are used to present the process of creation of reality representations in given cases. Furthermore, the analysis attempts to assess if the provided cases possess indexical relations in correspondence with reality or not, and to indicate the degree of fact and fiction in terms of truth in relation to reality.

Arrangement of the thesis

The following chapter covers essential description of notions and theories in order to evaluate the further study.

The second chapter presents the notions of reality and truth in epistemological terms, concentrating on classical theories of Plato, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Baudrillard. The chapter also ponders the issue of “interpretation of context” on the basis of Umberto Eco’s work. The fundamental theory concerning documentary films is constructed on the grounds of John Grierson legacy and Cinema Direct tenets. Furthermore, the chapter exposes the traditional documentary “modes” on Bill Nichols and other theorists’ classifications.

Chapter three covers the influences of technological development on capturing and representation of reality of documentary films. Moreover, there are described techniques of editing, camera movement and capturing. This theory is crucial for conducting the analysis.

In chapter four characteristics of developing sub-genres are evaluated. These are drama-documentary, mock-documentary and animated documentary.

The analysis chapter concentrates on selected cases and presents summary results of each case.

The last, summary chapter consolidates the results from analysis chapter and attempts to answer the main question as well as sub-questions stated.

Chapter one: The notion of reality and film imagery

Since the origins of human thought the ever-existing question of reality has been the most sophisticated, if not the most profound inquiry of all. The answers that appeared along the time, although many of them burdened with their philosophical and humanistic legacy, were aiming at scientific, if not gnostic nature of their complexity. Has humanity succinctly explored the topic and exposed all necessary prerequisites to understanding and unveiling the true nature of reality? Apart from well-elicited arguments from ontological points of view, the epistemological or even gnostic side of the matter still represents the most difficult issues which are put under constant attempts to be solved and explained by pragmatically centred attitudes represented by researchers involved in

image-making and philosophy. Scholars attained the issue and aimed at concise definition of reality, resembled by the notion which demarcates “reality” from the state of “not being reality.” Consequently, the humanistic struggle commenced at the philosophical current which invented “simulacrum”¹ of reality.

Reality and truth

The crave for the clarity of the above mentioned notions dates back to antic times, when as it may seem peculiar for many researchers, the ontological and epistemological notions had been exploited and elicited to the most detailed and scrutinised proportions.

Sincerely, it is impossible or even unimaginable to ponder the issue without deepening the core component related as a fundamental and inevitable factor underlying the perplexity of reality, it is “truth”; and most often treated as a similitude to reality, embracing its nature.

The epistemological roots of the inquiry about truth reach deep into antic times; however, many of these well documented theories have been eventually consolidated in the beginning of the twentieth century. To such theories belongs “the identity theory”, broadly discussed by G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell in their common philosophical work, which originated from antic legacy. According to Stewart Candlish and Nic Damnjanovic of Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy² (who analyse the theory of above mentioned scholars), the essence of this philosophical mind-set is relied upon two notions, of a truth-bearer “proposition” and a truth-maker “a fact”. A proposition refers to judgements, things that are perceived to be true, namely a mental act of belief, whereas a fact is the manifestation in reality, an objective act that can be seen or testified in its existence. The crux of the matter refers to the relation between a proposition and a fact, namely truth is attained when both components are proclaimed to be true and correlate with each other. Only true propositions correspond to facts. Nonetheless, true propositions are constructed on the basis of judgements and “since both true and false judgments are composed of real constituents in just the same way, truth would not be distinguished from falsehood by being identical with reality.” As explained in Stanford Philosophical Encyclopedia, theoreticians like Russell, agree that the identity theory possesses its weakness in this point, due to the fact that in the same way a one is able to endure falsehood. Theorists argued in the past century about the relation of both components, particularly of the nature of propositions, their true state and falsity, actually stating that

1 “Simulacrum” – “something that looks like sb/sth else or that is made to look like sb/sth else” as defined by Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 7th Edition.

2 Here: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/truth-identity/>.

propositions are almost like facts but in a “wordly” manner. However, F. H. Bradley made an assumption that if the identity theory is to fulfil its function, propositions cannot be reasoned from abstractive perspective, but “one judgment can be true-that which encapsulates reality in its entirety.” Therefore, a proposition is to be treated as a descriptive mean towards reality. Moreover, he claims that “the degree to which a judgment is true is the degree to which it is identical with reality as a whole, while its degree of falsehood is in inverse proportion.”

Simultaneously, along the undergoing queries and doubts about the identity theory appeared “the correspondence theory” based on the similar mind-set, as noted in Stanford Philosophical Encyclopedia³, which asserts that “what we believe or say is true if it corresponds to the way things actually are – to the facts.” The explanation embraces almost the same factors as the identity theory, but with one distinction, a proposition is replaced with “belief”. Michael Glanzberg quotes Richard Cartwright, who encapsulates the theory in such words: “A belief is true if and only if it corresponds to a fact.” Therefore, the full neo-classical formula of the theory goes as follows, “a belief is true if there exists an appropriate entity – a fact – to which it corresponds. If there is no such entity, the belief is false.” Russell and Moore dismissed the identity theory and focused on the correspondence theory, due to the fact that they questioned the authenticity or the sense of the existence of propositions, eventually they denied it. Similarly, Ludwig Wittgenstein found the correspondence theory worth pondering and put it under scrutiny in his work “Tractatus”. However, Glanzberg remarks that the modern version of the theory goes back to the notion of proposition, though it had been rejected earlier.

At exactly the period of popularity of both theories, another theory emerged in response to these existing ones. “The coherence theory” that was laid on more holistic fundamental than above presented theories. Glanzberg quotes H. H. Joachim who asserts that “systematic coherence”, a system of beliefs appeals to truth. Theorists put it in such form: “a belief is true if and only if it is part of a coherent system of beliefs.” This “coherence” is the key factor that evoked beliefs to be true, to occur in unified, holistic system. As theorists mention, the emphasis with the theory is put on the relation of “belief-to-belief” not “content-to-world”. The coherence theory is strongly related to idealistic theories, thus lets a hint of metaphysics into its tenets. The theory is perceived as a contradictive one to the correspondence theory.

As some theories are founded on the idea of beliefs or refer to propositions, American pragmatists found truth in respect with experience, which is believed to be the ultimate factor that unveils it. Glanzberg presents view of British scholars; Peirce and William James embrace the

³ Here: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/truth/#CorThe>

essence of the idea in words: “Truth is satisfactory to believe” or “truth is the end of inquiry.” Truth is supposed to address experience and correspond with it in non-conflicting manner, and particularly to address its pragmatic values. Ultimately, the theory is concluded in the quote that “truth is verifiable.”

The identity theory of truth and coherence theory constitute fundamentals for neo-classical theories about truth and its prerequisites, laying epistemological foundations for theories based on logical formulas as Tarski’s theory, deflationist, realism and anti-realism theories. The latter ones ponder the notion of proposition and address the issue in content-to-world manner. As Glanzberg explains these theories use the dialectics of “bivalence”, introducing the notion of truth-bearer (proposition, belief, etc.) and truth-maker (fact), and their relation towards each other. The straightforward conclusion implicating from above mentioned tenets emphasises that in order truth to prevail, a belief or opinion needs to correlate with a fact in reality, including both relations in reference to the world and context. Possessing more thorough epistemological basis for the notion of truth, helps in taking a proper perspective towards reality, this is concluded to be an overall phenomenon which is represented as on-going facts.

Coming now to the analysis of reality, the most prominent Greek philosopher Plato significantly deepened the issues and in his rhetoric came to specific, if not revolutionary conclusions.

Plato uses the dialectic of simulacra in his theories to depict the art of reasoning about reality. In his work “The Republic” he projects a sophisticated vision of “three beds”, of three elementals, resembling the conditions and state of existence in reality. Plato extrapolates the fact of an ultimate state of being in its pure form, thus “the first bed” is hinged upon the notion created by God, a thing clear in its construct, unimpaired and flawless, only shaped by absolute. There is only one notion, “one bed” existing in nature, with no probability of appearance of any other. Even though “any others” exist, they are mere replicas of the first creation. God is the primal “creator” or “inventor” in nature. So is the carpenter. Although as ingenious and skilled he may be in his cognitive perfection, he cannot profess “the first bed” as it is truly crafted by God. He may imitate, or even better to describe it as to simulate in order to project “the second bed”, which genuinely is a replica. Nevertheless, the carpenter attempts to recreate the truth embedded in God’s idea/creation, and struggles to attain as detailed “thing”, accordingly to original. “The third bed” is the semblance of art, it is where the artistic simulacrum is constructed by the painter/artist, and the same construct becomes notably distinct from God’s and carpenter’s creations. Disdained of any truth claims imitates the notion only by appearance and somewhat false imagery, deluding and pretending to be true. Plato names the painter, the imitator, “and therefore, like all other imitators, he is thrice

removed [...] from the truth.” It is where the vision of a specific notion is embroiled into the painter’s perspective, reaching for and only enhancing part of it, consequently disguising truth through prism of artistic claims, and the same implementing falsity. The object itself may be observed and interpreted from different viewpoints, and what Plato argues, brings only “apparent” differentiations. (459-461) No matter how skilled the painter is, absolutely imitates and partially projects simulation that hinders revealing truth, mesmerising and leaving audience in bewilderment at the same time. Beneath the layer of appearance lies what a one would call reality; and that reality, as it may be concluded, is only to be unravelled by the God himself.

As a way of complement to symbolism of three beds, it is vital to review the notion of the Platonian den, resembling the state of awareness and enlightenment of human kind. The den is inhabited by people, who are not able to move around it, due to the fact that they are chained to its walls, and the same, their movement capabilities are limited only to the minimum, thus they may only observe the surroundings, assessing and interpreting facts only on the basis of mere shadows cast on the wall. It's the only indirect medium of one way communication with outside world (reality), providing hazy and stupefying information or giving no information at all. Nevertheless, it is proving only the fact of existence of more than just the den and its inhabitants. It derives obvious implication. Any theories related to reality and formulated by people living in the den lead to objective illusion and further enigma. Therefore, these theories may appear inaccurate, misleading or even untrue. Plato inarguably attempts to ground philosophical tenets which assume that it is impossible to describe reality when cognitive conditions and perception possibilities are compromised.

In “Sophist”, Plato intertwines a specified distinction into his philosophical dispute, somewhat distinguishing two kinds of image-making, “the art of making likeness” and “the art of making appearances.” The carpenter in his sincere ingenuity struggles to reproduce, to recreate, the likeness of a notion, not imitating, but slavishly copying the original in its details and features. He prudently attempts to envelop his work in veils of truth, of reality. This is the Platonian art of making-likeness, devoid of any elements prone to twist its perfection. Contrary to the point presented, the imitation commences not at pure, earnest reproduction, but at delusion of appearance. The imitator, let it be the artist, directs himself to be the one that tries to conceive the beauty in his work, and he is not absorbed by displaying the precision of reality, he is after another precision, indulged in appealing appearance of a notion. The artistic genius of the imitator is submerged, nevertheless, Plato resurfaces it by claiming that “for artists were to give the true proportions of their fair works, the upper part, which is farther off, would appear to be out of proportion in comparison with the lower, which is nearer; and so they give up the truth in their images and make

only the proportions which appear to be beautiful, disregarding the real ones.” (p.110) Furthermore, Plato trespasses the field of a sort of contradictory equation by raising the question of “not being”. He himself is absolutely convinced that this inquiry may lead him to vicious circle of non-argumentative dispute, bringing no answers. In his inclination to resolve the query he states: “for how a thing can appear and seem, or how a man can say a thing which is not true, has always been and still remains perplexing question.” (p.112) Along the current of his thoughts, he stumbles upon the notion of an “image”, simplified to the idea of resemblance of a true thing. The image is not true, and Plato unequivocally states that the condition in which “not being” is involved, *de facto* exists. Therefore, a thing which is not true is interwoven into complex structure of reality; a non-existent element complements this reality in reciprocal fashion.

Surely Plato delivered a sort of dialectic, or rather a spot from which reality in its existence and non-existence may be observed. Maybe he put a specific philosophical tool by which real can be measured. Nonetheless, to conclude and summarise his observation is quite unimaginable or inappropriate, due to the fact that he himself conducted an attempt to address the underlying issues of reality, and also tried to hinder the perpetuation of the notion as “untouchable” in philosophical terms; however, he himself doubtfully acknowledges certainty, or uncertainty of his findings. The further implication from the tenets of his philosophical framework leads to basic assertion of existence of simulacrum, constructed in deliberate manner, or even created from the mere incapability of human cognition to undisguise truth in the face of reality.

Similarly, a philosopher Jean Baudrillard weaves his own set of beliefs pinned to the perplexing notion of simulacra, projecting the notion in rather enigmatic manner as Plato did. In his opinion the obsolete reality and its prerequisite principles have met a sort of realistic alteration, a sort of shift what belongs to the field of his study in “The Perfect Crime”. The pivotal question and key to his philosophical research is determined by two questions, being surprisingly contradictory towards each other. The first concerns the state of existence of notions in reality, of their values and truth, inquiring how they exist. It is the question of the past times that used to be asked. However, contemporary question is to ponder the non-existence of notions, attempting to define illusory state of being. The emphasis is put on this “illusoriness” within the materiality of things: “The absence of things from themselves, the fact that they do not take place though they appear to do so, the fact that everything withdraws behind its own appearance and is, therefore, never identical with itself, is the material illusion of the world.”(1996: 2) The philosopher points out to something new emerging from the dust of the philosophical diaspora, he beckons to scrutinise the notion of false reality, the reality that became, as he calls it, the “hyperreal”.

Baudrillard acknowledges inclinations that are true for reality, mainly of the flexibility and

eligibility by which it's undefined materia is susceptible to any theories, especially in technological and philosophical terms. He declares that it is the image that professes the immersion of reality; it is technology that cleaves the real. Images, for Baudrillard, now acquire more than before, they don't appear as mere resemblances of real anymore, but artifice it, and they possess the quality to simulate reality in its projection. Technology avails to be the catalyst for twisting reality into shape of "derealisation" or rather "hyperrealisation". Baudrillard proclaims that "This is what we do with the problem of the truth or reality of this world: we have resolved it by technical simulation, and by creating a profusion of images in which there is nothing to see." (1996: 6) The reality is burdened under layers of technological advancement. The imprint of such tendency is to be seen in the activity of media sphere by the embodiment of virtual technology, HD technology, the tendency or drive to make what a one sees more realistic than it sincerely is. In his trail of thoughts, Arthur C. Clarke's science fiction novel⁴ as an example perfectly portrays the issue, by description of a world where altering reality with virtuality accelerates the realisation of this reality; and the same makes reality non-existent. (1996: 25) Technology enables plethora of possibilities to discover reality, makes its existence and non-existence possible at the same time; exhausting possibilities and shrinking the world in swift rapidity. It signifies and mirrors the inevitable process of commencing simulations, building up of simulacras in a one's, from now on elusive reality. This is the step further into realisation for human kind and the step further from reality for Baudrillard. This is the commencement of hyperrealisation.

Baudrillard in his testimony projects the vision of reality that is structured on simulacras and revolves around reality, illusionary in its construct. For Baudrillard illusion is the appearance, it is de facto reality that possesses the quality to exist and non-exist simultaneously, "The world exists only through this definitive illusion which is that of a play of appearances – the very site of the unceasing disappearance of all meaning and all finality." (1996: 8) As the previously mentioned philosopher Plato, Baudrillard realises the God as the unequivocal element for reality's existence, and rather in contrary formulation to Plato's proclamation (where the God is in the provenance of reality), he remarks Him as the final and ultimate answer, as the explicit and firm parallel to reality by stating "It is God who presides over this dissolution of the world as illusion and its resurrection as simulacrum and virtual reality, at the end of a process of extenuation of all its possibilities by the real. It is God who presides over the unconditional realization of the world and its final illusion. God is never at the origin, but always at the end." (1996: 8)

4 In Arthur C. Clarke's "Nine Billion Names of God" Tibetan monks apply computer technology to finish their work connected with handwriting transcription of God's names. The finish of their job would commence the end of the world.

In this rather succinct emphasis of philosophical mind-sets addressed towards reality, another paramount matter, seemingly unobtrusive, needs to be taken into consideration. That is contextual representation of reality which is undoubtedly crucial in identification, interpretation and ultimately impacts the perceptive prerogatives of cognition processes.

On the basis of contextuality, a one decodes imagery, weaves it into coherent and intelligible message, projecting a specific vision of a subject in a one's mind. Thus, the perception of reality is not merely a question of cognition but namely, the question of its interpretation. By interpreting facts a one discovers reality consequently addresses, communicates, envisages it and names it through provided sources of information and channels of communication. The interpretation conceals more than mere standalone process and direct one-way communication, it entails elements that coincide and reinforce or disengage elements in presenting reality, and simultaneously constructing it. As the paper strictly addresses the notion of documentary imagery, basic communication model, presented by Roman Jakobson, may illustrate the issue:

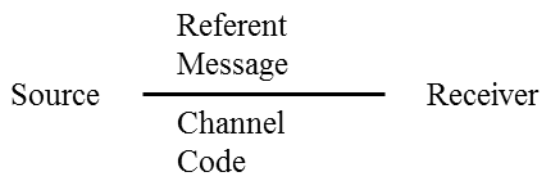


Figure 1. Roman Jakobson's model of communication (adapted from Grzegorzczkova 1991: 13, translation is mine).

It is a universalistic model, applicable to each mean of communication. The whole process of communication is not to be issued in the paper, whereas the essence of the analysis taken from linguistic viewpoint encompasses only a specific element to be scrutinised. The “referent” element corresponds with the contextual function entailed into the process of decoding, identifying reality. The image of reality that is projected in a one's mind is based on this pivotal function. The contextual knowledge implemented in the process, figures as a layer, categorising reality, displaying only its part, being responsible for reality's appearance or disappearance, as Baudrillard would suggest. The interpretation selects the criteria for its existence.

An infamous theoretician and writer Umberto Eco, in his book “Interpretation and overinterpretation” provided an in-depth study on how the textual meaning may be interpreted. Documentary imagery operates within a variety of texts and embraces intertextuality. Thus, numerous possibilities to interpret reality conveyed within these texts are substantial. Let assume that a symbolic notion, image, object, element existing in reality, and possessing a specific representation within this reality, is labelled as a “text”; basing on such assumption Eco convinces that a “text” may carry multiple, unlimited number of interpretations; however, he also points out that such interpretations are still susceptible to specific rules of their conduct. (23-24: 2004) It is the

exposition of critical elements within a text; it is the revelation of true intention of the author, so called the *intentio auctoris*, then intention of the reader – *intentio lectoris*, and lastly, *intentio operis* which means the intention of the text. (25: 2004) Nonetheless, Eco remarks that other theorists adhere to other paradigms among which tendency to claim that “the only reliable reading of a text is misreading” became popular. In this case, “misinterpretation” is the exact word to paraphrase the statement. This strong assertion somewhat connotes with “falsity”, something opposite to “truth”, “authenticity” or genuine sense of a text, of its true representation in reality. The statement provided by Eco is consequently followed by the implication suggesting that in order to declare a text's existence it is “given by the chain of responses it elicits, and that [...] a text is only a picnic where the author brings the words and the readers bring the sense.” (2004: 24) If a one steps further into Eco's reasoning, may find out rather exorbitant concept, providing two “interpretative attitudes” which would recognise “a text as world or the world as a text.” This is where Eco beckons his current of thoughts to Plato and other antic philosophers, plunging into notions of linear causality lying in fundamentals of existence of reality. Instantly, to simplify such thought, a one may imagine a cause that drives to further causes, a one point goes to another and it cannot avail its route. The representation of the reality is a “unilinear chain” of causes. Eco makes a rather deep leap into depths and principles of logic. (2004: 27) Following the provided paradigm, he professes secrets and their revelations as an obvious non-obscurity, thus one secret leads to another, and there is no “ultimate truth”, no end to everlasting conundrum. (2004: 35) However, similarities, though seemingly distinct, are based on a similar mechanism. Eco claims that “everytime one thinks to have discovered a similarity, it will to point to another similarity, in an endless progress.” (2004: 37) In a natural manner a one enters a dimension of intertextuality by revealing and acknowledging similarities in representations. Leaving aside cognitive sciences, it is crucial to point out that interpretation of reality bases on such concept, hugely impacting interpretative process. Thus, a one may assume that contextual meaning depends on the context; this is in fact the knowledge and background of the interpreter, receiver. Eco notices a conspicuous element in here that binds together contextual knowledge that mediates in-between hypotheses formulated about reality. For him these are “evidences”, standing as points in a text, reaching and pointing out to another; and together constructing an intelligible message, a way in which reality is read. Instantly, Eco remarks that these may be objects at a crime scene through which during a process of logical reasoning the whole chronology of events in a felony would be revealed. For Eco “the evidence is considered as a sign of something else on three conditions: that it cannot be explained more economically; that it points to a single cause (or a limited class of possible causes) and not to indeterminate number of dissimilar causes; and that it fits in with the other evidence.” (2004: 49) Furthermore, the reading of

a text is entangled into more complexities which include social patterns, the specific system of “interactions” within society, the linguistic heritage and rituals, as Eco explains. According to such principles the primal *intentio lectoris* becomes not the priority in interpreting but the whole social construct that a one reckons.

The method introduced by Eco addresses the issue of reality; it is an exponential actor that goes beyond the boundaries and operates a step further in everlasting debate about representation of reality. It provides insight how a multitude number of elements are included into interpretative attitudes, the paradigms in which reality is perceived, and also how it cleaves the real. The precinct in which the Eco’s approach lies is endlessly huge. Thus, it seems impossible to invent an equation or formula that would provide ultimate solution, a solid framework on which theoreticians could implement their knowledge. Nevertheless, Eco attempts to convince that there are major rules applicable to conduct successful interpretation of a text, to find authentic *intentio lectoris*, and distinguish *intentio operis*, although these terms seem too broad and tend to focus on general categories in which he operates.

A profound work of Ludwig Wittgenstein “*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*” may somewhat appear supplementary to Eco’s findings. The theoretician’s philosophical attempt is a paramount description of the world/reality manifestation and its logical assumptions, within objects congruent relations or interactions. Wittgenstein in the very beginning of his book states, “The world is everything that is the case. The world is totality of facts, not of things [...] is determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts. For the totality of facts determines both what is the case, and also all that is not the case.”⁵(2012: 11) In the quoted passage the word “case” represents a notion, an object, and reality’s manifestation which is described by the “facts”. A one understands “facts” as factors or knowledge that defines or rather constructs/defines reality. A one does not possess the whole knowledge about necessary facts to perceive truth, completeness of a case, notion or object. It is possible to describe or name a case only on the basis of accumulated facts, contextual knowledge that a one possesses. Having the required knowledge means the ability to read presented reality in a proper way. Wittgenstein also remarks that an object may not exist beyond its context. By this he means: “Just as we cannot think of spatial objects at all apart from space, or temporal objects apart from time, so we cannot think of any object apart from the possibility of its connexion with other things. If I can think of an object in the context of an atomic fact, I cannot think of it apart from the possibility of this context.” (2012: 12) The presented reality cannot convey any meaning without its proper context, and preserve logical consistency. Eco presented a similar

5 Translation by Ogden.

analogy in his theories, emphasising the importance of context in order to enable reality to interpret, to make it possible to exist. In relation to recorded reality, which means a picture or a film, Wittgenstein makes an assumption that “we make to ourselves picture of facts. The picture presents the facts in logical space, the existence and non-existence of atomic facts.” And significantly, “the picture is a model of reality.” (2012: 16) According to Wittgenstein, a picture is a phenomenon that links with reality as a fact, and elements in a picture stand as objects within this reality. However, a picture may portray the existence or non-existence of a fact which is ultimately dependent on its form of representation. Thus, in its representation it is able to embrace falsity or truth, as Wittgenstein explains: “The picture depicts reality by representing a possibility of the existence and non-existence of atomic facts.” And, “the picture agrees with reality or not; it is right or wrong, true or false.” (2012: 18) For Wittgenstein a thought is claimed to be a representation of facts, a logical picture of reality; and consequently this claim is ensued by a statement “the totality of true thoughts is a picture of the world.” (2012: 19) Following his reasoning, a one may make a rather bold statement that reality consists of all logical thoughts, and pictures are in fact representations/thoughts about reality.

Wittgenstein, undeniably, excavated the notion of reality in wider proportions and by his logical claims attempted to grasp the general overview of the issue portraying the image of reality in which thoughts/facts play the role of fundamental material. The stream of arguments he invokes, aligned as logical equations, define the problematic notion almost mathematically, and they seem to project the vision of reality consistently, thus successfully, being scientific evidence which in a legitimate way claims the real.

The presented, rather concise, framework of philosophical mind-sets towards reality, enable to make a specific proclamation, or somewhat an assumption that reality is a multi-layered construct, of a high density of perplexed notions, which de facto professes the unified vision of reality. Each above mentioned philosopher addressed the issue sometimes in almost absolutely different way and through own self-categorised symbolism, nonetheless, these apparently abstract tenets manage to reach truce. It is knowledge which is the catalyst for reality. It may be a matter of a social structure and interactions within it, but definitely it commences in the question of corresponding knowledge. It has its semblance in each layer of reality's representation. To perceive reality, is to perceive its each layer adequately to possessed knowledge. Each layer enables to see the truth underlying representations. If a one perceives only part of them; may not see the authentic, genuine image of reality, thus sees only the semblance, the simulacrum, as the imitator in Plato's republic, portraying the statue not in its true proportions, the statue only appears to be true, truly it's not. Instantly, a one can imagine a picture in which separate elements were drawn with transparent

illuminating colours unidentifiable to human perception and only by using specific instrumentals a one is enabled to decipher and unravel the mystery, the true representation of the picture, not readable to human cognitive abilities. A one discovers reality with appropriately created devices where human senses are compromised. This is where Eco speculated about interpretation, this is where evidences match together in order to reveal truth; and the same, as Wittgenstein treats about atomic facts which constitute the case. Not knowing all facts or evidences disables the possibility to see the case, or enables the possibility to perceive it partially, enabling for creation of simulacrum. Such occurrence is the birth of falsity, and the cradle for simulacrum.

In author's opinion, the contemporary trends appearing in scholarly legacy failed to trace and discontinue solving the clutter and haziness embraced in the notion of reality. Furthermore, in sort of disregarding manner towards the reality itself, the emphasis is put on unveiling the process of creation of reality and building up of mere simulacras. A one may find many answers on to how the reality is being and constructed (falsified), but has no explanations as to how the real can be observed and measured in its essence and purity.

Fundamentals of documentary theory

"Documentary", a derivative of contemporary "document", was originated and used by Scottish documentarist John Grierson during 1920's. De facto the genesis of the word is deeply rooted in late Middle Ages when in English language word "muniment" was altered by term "document", and the same has encapsulated words like brief, letter, memorandum, etc. Brian Winston clarifies the meaning of "document" as "something, written, inscribed, etc., which furnishes evidence or information." (2008: 14) Consequently, he adds, "the contemporary use of 'document' still carries with it the connotation of evidence." Therefore, for "documentary" it laid the ideological basis. Grierson, however, might have been influenced by other term widely used by French critics "documentaire", which meant, as Winston proves, "serious expedition films, travelogues." (2008: 16) As the history shows, the term coined by Grierson let a hint of confusion into the discourse and ignited disputes which consequently ended up in tries to re-define and re-name the genre. A famous Polish theoretician Mirosław Przyłipiak concluded that all such attempts appeared to be failures or half-successful efforts. Instantly, he (2000: 8) exemplifies that coining of term "non-fiction" for documentary in 60's and 70's, generally places the genre in the same category as fictional texts and deprives its characteristic claims to represent reality. The word "documentary" itself was ascribed to the genre when Grierson wrote about Robert Flaherty's film that it holds "documentary value".⁶ The

6 Grierson wrote about Robert Flaherty's *Moana* in 1926, the documentary relates to young Polynesians and their way

Oxford dictionary provides such definition of the word “documentary”, “giving a record of or report on the facts about sth, especially by using pictures, recordings, etc. of people involved.”

The fundamentals that constitute classic theory of documentary films are inseparably defined according to principles of John Grierson (and British documentary movement) who described the phenomenon as “creative treatment of actuality” in 1920’s. However, Winston (2008: 16) explains, that Grierson never deepened the philosophical aspects of the definition what subsequently brought confusion as to how interpret it. Grierson never perceived himself as a theoretician but an activist in the field of filmmaking.⁷ Essentially, “creative treatment” corresponds with image-making and “actuality” means pre-existing reality.

On the basis of elemental parts of the definition many issues concerning documentary genre are addressed in order to answer profound questions of artistic, scientific claims and authenticity aspects. These issues of documentary boundaries needed to be disentangled and determined in order to address “journalistic/ scientific and (contradictory) artistic” claims. Winston (2008: 9) explains, “as a result, the documentary, unclear as to its legitimations and confused as to its *raison d’être*, is not in a good position to counter current doubts as to its authenticity.”

In evaluation of the Griersonian definition “creative treatment of actuality”, the tradition of realist documentaries had been the core concept of the theory; Winston supports this statement by claiming that “[...] realist documentaries constitute the dominant tradition, not just in the United Kingdom and North America but also in the rest of Western Europe and all other parts where Griersonian realists trained local film makers.” (2008: 10) Grierson stressed that documentaries should focus on “the affairs of our time” and acknowledged other theories like Paul Rotha's statement that “above all, documentary must reflect the problems and realities of the present echo the injunction of the realists [...]” (2008: 33) In his opinion film (documentary) may not be understood as mimesis of reality, as Bolesław Matuszewski and Edward Curtis suggested, but interpretation of reality. (15: 2008) Nevertheless, Curtis also emphasises the necessity to adhere to convey authenticity, “the greatest care must be exercised that the thought conveyed be true to the subject, the ceremony be correctly rendered [...]” (12:2008) On such basis, the Griersonian definition seems to be more comprehensible, however, to fully understand Grierson’s vision, separate elements enclosed in it need to be separately pondered.

Grierson perceived documentary as a genre related to art form what simultaneously, made a documentarist an artist. The first component of his definition “creative” was strictly addressed to

of living.

7 He propagated documentary genre through its educational aspects in society.

this issue. He understood his concept on completely binary opposition what he meant by “shapeless reproduction”, a material “produced mechanically by camera.” Winston states that “dominant opinion throughout the heyday of the Griersonian documentary had the fiction film maker becoming an artist by struggling against and overcoming the ‘shapeless reproduction’ [...]” (23: 2008) The artist turns the film production into piece of art. At the beginning of the twentieth century, documentarists followed the current of thought popular among film makers that ultimate product of their work is art. It is a mean through which they explore and interpret reality. Winston proves this by quoting Basil Wright, a documentary filmmaker, “I regard the film as an art. I don't pretend that any film I am going to make is a work of art – though I always hope something of the sort will turn up.” (2008: 26) Przybyszewski (2000:169) mentions that the concept of art in documentary filmmaking evolved to wider diaspora, due to Siegfried Kracauer's deductions, which pointed out that the real art in documentary films, is pure mimicry of reality, not any subjective artism itself. Such statement appeared to be an ignition point in argument with theoreticians who were attempting to define artistic principles in documentaries. Until 40's intellectual elites disclaimed documentary genre as art and tended to perceive it as shapeless reproduction. Mirosław Przyłipiak (2000: 182) ponders that artistic claims were automatically attributed to documentary films due to usual connections of their creators with artistic movements, at the beginning of the twentieth century. Griersonian documentarists were inclined to take artistic perspective; by “creative” they meant process in which technical, even mechanical, aspects were involved, shutter, lens, appropriate lighting, the whole equipment, its acute artistic usage was crucial in order to document reality. “The concept of the artistic was at work everywhere in documentary production, starting with ‘the way camera is used’ [...]”, Winston suggests and remarks that Grierson also put emphasis on post-production what he meant by editing as “imaginative work”. Similar attitude takes Paul Rotha (cited by Winston): “[...] the primary task of film creation lies in the physical and mental stimuli which can be produced by the factor of editing. The way in which the camera is used, its many movements and angles of vision in relation to the object being photographed, the speed at which it reproduces actions and the very appearance of things and persons before it, are governed by the many ways in which editing is fulfilled.” (2008: 30) However, Przyłipiak argues that Siegfried Kracauer, a German writer, and Griersonian documentarists put a lot of effort to avoid any “shapeless reproduction” and purely treated themselves as artists.

“Treatment” in the sense of Grierson's definition of documentary, connotes with sort of framework related to process of documentary filmmaking, a sort of perspective taken towards reality to convey it in a proper documentary way. This perspective for Grierson is another widely used word among filmmakers “dramatisation”. Winston defines it as “[...] documentarists' desire

and willingness to use actuality material to create a dramatic narrative.” Grierson observed a specific phenomenon in mass communication at that time, especially in journalism, which manifested itself in dramatic form of stories. That included rich usage of active verbs which fostered drama along story lines. Grierson concluded, “All I did in my theory of documentary film was to transfer that concept to film-making, and declare that in the actual world of our observation there was always a dramatic form to be found.” (2008: 107) Robert Joseph Flaherty and his work had a strong impact on Grierson’s attitude towards “treatment”. Flaherty adopted “dramatisation” at the point of post-production, although he adhered to the principles of structuration of narrative; he implemented some parts of fiction in it. Winston discusses that “[...] he dramatised his material in the cutting room and on the titling bench [...] Understanding not just how to manipulate his ‘everyday’ material but also what dramatic necessity imposed on that is the essence of Flaherty's contribution.” (2008: 111) This was for Grierson a crucial component, his “dramatisation” that had to be involved in documentary filmmaking. Later documentarists, like Leni Riefenstahl in documentaries about Hitler, applied such dramatisation to evoke a specific effect: “[...] Riefenstahl uses the micro-editing techniques to create overall an edited representation of the event for the purposes of telling the story of the conference (in which Hitler took part – P. Š). The sequences are assembled according to perceived dramatic needs, not, as they might have easily been, according to the actual order in which they occurred.” then he adds, “That is not the order in which these events occurred proves nothing more than that Riefenstahl was obedient to the need for ‘treatment’.” (2008: 120) According to Grierson and Flaherty, that is what “treatment” or “dramatisation” involves. Prima facie, it may seem that definition only relates to the mean of “dramatisation” which in fact is intervention into chronology of documented events, into narrative of a document. For Flaherty, a perfect template for narrative was journey which involved such components as “beginning”, “the end” and “key events in the middle.” As Winston puts it, “This should not surprise. Journeys and narratives go together: “*To depart/ to travel/ to arrive/ to stay*: the journey is saturated.” (2008: 113) Narrative, along with dramatisation, constitute “the spine” for Griersonian “treatment”, nevertheless, Winston in his dispute about narrativisation argues that even non-narrative documentaries are possible to be made and involve some elements of fiction, although it may undermine their authenticity. He clarifies “That a documentary looks for the equivalence of the narrative effects of the fiction film does not invalidate it as documentary. If narrative is unavoidable, it cannot of itself subvert truth claims because it is not limited to fiction.”(2008: 127) Furthermore, narrative involves a crucial aspect which is inevitable in documentary production; that is coverage. Griersonians and classics applied two major techniques in obtaining coverage (material that is later adapted to editing process) through intervention and reconstruction. Winston describes that Grierson

used reconstruction as a basis in production *Drifters* (1929) in which the protagonists were documented in artificial and reconstructed conditions. (2008: 128) The notion of “treatment” is entailed into narrative, dramatisation and coverage, which became crucial components of Griersonian documentary school.

In the Griersonian definition third aspect, “actuality” is defined by such vital components as evidence and camera apparatus, a tool of representation, on the ground of law concepts. The definition needed to be balanced, especially when “creative” and “treatment” do not relate strictly to what defines “document”. Winston claims that “[...] beyond art, beyond drama, the documentary is also evidentiary, scientific.” (2008: 133) The word “evidence” referring to “actuality”, constitutes a sort of synecdoche that makes the definition concise and logic in its form. The “evidence” has to be provided and camera apparatus is the necessary tool to make it possible. “There are two main reasons for this: first, the long history of pictorial representation as a mode of scientific evidence, [...] and the second, the tendency of modern science to produce data via instruments of inscription [...]” (Winston 2008: 133) For documentarists camera brought science into their scope and allowed to conduct “documentary investigation”, the search for pure scientific evidences of reality. Gathered data, or representations in camera, are transferred onto screen which displays evidences, as Winston suggests, “Watching ‘actuality’ on the screen is like watching the needles dance on the physiograph: the apparatus becomes transparent; the documentary becomes scientific inscription – evidence.” (2008: 140). However, “law” determines in fact the authenticity of “evidence” and “the law provides the general cultural concept of evidence into which science and documentary’s truth claims in general both fit.” (2008: 142) This concept involves a specific judgement to be made on the basis of evidence, in this case, delivered by camera. As almost as in imaginary court, the “case” requires jurors, which means audience that judges the authenticity of a documentary. Winston supports this statement by claiming that “Documentary mimesis is grounded in assumptions about the nature of evidence that comes from using the camera as a scientific instrument. The camera’s scientific status is the bedrock upon which the Griersonian documentary’s truth claim must rest or collapse; but the law interposes itself to offer a cultural context in which this audience as jury can operate – and that context has its limitations.” (2008: 143) Legal concepts set the boundaries to scientific claims and limited any artistic “treatment” aspects that would counter-act documentaries’ authenticity, evidence. Winston (2008:144) points out that the tendency to avoid shapeless reproduction generates distance to evidence and yields fiction. Hypothetically, the pure concept of “actuality” was vaguely touched, or rather the verge of it, by filmmakers of Cinema Direct, who had taken the idea of literally conveying the feeling of “being there”, as the main concept of their work; and therefore, idealistically, coming closer to Kracauer’s vision of art non-interventionism and no

mediation between the subject and filmmaker constituted the fundamentals in Cinema Direct style of filmmaking. Their aim was to reach “actuality” in its full scope. “It is the experimental method and the place of the camera as scientific instrument that provides the context in which the filmmaker/observer [...] emerges.” Winston justifies. (2008: 150) In “Crafting Truth”, a book about meaning and form in documentary, Louise Spence and Vinicius Navarro (2011: 2) claim that to distinguish documentary from fiction, it is essential to speak about it through context of “actuality”. They assume: “‘Actuality’ is infinite and can never be wholly represented. Any representation is selective view of the world. All representations of actuality must choose which aspects to include and which to leave out. Decisions are made to emphasise one element and to downplay others, to assert some truths and to ignore others. First the documentary maker has to determine what actuality is worth exploring. Then appear other questions. Which aspects are considered important and which are considered unnecessary? Whose viewpoint on that actuality will we be getting?” Answering these questions would narrow the scope of defining perspective on “actuality”. The term “actuality” persists to be a misleading and hazy concept for filmmakers and theorists; nevertheless, its main role is ascribed to the context and camera as an instrument for registering reality. It constitutes the most solid foundation for the Griersonian “creative treatment of actuality”.

During post-Griersonian phase the next generation of filmmakers found themselves inconvenient with heritage of Griersonian documentarists. Winston (2008: 221) explains that the elusive claim of artistic and scientific aspects left filmmakers in tentative attitude towards Griersonian works because of failures on the ground of conveying meaning. Even the Griersonians themselves in the 30’s argued that “the father” of documentary burdened them with difficulty in relation to the theoretical fundamentals, especially word “documentary” evoked in Griersonians ambiguous connotations. Presently, Griersonian values in documentaries are undergoing profound transformation or even are said to be outmoded as Winston proves.



Figure 2. John Grierson (photography: The Grierson Trust, <http://www.griersontrust.org/john-grierson.html>).

The restless search for precise definition of documentary genre (since its origins) has driven to confusion among filmmakers' environments and many theorists who employed their own definitions. Until 40's the Griersonian "creative treatment of actuality" chiefly maintained its position as determining definition of documentary films, however it failed to answer profound questions concerning the genre. In constant strain to define documentary The World Documentary Association held a conference in Prague (1948) and laboured such definition, as quoted by Winston (2008: 129): Documentary is:

"All methods of recording on celluloid any aspect of reality interpreted either by factual shooting or by *sincere and justifiable reconstruction*, so as to appeal either to reason or emotion, for the purpose of stimulating the desire for, and the widening of human knowledge and understanding, and of truthfully posing problems and their solutions in the sphere of economics, culture and human relations."

Przylipiak (2000: 14) ponders Andrzej Kołodyński's critique which assumes that Prague definition appears to be in some aspects imprecise, namely its assumptions are too general and may be easily fitted to any realistic films, and simultaneously, seem to be overly narrow. Instantly, it can be seen in the phrase "[...] the sphere of economics, culture and human relations" which focuses on given aspects as the only scope of documentary films' interest. Some documentary productions, as Kołodyński argues, proved this phrase to be insufficient.⁸ Paul Rotha, however, had not dismissed Griersonian theories and followed the tradition. Przylipiak cites Rotha's definition which is located under the title "Documentary Film". Rotha claims that documentary is "a usage of film medium to interpret life of people as it really is, through social context." The sociological aspect is emphasised in order to unveil the "the mechanisms that control reality." Rotha was strongly influenced by Marxist theories what resulted in concentration on only sociological aspects.

Similarly to Rotha, Richard Barsam assumes that documentary is a resultant of sociological factors in which public is the protagonist. It may involve various crisis situations and issues concerning realistic events. Barsam emphasises the aspect of non-interventionism into production of documentary, therefore there's no place for any "artificial" narrative elements. Przylipiak (2000: 16) quotes Barsam:

"[...] attempts to recreate the feeling 'of being at the centre of events', at the same time preserving compatibility with current state of affairs. It consists of two or three parts, including introduction and conclusion: and mostly develops from crisis to solution. It is usually black and white, and employs 100-percent recording (realistic or simulated), purposefully written soundtrack for documentary and integrated as a whole. Such film generally lengths 30 mins, but some are shorter, and other possess feature length quality."

However, Bill Nichols, as Przylipiak explains, critiques Barsam's definition. In Barsam's opinion

8 Documentaries like *Microkosmos* (1996) C. Nuridsany, M. Pérennou or *Stan Nieważkości* (1994) M. Drygas

documentary films may possess more parts than given in the definition and comments above mentioned technical aspects as similar to fictional films. Furthermore, he argues that again narrowing documentary to sociological topics seems to be completely imprecise and dismisses subjects beyond this field, for example, in scientific or naturalistic terms. Przylipiak concludes that according to this definition documentaries “are movies presenting people, public affairs, in all their scope.” Both, Nichols and Przylipiak, disagree in relation to narrow perspective taken by Barsam and disdain its principles.

Different attempts, to define documentary genre, are made by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson who in opposition to previous theorists focus on process of production of documentary. What distinguishes non-fictional and fictional films, lies in the concept of control during shots and other key stages in production. As quoted by Przylipiak (2000: 17): Bordwell and Thompson state that “It is usually filmmaker-documentarist who controls some of the elements of pre-production, stage of shot-taking and editing. Some elements (script, rehearsals) may be omitted, and others (lighting, acting) are not really dismissed, but find themselves beyond control.” The definition itself has its origins in Cinema Direct and Richard Leacock’s theories about filmmaking. Leacock claimed that a documentary filmmaker should maintain and achieve high level of naturality of protagonists during production. Moreover, Leacock is certain that “[...] a filmmaker has no less control over material, but differently this control understands.” Przylipiak concurs with Bordwell and Thompson, he states that “at many stages filmmaker gives the voice to reality, does not influence it, nor controls it.”

Attempts to define documentary film were not only conducted through genre’s specific characteristics like its sociological aspects and textual basis, but also through context. Przylipiak (2000: 18) explains that genres are ascribed to specific types of texts by different institutions and organisations. That is why different texts may be addressed to various audiences, and the same, audience knows what to expect. According to Przylipiak, a film becomes “documentary” when it is “signified” with that label by different agendas like media. Przylipiak provides Noel Carroll’s theories which assume that “[...] the ground, to treat a given movie as documentary, is indexing, which means signifying it by proper institutions.” Przylipiak adds that act of indexing can be observed in “magazines devoted to documentary movies, in course books of history of documentary movie, through presentations on various documentary movie festivals [...]” and so on. Nichols also remarks that documentary films are a product of professionals who perceive themselves as documentarists; and belong to some documentarists’ environments which are usually strongly integrated. However, as Przylipiak (2000: 20) observes, any framework of cinematic institutions, in which films are involved cannot determine their principles and characteristics or definition. To

operate within such framework, a specific genre needs to define its boundaries. Documentary may not be signified by any “authority” unless it addresses its principles and meets audience expectations. Therefore, indexing is employed as a tool to indicate “compatibility between textual features and necessary methods of representation.”

A famous Polish documentarist Wojciech Wiszniewski defined documentary on the basis of statement that documentary accurately reflects reality, although his critique is concentrated on the part that it is impossible to be accurate in this process. It is supported by the idea that a one cannot perceive reality in its full representation and the imperfectness of technology makes it impossible. Substantially, he agrees that reality to be perceived only by a one’s subjectivity which is reflected on filming material. Again, as in previous definitions the anthropological aspect is emphasised. Przylipiak cites Wiszniewski’s perspective: “the (documentary) filmmakers’ subject of interest is a man and whole his live. [...] For documentary, in differentiation from fictional cinema, the starting points are really existing people, specific situations; and things. Generally speaking, filmmakers’ subject of interest is people reality, sociological reality.”⁹ (2000: 20) Przylipiak comments that Wiszniewski's theories focuses on the idea that documentary’s aim is to build awareness and to unveil basic principles which rule the world. In his opinion, it fills the definition with crucial element and enriches it in theoretical usefulness.

Mirosław Przylipiak profoundly studied most prominent definitions of influencing filmmakers and theorists. Subsequently, he (2000: 40) developed his own theory which is encapsulated in scrutinised definition:

“Documentary movie is a partly existing as a whole, autonomous audio-visual form, which presents a fragment of entire realm, in which nominal values are equal to source values; in which time-distance between a moment of recording and moment of receiving exists; where accuracy of indexical value of time and space is captured within a frame; where filmmakers do not intervene into reality in front of camera, or intervene, and this fact of intervention is intertwined into documentary narrative; or intervene in order to restore the previous state of reality before a filming crew appeared; or to unleash the true behaviour of filmed people; in which imitates in its structure conventional ways of people of proper reality reordering; where autotelic function, if only exists, may not suppress and dominate instrumental function in relation to production and footage.”

The author regards his concept as a wholly functional body and attempts to address every aspect that appeared problematical or missing in other theories. However, some key elements in the structure of the definition are, if not seemingly abstruse than, unclear. To comprehend his theory completely it is essential to distinguish between two elements: “nominal” and “source” values. By “source” value concerns any realistic person or object that are captured on the camera. Instantly, it

⁹ Translation is mine.

may be a scenography in a film or a city panorama, whereas “nominal” values are also representation of environmental “realia”, however, specifically arranged to the context of ongoing film production, like actors featuring different characters. Moreover, the perplexity of notion of “indexical value of time and space” constitutes a crucial component in the theory. As author (2000: 34) suggests, any applied effects in a production of documentary “deformulate indexical value of time and space in relation to phonographic registrations.” Therefore, to attain unviolated indexical value of time and space, the capturing of sequence within the frame is a necessity, and the usage of special effects within this sequence cannot be allowed. The precedence of intervention with special effects (CGI)¹⁰ may violate the accurate capturing of reality on camera. Similar situation occurs in intricacy of autotelic¹¹ and instrumental function. The latter aspires to expose useful contextual values in a documentary film, sets aims and objectives of the conveyed message; however, autotelic values emphasise the existence of a documentary itself, thus it stresses not the message but production and aesthetic principles. Przylipek at this point refers to the language of visuality and as a result, poetic concept of a film. Understanding above mentioned aspects unveils the thorough examination and study in which Przylipek addressed fundamental concepts which reappear at many stages in attempts to define documentary genre.

The Griersonian thought equivocally laid the foundations for next generations of theoreticians who struggled to determine genre’s boundaries and characteristics. Grierson’s “creative treatment of actuality” appeared to be a starting point, nevertheless, the inventor of the definition never set the ending point for its artistic and truth claims, the same perplexing the subject and bringing unsatisfactory answers to legitimate questions in relation to future perspectives of documentary films. The conference of documentary filmmakers in Prague in 1948, aimed at achieving a common perspective in defining the genre. Subsequently, theoreticians criticised the idea of too narrow perspective taken towards crucial components which distinguished documentary films from fictional films. The main problems that occurred in the process of defining the genre concerned Griersonian legacy which occurred to be insufficient in theoretical terms and unleashed various interpretations. Furthermore, the primal artistic claims, since the beginnings, have brought discord between the accurate representations of reality. Theoreticians struggled to discover the consensus between both aspects, although next generations abandoned the implementation of any artistic concepts into definitions. It resulted in describing the textual form of documentary in sociological terms. Attempts to re-invent documentary characteristics concentrated not on the

10 Computer-generated imagery.

11 “Autotelic” – “(of an activity or work of art) having a purpose or meaning simply by the fact of actually existing, being done, or having been created” definition by Oxford Advance Learner’s Dictionary, 7th Edition.

documentary itself, but on wider context in which the genre could operate; specifically through signifying its legitimacy by different institutions. Such precedence appeared to measure only vague aspects of the genre, and maintained to be only result of the genre's form with no clear boundaries. Documentary genre has been evolving and undergoing transformations since the origins and task to differentiate documentary texts from fictional forms appeared challenging. The constant changing of legitimations and developing technologies obscured the pure form of documentary and confines within the genre.

Traditional documentary modes

Although the complexity and unsatisfactory history in depicting documentary image as a whole, filmmakers and theoreticians distinguished autonomous basic modes of the genre. The attempts to segregate documentary texts have been noted since the origins, and Paul Rotha strictly collaborating with Griersonians pioneered in terms of determining several documentary modes.

Przylipiak (2000: 75) states that Rotha delivered four fundamental branches in genre which initiated particular traditions. The first to be distinguished by Rotha was “naturalistic” (or “romantic”) documentary film. Przylipiak comments that “[...] to naturalistic series belonged films produced in natural outdoor-sceneries, representing man struggle against nature.”¹² An example of such films is Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), presenting a family life in Canadian Arctic. Following mode embodies images of cities, called “realistic”, appears to be the most similar one to the concept of contemporary documentary. Przylipiak mentions that it represented avangarde themes at that time. The series of “cinema chronicles” refers to example of Dziga Vertov's works, Przylipiak explains, like *Kino-pravda* (1920's) or *The Man with the Movie Camera* (1929). And lastly “propaganda” tradition that evolved around soviet and British cinematic legacy in 30's and 40's. Przylipiak enumerates such titles as *Oktyabr* (1928) by Siergiey Eisenstein or Wsiewolod Pudovkin's and Michail Doller's *Konets Sankt-Peterburga* (1927).

A Polish film theorist, Bolesław Michałek shaped two modes: “descriptive, represented by Flaherty and agitative, presented by Joris Ivens.” (Przylipiak, 2000: 75) Both of filmmakers symbolise the whole documentary filmmaking heritage.

However, Carl Plantinga proposed three modes, basing on Bordwell's division employed in Classic Cinema. His first, “formal” mode, performs persuasive and explanatory functions, then comes an observatory one, “open” mode which is characterised by the tendency to evoke open questions and motives; thus to stimulate reflexive thinking and providing no precise solutions to

¹² Translation is mine.

presented issues. The “poetic” mode is said to resemble parametric narrative¹³ which basically imitates patterns seen in structure of poems. Instantly, in case documentary images may unveil text that inflicts the rest of the content like music or narration.

Stella Bruzzi in her book, “New Documentary” (2006: 3) states that “The most influential and widely used writer on documentary has been Bill Nichols.” She also adds that “Nichols has offered the most influential documentary genealogy; there are others, such as Paul Rotha’s early evolution of documentary’ [...] but Nichols’ ‘family tree’ is the one that has stuck, although hybrid, eclectic modern films have begun to undermine his efforts to compartmentalise documentaries.” Definitely, Bill Nichols is the authoritative theorist who has been shaping contemporary documentary theories for over decades. Up to date, Nichols has developed several modes, although they have been undergoing severe critique, they are implemented into theory fundamentals. There can be observed as “six modes of representation”, which as Nichols suggests “function something like sub-genres of the documentary in itself: poetic, expository, participatory, observational, reflexive, performative.” Furthermore, Nichols within the given framework provides legitimations, enabling to set specific boundaries and principles in sub-genres. When applying the modes to identify specific documentaries, intertextuality in contents of documentaries may occur, thus it allows for different texts to overlap, for instance a given film may possess both poetic and expository aspects. According to Nichols, the theoretical basis for the modes dates to 1920’s for expository mode (or 1930’s as Bruzzi suggests); the observational mode to 1960’s; and performative mode to 1980’s-90’s, then poetic and interactive mode in following years. Nichols (2001: 100) claims that “The modes do not represent an evolutionary chain in which later modes demonstrate superiority over earlier ones and vanquish them. Once established through a set of conventions and paradigmatic films, a given mode remains available to all.”

The poetic mode operates as additional source of information manifested in control over time and space in a sequence, concentrating on vivid poetic imagery and rhythmic associations of patterns; attempts to build a specific mood and climate using aesthetic techniques in editing or capturing (taking shots). Nichols presents (2001: 103) the mode as “[...] a way of representing reality in terms of a series of fragments, subjective impressions, incoherent acts, and loose associations.” The conveying alternative or subjective meaning in poetic mode is of greater importance than the narrative itself. The use of the poetic mode may be seen in documentary like Ron Fricke’s *Samsara* (2011).

13 “[...] film’s stylistic system creates patterns distinct from the demands of the syuzhet (edited order of a narrative) system. Film style may be organized and emphasized to a degree that makes it at least equal in importance to syuzhet patterns.”(Bordwell, 1965: 275)

In strong opposition to above mentioned mode, expository mode stresses the rhetorical aspects and direct communication with receiver, through narrative voice. The author (2001: 107) explains: “Expository documentaries rely heavily on an informing logic carried by the spoken word. [...] The commentary is typically presented as distinct from the images of the historical world that accompany it. It serves to organise these images and makes sense of them just as written caption guides our attention and emphasises some of the many meanings and interpretations of a still image.”

The participatory mode regards to aspects of direct observation, it enables for a researcher, filmmaker to participate, experience and engage into a subject’s original environment or habitat. It mainly concentrates on an anthropological or sociological aspects involved in topic. The filmmaker actively exists in the representation captured on material. Nichols comments that “The sense of bodily presence, rather than absence, locates the filmmaker ‘on the scene’. We expect that what we learn will hinge on the nature and quality of the filmmaker and subject rather than on generalisations supported by images illuminating a given perspective.”(2001: 116) The mode is featured in such film like Jon Alpert's *Hard Metals Disease* (1987).

The following mode concerns pure observation and excludes any intervention techniques appearing in pre-production and post-production. The observatory mode addresses typical directives involved in Cinema Direct. A filmmaker only records material and tries to convey the “state of being there”. Nichols (2001: 110) enumerates several features of the mode: “no voice-over commentary, no supplementary music or sound effects, no intertitles, no historical re-enactments, no behaviour repeated for the camera, and not even any interviews.”

The reflexive mode is a deliberate commentary and a way of communicating a situation or an issue which may affect the style of representation. Normally, carried out by a filmmaker to concentrate receiver’s attention on topics referred not to presented world but to analyse and question the documentary itself. Nichols recalls a scene in Vertov’s *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), in which it is shown how editing is performed, making the audience aware of the process.

Lastly, Nichols provides the performative mode as a mean of subjective and even holistic interpretations focused on the most basic and prolific questions in political, moral, sociological or metaphysical terms. It induces a rhetoric that directs logic into process of building awareness and understanding of social mechanisms. For Nichols “performative documentary underscores the complexity of our knowledge of the world emphasizing its subjective and affective dimensions.”(2001: 131) The performative mode is present in many Michael Moore’s productions like *Roger & Me* (1989).

Stella Bruzzi (2006: 3) argues that Nichols providing his six modes of documentary appeared to be inaccurate in their definition. She points out that “his categories are often - and increasingly - defined negatively, that is in terms of what they do *not* as opposed to *do* represent.” The critique is based on the statement which assumes documentary films to be more “complex” and “heterogeneous” in their form, thus Nichols’s diversification is much too simplistic. Bruzzi supports this with a statement that documentaries are somewhat forced to operate within one mode matched to specific characteristics of a film; and the interaction between the modes does not operate effectively. Although, the modes exhibit slight incongruities, they definitely depict the general image and organise the segregation of documentary films.

Table 6.1

Documentary Modes

Chief Characteristics

—Deficiencies

Hollywood fiction [1910s]: fictional narratives of imaginary worlds	—absence of “reality”
Poetic documentary [1920s]: reassemble fragments of the world poetically	—lack of specificity, too abstract
Expository documentary [1920s]: directly address issues in the historical world	—overly didactic
Observational documentary [1960s]: eschew commentary and reenactment; observe things as they happen	—lack of history, context
Participatory documentary [1960s]: interview or interact with subjects; use archival film to retrieve history	—excessive faith in witnesses, naive history, too intrusive
Reflexive documentary [1980s]: question documentary form, defamiliarize the other modes	—too abstract, lose sight of actual issues
Performative documentary [1980s]: stress subjective aspects of a classically objective discourse	—loss of emphasis on objectivity may relegate such films to the avant-garde; “excessive” use of style.

Figure 3. Bill Nichols’s documentary modes “tree” (adapted from Nichols 2001: 138).

Chapter two: The construction of reality

The stages of technological development are inherently embedded into development of documentary film. The beginnings of the genre in the first decades of twentieth century appeared to be a hard task for filmmakers who were restrained due to technological limitations of equipment which specifically impacted the whole framework. Throughout the history, it can be noted that the improvement and modification of cinematic technologies have been adequately influential on ideological aspects and capabilities of documentary, and the way of conveying and perpetuating reality. Nonetheless, first documentary filmmakers tended to refrain from some technological advances.

Technological development in documentary films production and reality

The early years of documentary production burdened filmmakers with several issues which took part in style of capturing reality and formulation of theory basis. Namely, the cinematic industry was under strong influence of Hollywood norms and filmmakers, in this case the documentary Griersonians movement, had to employ techniques which in fact limited the means of capturing reality (scientific and evidentiary claims) and more specifically to concentrate on aesthetic forms. As Winston (2008: 145) stated, “The more they sought to avoid ‘shapeless reproduction’, the further they removed themselves from evidence, observation and science. This did not, though, prevent science from being crucial to their enterprise.” At that time intellectual elites perceived documentary as a non-art form and rather disregarded the genre. Furthermore, the constant evolution of technology in cinematic industry obligated documentarists to transcend the style of capturing reality in its full technological potential. The issue concentrated on the technology to enable sound and involve it into documentary production, the same as happened in fictional cinema. Winston (2008: 144) argues that technology was imposed on documentary production, due to its truth claims and justifying public which started questioning the techniques, especially in terms of interventionism and reconstruction.¹⁴ He claims that “Reconstruction, increasingly commonplace since the coming of sound, was becoming particularly suspect. If what distinguished the documentary was that it offered evidence of the real world, how could such manipulations be justified? More and more it was held that they could not.” However, documentarists had not been

¹⁴ Both terms discussed further in the chapter.

treating technological advances enthusiastically until 40's when due to public expectations had to employ new dimensions. Documentarists' justified their attitude with cameras used by them in 1920's or 30's. The equipment popular among filmmakers at that time was 35 mm cameras which were quite massive and heavy. Therefore, the construction of such gear did not enable documentarists to capture reality without strong interventionism. Winston proves that they did not involve 16 mm into production, as it was seen as amateur standard. He cites (2008: 145) Paul Rotha who depicts the attitude taken towards technological advancement: "[...] synchronised sound and speech obtained simultaneously do not play a large part in documentary production... There is a practical point that we might well remember in this connection – the greater difficulties attending the portability of sound equipment when compared with the compactness of the modern automatic camera. Sound trucks are essentially large and cumbersome objects. They attract attention, disturb the natural characteristics of material being shot and upset the intimacy which the documentarist tries to create between himself and his subject. Mobile sound ...is useful for the gathering of natural wildtracks, in which case it is used separately from the picture camera."



Figure 4. NC Mitchel 35 mm cine camera used by Leacock, designed for studio, production dates: 1933-1954 (adapted from George Eastman House Technology Archive, www.geh.org/fm/precin/htmlsrc5/mm681600001_ful.html).

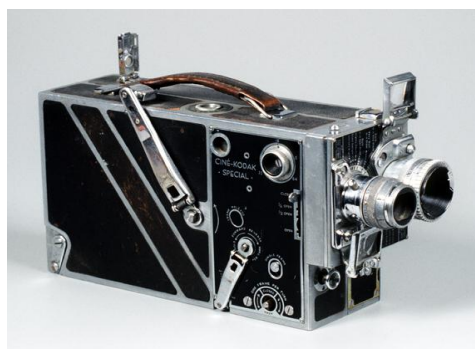


Figure 5. Cine-Kodak special 16 mm, light camera widely used by semi-professionals, production dates 1933-1948 (from George Eastman House Technology Archive, http://www.geh.org/fm/precin/htmlsrc5/mE13000690_ful.html#topofimage).

In the 50's and 60's documentary genre witnessed a revolutionary perspective applied by symbolic persona: Robert Drew and Richard Leacock¹⁵. The founders of Cinema Direct abandoned the principles of traditionalists and sought for a new mean to capture reality and convey the state of “being there”. They resigned from heavy equipment which constrained the possibilities for flexible filming and equipped new prospective light cameras (Eclair NCR or ACL, Filmagnetic or Auricon) and tape-recorders (Perfectone or Nagra) which enabled to synchronise image and sound.



Figure 6. From left: Eclair NPR (Noiseless Portable Reflex) 16 mm camera, used by documentary and news filmmakers. Still perceived as a great camera until nowadays. Eclair ACL (Austin Coma and Jacques Lecoœur) 16 mm camera, the next generation of camera in late 1960's. Occasionally used by professional filmmakers (adapted from Internet Encyclopedia of Cinematographers, <http://www.cinematographers.nl/CAMERAS1.html#npr>).



Figure 7. Perfectone Nagra III, tape-recorder. Specifically manufactured for 16 mm cameras in 1962. Revolutionised sound recording in broadcasting and documentary industry (adapted from <http://www.olderadio.tv/collection/nagra-iii-0019>).

The new cameras and tape-recorders offered no limitations for flexible filming and revolutionised documentary filming production. On such basis Cinema Direct filmmakers applied the ground-breaking ideological principles and presented renewed documentary filmmaking. Winston (2008: 149) describes that “In deploying the new technology, this small group of filmmakers created a furore that paralleled Grierson’s public relations blitz thirty years earlier. The new rhetoric was exciting and uncompromising. It was now possible, at last, to make good on documentary’s scientific/legal promise to put ‘actuality’ on the screen. The equipment was to hand that would allow for reality to be documented in an unmediated fashion [...]”

Since 1960's technological development in filmmaking has stepped up a pace and brought

15 They are perceived as the founders of Cinema Direct.

modifications and innovations to the industry. However, as Przylipiak argues (2000: 209), in the terms of technological advancement theoreticians tend to enthusiastically describe revolution of 60's, but they are not inclined to depict major technological "leaps" that appeared in 80's when new technology in editing and recording started to be available.

Przylipiak points out that improved technology embedded in cameras enabled to register sound and capture image on one handheld. In his (2000: 210) opinion "In-built microphone integrated with camera and high-sensitive magnetic tape, mean that shots may be taken by only one man, without any supporting audio-video crew." Not as it was in previous years when camera and sound equipment were carried separately. It allowed greater flexibility for filmmakers during capturing of reality and was ground-breaking in terms of non-interventionism. The magnetic tape was a breakthrough in material storage terms. Prior to this innovation, filmmakers were using cinema stock which possessed limited properties that could not enable swift editing. Moreover, Przylipiak (2000: 210) claims that cinema stock was expensive material, unlike magnetic tape, and normally was scarcely measured. Factually it meant less storage for materials (a nuisance for filmmakers at the time). The magnetic tape granted a wide palette of possibilities in editing and recording. The material on magnetic tape in camera could be erased and re-recorded at any time, such process had been impossible (e.g. cinema stock tape) until magnetic tape and other media (optical tape and disc)¹⁶ appeared. However, such progress opened possibilities which interfered with principles of intervention in reality. That is to say, during post-production, editing process. Przylipiak (2000: 211) explains the effectiveness of editing, enabled by electronic recording of material. Instantly, he states that soft editing (transgression, cross, fade effects) used in-between scenes and shots are easily applicable on electronic material whereas in case of cinema tape these were usually rough cuts. If cross-fading effects were employed, the material would need undergo a chemical processes in laboratories. Then he adds that new technology, in which cameras mean emblematic aspect, has been "amateurised" by popularisation of such light, compact cameras in digital technology. He perceives the phenomenon as a refreshing air in documentary stages of development. By popularisation he means easy access to equipment and amateur documentary, or in other words, private production. Przylipiak (2000: 211) claims that "Naturally, these recordings are not usually presenting any artistic or even public events. Nonetheless, their presence signifies unbelievable broadening of non-fictional audiovisual forms."

16 Optical media: CD, CD-R, CD-RW, DVD, DVD-R, DVD-RW, etc.



Figure 8. Aaton cameras: I – Penelope hybrid camera 35 mm, possesses film and digital storage, introduced in 2008. II – Penelope digital camera 35 mm, first professional full digital camera, introduced in 2011 (adapted from Production Diary, <http://www.creativeplanetnetwork.com/dv/feature/production-diary-my-2010-omg-spot/16506>).

The digitalisation of cinema and especially documentary form leads to new technological possibilities that have impacted assertions within ideological framework. As Winston (2000: 211) suggests “Electronic technology, particularly in its appearing digital form, may lead to disintegration of the whole fundamental ontology of cinema, the truth philosophy featured by indexical recording of audiovisual forms.” The concern expressed by British theorist refers to mainly the process of post-production, in this case editing, which by provided technology is extremely adaptable. He (2000: 212) explains that captured material transforms into electronic form that can be easily digitally varied, and by such process, reality may become distorted. Therefore, it is possible to create reality simulacrum, visions of reality, but not to “reproduce reality itself.” The issue is argued to be the most problematic and means utmost threat for credibility and legitimacy of documentary genre, and as Winston suggests “the image may be no longer a proof.” Przylipiak points out those opportunities to manipulate and falsify the image are more probable; nevertheless, he adapts a sceptical attitude towards the possibilities. The technological advancement and its outcomes are rather to be perceived as an opportunity, not necessity.

Shift in production of documentary films, CGI (computer-generated imagery)

The evolution of documentary film has witnessed several dynamic changes along its path, and the entrance into digitalisation era appears to be the most intensive in terms of genre’s experience. It is strongly emblematic that the beginning of the twenty-first century occurred as a turning point in non-fictional cinema in terms of technological advancement, ideology and its popularity among fictional genres. The rapid growth in popularity of the genre is caused by forming of other documentary forms in mass media like television and web platforms. Nevertheless, the traditional form of documentary is quite resistant to the changing environment and operates in it quite effectively on different principles though. Winston (2008: 3) claims that “It is hard to see how

Grierson's theoretical foundations for the documentary can survive. Indeed, the collapse of Griersonian theory might be well upon us. Nevertheless, it also becomes possible to envisage a greater proliferation of documentary forms [...] but on a different, post-Griersonian, foundation." In Winston's opinion the focus is different and the "ground" has changed. Instead of "creative treatment of actuality (reality)" is observed a new perspective in which "treatment" is replaced with "creation", the new form of documentary encompasses a ground-breaking ideology, "the creation of reality." Przylipiak (2000: 34) elucidates that usage of special effects (it involves CGI) within a film which aspires to documentary, is against its fundamental normative principles, as it is stated in the definition. In his opinion "Documentary film should not use special effects, because they deform the indexical relation of time and space, and its phonographic registrations."¹⁷



Figure 9. BBC series *Walking With Dinosaurs* (1999), an example of CGI and computer animation documentary, reconstructing prehistoric times (photography: RED, <http://ff0000.com/work/view/walking-dinosaurs/>).

The technological shift, especially in cinema, resulted in entering computer-generated imagery to almost every aspect of production. Hollywood films adapt special effects for a wider scale to make production more appealing, television shows with CGI attempt to convey different meanings to audience, and documentary films employ the technology to enhance narratives. The questioning of the image and the imaged, as Winston ponders, appears to be the issue and consequently it has its impact on audience. He (2008: 9) states that "the camera's capacity to capture the real will not be erased by this, but a far greater sophistication on the part of the audience will be needed to determine documentary's authenticity." Louise Spence and Vinicius Navarro (2011: 16) imagine documentary purely based on CGI images what is unacceptable in ethical terms, however, it is claimed that tendency to produce such documentary films is becoming more common. In their book, for instance, BBC documentary series *Walking With Dinosaurs* (1999) is

¹⁷ Translation is mine.

mentioned in which footage is constructed on CGI imagery to reconstruct prehistoric life. They argue that “Computer-generated images are simulations, not ‘direct’ records of lived reality.” In their opinion the aim of such production is not to deceive audience, but they perceive it as a threatening example of undermining documentary’s truth claims. The theorists state the same questions of images in terms of authenticity: “Can we still talk about authenticity when the image, realistic as it may be, is not physically connected to a referent in the phenomenal world?” (2011: 16) The phenomenon of digital imagery, in Spence and Navarro’s opinion is probable to change the perspective of reality, and bring false identification of signifier and signified into the physical representation. Nonetheless, Spence and Navarro (2011: 208) agree that digital technology enabled filmmakers to discover innovative “shooting techniques” and revolutionised the whole documentary production which, by the theorists, resembles the technological breakthrough in 1960’s, the appearance of Cinema Direct and new technological possibilities. Furthermore, the digital technology embraces wide scope of publication and addressing to mainstream audience. Other theorists like Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight in their book “Faking it”, support the statement by (2001: 24) mentioning that “Media convergence and digitalisation have presented new marketing opportunities for documentary filmmakers, together with the prospect of a global audience.” Moreover, they add that “[...] the concepts of “reality” and “truth”, coupled with new digital technologies that seriously undermine the camera’s ability to record accurately and honestly, have proved to be the latest and most severe challenges for documentary.”

The contemporary technology allowed filmmakers to easily access necessary tools to produce documentary films. However, the term itself “filmmakers” not only encompasses professionals, but also semi-professionals or even amateurs who produce and distribute films using not necessarily expensive equipment; and still capture high quality images and sounds.¹⁸ In order to capture footage, a simple digital camera is only needed and a laptop with specific software. Such equipment is easily affordable for population at a standard level of living. The internet plays crucial role in popularisation of software like various versions of Adobe Photoshop and other image editing programs which allow generating CGI graphics. For instance, video editing is possible via Adobe Premiere Pro and associated programs which allow users to capture, edit and distribute films. In fact, anyone can be involved in film production. It is done on a massive scale using digital and non-digital technologies. Therefore, such situation puts documentary films into new level, where documentaries are produced and popularised more effectively than in other eras. Moreover, the

18 For instance: digital HD cameras, magnetic tape cameras, etc. are available in various versions on the market in low prices.

appearance of web platforms dealing with digital documentaries is a tangible sign that new forms of documentary are in constant development. Instantly, the project Media Storm¹⁹ publicises cinematic narratives from all over the world, and other platforms like Zeega or Korsakow²⁰ which deal with interactive storytelling, a completely different perspective of documenting. The contemporary documentary forms are evolving in fast pace and the genre has stepped into area which lies beyond its traditional legitimacy.

The post-Griersonian phase that is facing contemporary documentary is a natural cause of technological development and shift in ethical aspects. The appearance of new forms has widened documentary legitimations what disintegrated genre's traditional values. Questions of the genre framework must be raised, and filmmakers' attitude towards capturing reality. The thin line lying between fictional and non-fictional films is starting to blur. Increasingly, documentaries are adapting narratives which seem similar to fictional films. Winston (2008: 130) argues that such tendency was noted very early, after the Second World War when filmmakers used influences from fictional cinema especially in terms of narratives and due to technological progress. Nevertheless, the technology may vary, but documentarists' ethical principles may not.

Editing, camerawork and profilmic

The quality of a documentary film includes a few elements that are crucial. These are: filmmakers' experience and perspective, budget of a film, a script and technology, meaning applicable production techniques. The latter category speaks about the way of the process of capturing raw material, its preparation, pre-production and post-production, finally construction of a narrative. This process requires appropriately applied technology at every stage of production. It demands particular attention of filmmakers to fundamental aspects like editing of material, camerawork and necessary organisation of profilmic.

Editing techniques

The essence of a film is a story represented by one coherent narrative which comprises of parts of footage joined together. The process that orders sequences in a logical way is called editing, a stage of post-production. Spence and Navarro (2011: 161) claim that editing "[...] is the positioning of one part of the narrative next to another, the arrangement of story information" or in other words "the placement of one shot or one sequence next to another." At one level editing aims to order a

19 Website: <http://mediastorm.com/>

20 Websites: <http://zeega.com/>; <http://korsakow.org/>

footage to convey a story, present an argument or idea, thus to build communication with audience. Moreover, editing is used as a mean capable to re-establish meanings in reality and carry a specific perspective towards a subject of documentation, therefore an illegitimate tool for manipulation with audio-visual forms.²¹ The theorists (2011: 162) explain: “A filmmaker begins by shooting something concrete, a portion of the physical world. That footage, the raw material, takes on a specific meaning when it is placed in a sequence, as it becomes part of flow of sound and images.” According to Frederick Wiseman (quoted by Spence and Navarro), the distinction between documentary and fictional films is the placement of a script. A fictional film arranges narrative on the basis of a script, whereas a narrative in a documentary film is carried out during production process. Images convey “truth” but “they have no meaning except insofar as you impose as a form on them, and that form is imposed in large measure, of course, in the editing.” The process of a film production encompasses a wide range of capturing material (usually a vast number of filming hours) and then meticulously selected and transformed into feature length or shorter material, depending on documentary sub-genre.

Ordinarily, a documentary narrative becomes an argument, a mean to support a documentarian concept that precedes production, thus footage is to play evidentiary role. Nowadays, the tendency to produce documentaries that support specific claims and present a single perspective is increasingly more common. Instantly, Michael Moore’s documentary *Roger and Me* (1989), introduces a story of director’s town Flint when General Motors shutdown local factories. The narrative is edited in a slight comedy style and exposes the events as a sequence of logical arguments in order to convince audience. However, Spence and Navarro contrast that a narrative may be created during the process of editing, and such example is represented by a documentary by Pare Lorentz, *The River* (1989). The film narrative comprises of footage of nature which later during production (editing) is transposed into story of deteriorating condition of nature. In this case the meaning and scripting is directly applied at the moment of editing. Such tenets of production were employed by Cinema Direct in 1960’s.

In editing filmmakers utilise wide variety of techniques to evoke specific effects and implement meaning into narrative. The specificity of effects draws upon aspects like time and space, enabling to provide and induce continuity editing into narration. Furthermore, the inducement of coherence into narrative is done through sequencing events to achieve smoothness in a scene. Spence and Navarro provide such example; a conversation between two people is captured within different sets of shots and then meticulously edited to create an effect of consistency in

21 For example, media which falsify the image of reality for different purposes (e.g. propaganda).

a scene. First of all, an establishing shot of the world sets the scene and provides any necessary background information. Therefore, the sequence is as follows: the establishing shot of people engaged in conversation (marks the beginning of the scene); then medium shot of both of them subsequently goes to close up shot of framing one of interlocutors. The interlocutor A gives an utterance; next there is a close up shot of the interlocutor B responding to A. Repeatedly, the interlocutor A answering B. The sequence is claimed to be, by Spence and Navarro, basing on similar pattern interweaving into structure a re-establishing shot to maintain viewer's orientation in a scene. The technique reinforces a viewer's feeling of continuity of space and time. Furthermore, they observe that applying shot-reverse-shot formation, apart from continuity, evokes specific result on audience that entails and builds intimacy in communication. The technique itself derives from fiction cinematography and is employed to make non-fiction narratives feasible in conveying the story. Spence and Navarro (2011: 166) assume that "Continuity can be an important part of non-fiction storytelling as well, although we tend to think of documentary as a less controlled representation of socio-historical world. And to create continuity, documentaries often employ many of the same storytelling devices and techniques as fiction filmmaking."



Figure 10. Shot-reverse-shot formation (adapted from <https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/looking-at-women-william-a-wellmans-style-in-frisco-jenny-and-midnight-mary>).

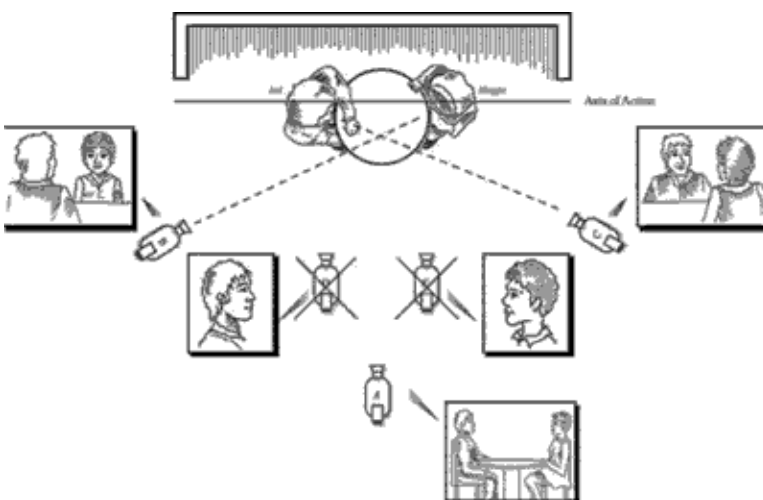


Figure 11. Shot-reverse-shot camera set-up (adapted from <http://www.aotg.com/index.php?page=shotreverseshot>).

Filmmakers in order to disengage continuity employ completely contrary measure. A “straight cut” technique transposes events or rather transfers action into different space and time. For instance, it is done by showing one place and then after a “cut” the narrative jumps into different set. The technique is considered to contradict scenes or cease action and switch to another sequence of shots.

Lev Kuleshov in 1920’s explored the possibilities of flexible editing and exposed a new variety of sequence construction. The classic example of Kuleshov’s ingenious approach is a short film portraying a man’s face, rather with blank expression and eyes fixed at a viewer. Various shots inserted into the sequence display a soup and glass of some beverage or attractive woman lying on a sofa. All these shots are interwoven with the medium shot of the man, generating different meanings and evoking eerie or clear emotions. Kuleshov’s experiment proves that by setting different order of the same pictures determines the context in the whole message. Spence and Navarro describe that Kuleshov’s students “[...] with little new stock, they reedited old films to change their effect, and they created synthetic people and places by editing together parts of different people and different locations taken at different times. They also combined shots in favour of close shots, they were able to produce the impression of continuity.” (2011: 167)

Lev Kuleshov and his experimentation with editing imprinted in the history of cinematography, producing a specific effect of continuity. By constructing sequences with artificial shots, he was able to introduce new technique and expanding the knowledge about narrative. The technique was applied by Dziga Vertov in his works. Spence and Navarro comment on Vertov’s “Three Songs of Lenin” in which the leader's funeral is accompanied by shots of rifles, reflecting the symbolic stature of the communist. In the given scene different parts of the country are shown to produce effect of continuity by emphasising the continuous action in different places at the same time. Vertov managed to obtain “spatial and temporal connection by the editing.” According to theorists, with proper editing space can be moved beyond the frame and still maintain coherence. “Editing, however, can create expanded space, a space outside the frame, and produce the semblance that that space is continuous with what was in the preceding and subsequent frames.” (2011: 169)

Among other techniques in documentarist’s manufacture of editing, “cutaway” occupies a significant position. Similarly, to previously presented techniques, it is employed in order to enhance the feeling of continuity and smooth flow of a narrative. By applying “cutaway” into narrative a filmmaker is to clarify or comment on presented part of footage, and also may attempt to forecast future events. “A cutaway can help maintain the illusion of clear and continuous action” or “would likely forecast some future narrative action.” (2011: 170)

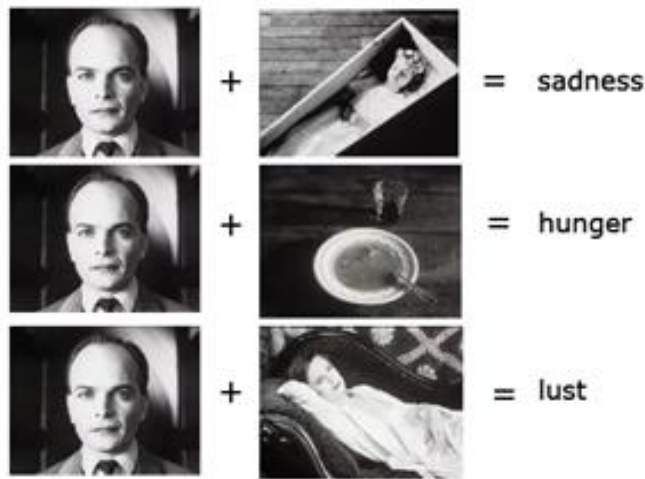


Figure 12. The Kuleshov's effect (adapted from <http://splitsider.com/2015/01/this-russian-filmmaker-invented-response-memes-100-years-ago/>).

According to Spence and Navarro (2011: 170) the deployment of continuities and discontinuities in narratives play crucial role in developing logical order and obtain intended effects. It is a play of “[...] similarities and contrasts - of light, texture, shape, movement, tone, and direction bind one to shot to the next.” Apart from above mentioned elements theorists emphasise the importance of rhythmic and tempo patterns in the structure of documentary films, very often accompanied by music, which like a conductor in symphony, controls the pace of narrative. These components ascribe aesthetic elements and adhere to the structure, adding poetic values and conveying the story at the same time. In documentary *The River* (1938) a whole ceremony of timbering is presented in an array of sequences edited accordingly to tempo music patterns. “The celebration of logging is expressed not only by the lively music but also by the energy created by the tempo of the editing and by joining shots with attention to the graphic conflicts with the frame.” Furthermore, there is an explanatory part describing how the editing is conducted in the mentioned scene. “The transitions are cuts throughout, punctuating the rhythm with their abrupt breaks. The sequence begins with trees and escalates to several shots of the screen filled with logs, and then three extremely close shots of logs passing through a saw mill, alternating, the first from left to right, the second from right to left, and the third from left to right once again.”(2011: 171) The whole sequence is embraced with dynamics to keep up with the music pace. By achieving appropriate tempo and rhythm the scene of logging is presented in its unstoppable and volatile nature. The opposite directions of trees falling and shots of desolate panorama of landscape with no trees is displayed to enforce the feeling of similarities and dissimilarities, achieving opposite effect to previously mentioned techniques, and the same, disrupting the effect of continuity and space in the sequence.



Figure 13. *The River* (1938) documentary, the emphasis is put on tempo and rhythm in editing (adapted from <http://www.travelfilmarchive.com/item.php?id=12019>).

Time and space in documentary narrative may be partially or wholly reordered to adequately convey perplexed meaning in original and clear way. It is done through presenting one sequence in specified time and space and immediately jumping to the other. Although, the representation of different order of events, the narrative takes its specific direction. Spence and Navarro (2011: 172) define the given technique as “editing for development.” In narratives the unfolding of events is usually proceeding according to linearity, and in editing for development two or even more separate lines of stories are merged into one documentary narrative. It is in usual fashion that documentarists follow separate stories, and each has its own one or a group of protagonists, which in the climactic point of the film’s narrative meet and mark a significant moment where storyline directs towards finale. Spence and Navarro explain that “both stories are filmed chronologically from beginning to end and are edited together to alternately present one, then the other. This is a common way to point out parallel happenings.” The presented technique of editing reorders time and space constructing non-linear narrative and fostering effects of disconuity. It embroils audience into a specific way of communication to “avoid fixed meaning, forcing viewers to create their own spatial and temporal coherence.” Spence and Navarro present documentary *Lunch with Fela* (2005) where above mentioned structure is applied in order to convey meaning in such creative manner. It is claimed that “Fela’s displacements find reverberations in the spatial and temporal dimensions of the documentary.”

Using contrast and contradiction is a useful concept applied by filmmakers in editing. Its main aim is to achieve impartiality in documentary, by presenting counter arguments about material or various perspectives. Spence and Navarro (2011: 174) state that “[...] simply giving different sides of an argument does not mean that both sides are received equally.” A perfect example of the technique is displayed in documentary *No End in Sight* (2007). It covers undeniably controversial topic of Iraqi invasion and exposes motifs behind Bush's administration drive that consequently led to war in 2004. In documentary, there are provided several interviews which are juxtaposed with

press commentaries. “It uses lengthy interviews with respected informants, and then conflicting excerpts from press conferences held by people in the power of Bush administration, undercutting the authority and dignity of the administration’s officials.”(2011: 175) The perspective taken by filmmakers is questioned in terms of objectivity, however the impartiality is constituted providing space for viewers to make their own judgements. Through contrast and contradiction opposing arguments are exposed to present various sides of the story. The structure in such narrative is deprived of linearity and continuity, only layered with fragments of sequences selected from different time and space to construct a specific rhetoric towards audience. Theorists (2011: 176) argue that “The film demonstrates that editing is never a transparent or neutral carrier of meaning. The documentary treats the structure of a film not only as a tool for reporting but also as a means of persuasion.”

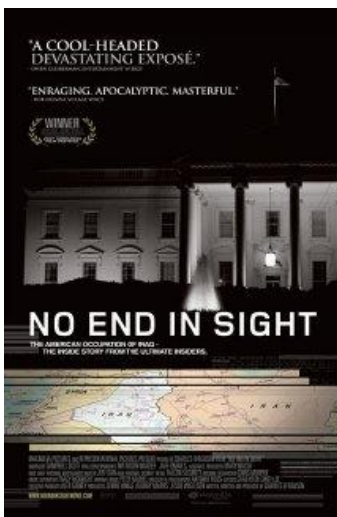


Figure 14. *No End In Sight* (2007) documentary (adapted from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0912593/>).

The narrative perplexities may sometimes appear too unclear or hazy for viewers. For that purpose filmmaker’s apply additional shots into sequence to portray the topic in comprehensible manner in order to clarify any complexities. Spence and Navarro call the technique “editing for clarification.” The logical connection among shots in a sequence may be disrupted due to insufficient footage or too contradictory shots. To fulfil such discrepancies, filmmakers employ such type of shots that are used as additional or background information supporting the sequence and filling gaps in footage. Authors distinguish examples by which clarification in editing may be represented, these are: hyperbole and metonymy. The implementation of both cases can be seen in Michael Moore’s films, e.g. *Bowling for Columbine* (2002). In this case, hyperbole is always used with cartoon CGI in his documentaries to enhance the meaning. On the other hand, for meaning like US government, a metonymical imagery the White House represents the concept. “In order to allude to that what is not visible or audible, documentary makers often make use of figures of

speech, rhetorical tropes [...] metaphors are rhetorical tactics to elucidate meaning. We can also describe them as hyperbole, an exaggeration to emphasise a point. This is a kind of extravagance we do not expect from sober stance of most documentaries.” (2011: 180)

Broadly used term “montage” is most often put for professional description of editing process. However, Spence and Navarro argue that the meaning of the word is misinterpreted. In their expertise it does not stand for editing only, but is narrowed to the use of archival footage within the process of editing, “We limit our discussion of montage to documentaries or sequences in documentaries in which archival footage is cut up and reassembled; time and space are fractured and then sutured together to create different connotations. Images once removed from their historical setting are reactivated by their inclusion in a montage with other images.”(2011: 181)

The presence of archival footage in documentary films is inseparable from the genre itself and undoubtedly maintains the core footage in many productions. It is crucial to notice that symbolic meaning of “documentary” directly addresses the evidence, the document as archival footage. The authors enumerate films composed of only archival footage filled with background noises added artificially with contemporary technology; a great example is the drama-documentary *Powstanie Warszawskie* (2014)²². Montage irrevocably constitutes an essential part in historical documentary movies which narratives are mainly grounded in evidentiary footage. For many narratives it is impossible to convey the meaning of the story and engage audience without archival footage, a complimentary element of documentary genre. Montage is provided to play specific role in the structure. It can be hyperbole as previously mentioned in Moore's movies, where footage from vintage movies is employed, usually functioning as a mocking commentary in narrative. The authors add that “By and large, though, montage is used for short sequences in larger films that are made from variety of materials. And as such, it performs a special service: a series of shots are edited into a sequence condensing filmic time and space, for a heightened. Whereas most film and video makers subordinate their editing strategies a tight rhetorical or dramatic logic, in montage sequences they can enjoy increased editorial freedom.” (2011: 183)

The coexistence of varied techniques within a narrative enhances its form in order to properly convey the meaning of the story, thus facilitates communication with the audience. By editing a filmmaker reorders and sets meanings in realistic world. Through appropriate application of editing techniques the specified meaning is adhered to a captured moment of reality and by such, a filmmaker is engaged into a process of manipulation, being the factor directly responsible for

22 Examples given by Spence and Navarro: *Point of Order* (1964), *The Fall of Romanov Dynasty* (1927), *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (2005).

constructing the meaning and influencing audience. Lev Kuleshov's experiment maintains to be the pivot that exposes the possibilities by which construction of meaning is exercised and may be achieved. Editing constitutes the most basic and powerful aspect of filmmaking.

Camerawork techniques

The camera apparatus, as previously discussed, is a mean that plays evidentiary function in the process of filming by capturing fragments of reality. Whether this is a still or a moving image, it plays fundamental role in documentary. It is through the channel of visualisation that communication proceeds; via images and signs the language of meaning becomes the most manipulative and expressive for audience. As Spence and Navarro (2011: 187) suggest “We all seem to attribute a special power to the camera. We know that, when the subject documented is actuality, the photographic image has the capacity to reveal as well as condemn aspects of the socio-historical world that might otherwise remain unremarked.” Then they add that visual memories imprint most effectively on audience, therefore images persist to be the mean of utmost importance in keeping documentary's veracity. In documentary genre filmmakers attempt to convey the actuality in its pure form unlike in fictional cinema to entertain. However, documentary style of filming has developed a strong aesthetic approach towards capturing of reality which simultaneously impacts the reliability of images. It is essential to mention that camera apparatus is selective, thus concentrating only on a fragment of reality.

The camera operator is burdened with responsibility to capture and record actuality to collect footage for further documentary production. The key moment in the process is the phenomenon called framing, when a camera operator selects a proper fracture of reality and captures it. Here is involved technological aspect: focusing. Spence and Navarro (2011: 188-189) explain that “[...] objects or people can go in and out of focus for dramatic emphasis. Or they can be framed in a particular way to make a point.” The selection process in framing determines which objects need to be emphasised in order to present a specific part of reality and other irrelevant ones not constituting the desired meaning and in order to define “[...] what aspects of reality need to be accentuated.” Scaling within the frame is directly associated with the process. It confines the distance between captured objects and a camera operator. The further the distance from the objects, the more general view is taken of reality, setting and presenting general idea about scene. On the other side, the closer camera gets to the objects, the scaling gets bigger with focus on details disengaging from general perspective and associating importance to the objects. By scaling in close shots, Spence and Navarro claim, some specific effects may be evoked, “They can also indicate familiarity with and proximity to that subject; or they may suggest curiosity and intrusiveness,

depending on the context in which the shot is included.” (2011: 189) Furthermore, they argue that documentary form inherits a specified conventions associated with non-fiction cinema. In this case, a primal example is of medium close shot and medium wide shot applied in interview scenes. By employing medium close shot the image provides not detailed but basic information about interviewee, e.g. mood, posture, facial expression, etc. Both theorists argue that any attempt to interfere or break into documentary convention of the scene, manifested by different scaling, facilitates and conveys different sort of message to audience. For instance, closing up and scaling to interviewee’s face, engages audience into more “intimate” communication, as Spence and Navarro (2011: 189) claim that “[...] any significant change in the frame or scale of the subject is likely to alter that sense of formality and create a different rapport between the audience and the interviewee.” Similarly, in order to communicate the most basic information of time and space, a wide shot or extreme wide shot are commonly applied, creating a point of reference in the scene and exposing the general set. A wide shot is characterised with adequately bigger scaling, enhancing the general view of the scene and providing mere number of detailed information. According (2011: 190) to both theorists “Between an extreme long shot and extreme close up, there is a vast range of options that determine the scale of the subject matter within the frame. Choosing one or another is decision often based on how much information one wants to include in the shot, what piece of information should be privileged, and what kind of rapport with the viewer one wants to pursue.” A close-up functions as an emphasis and focuses on specific information, including detailed message.

Further corresponding element with framing touches the important aspect of angles in camerawork. Taking a specific angle towards the captured object allows including different information. There is an undefined number of angles possible to be taken, however a cameraman employs some of them, a kind of “language” that enables to communicate with audience. The most often used “eye-level” shot is perceived by Spence and Navarro (2011: 191) as the one that provides “natural and inconspicuous perspective” for a one to communicate.

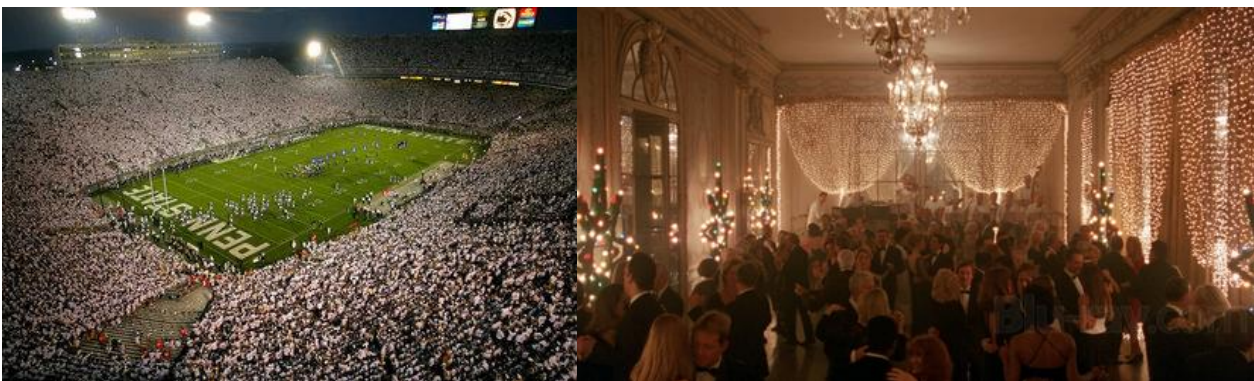


Figure 15. Extreme wide shot and wide shot, providing general information about a set (adapted from <http://mediacommons.psu.edu/2013/07/storyboarding/>).



Figure 16. Medium wide shot and medium shot, providing more detailed information (adapted from <http://www.nextwavedv.com/there-is-such-a-thing-as-%E2%80%9Ctoo-shallow%E2%80%9D/> and <http://mediacommons.psu.edu/2013/07/storyboarding>).



Figure 17. Close-up shot, providing detailed information (adapted from <http://mediacommons.psu.edu/2013/07/storyboarding>).

By this angle the process of capturing reality seems, as they claim, almost “transparent” and in a way vivacious. Furthermore, in documentaries “high angle” is performed when camera is above and looking down at the object. The opposite “low angle” is particularly applied in order to achieve an exposition that embodies feelings of supremacy. For instance, Spence and Navarro suggest that given effect is implemented into Leni Riefenstahl’s *Olympia* (1938), presenting a thrower and “the stature of his body” and “the ideal of physical perfection.” Any non-standard angles are specifically employed to create drama or convey other desired meanings. Spence and Navarro (2011: 191) claim that “stylized angles, by contrast, can create dramatic effects and function as markers of authorial intervention, especially since the optical properties tend to distort the natural shape of things.” Camera angles may also enhance the spatial relations. By connecting different points in space, as the theorists claim, filmmakers achieve spatial continuity similar to the editing continuity. It is done by switching camera from one perspective to another, maintaining focus on the same object. At this point Spence and Navarro provide an example of concerts where in order to capture the performance there are many cameras incorporated into the process displaying the stage and the audience. They explain that usually the performer on a stage is captured from the low angle whereas the audience from the high angle in order to show both parties with adequate respect.

Camera movement techniques

The changing frame in capturing reality constitutes a pivot along which material is arranged and accumulated. An essential aspect that plays crucial role in the process is camera and lens movement. This aspect of production has its direct impact on framing. Camera movement changes the perspective through scaling and switching to different angles. By such measures it expands or reduces the frame, as Spence and Navarro explain, and switches the focus to different objects, enhancing dynamism in documentary. The theorists (2011: 192) claim that “camera movements can also be prompted by a sudden disclosure of relevant information or a need to draw attention to a specific detail within the frame.” They describe that in case of capturing an interview of two people, a third one should enter the conversation, and camera adjusts the frame by lens and camera movement to involve three interlocutors into the frame.

According to the professional terminology: a “dolly”²³ is a move of a camera towards the object what consequently alters the overall perspective, the object is observed from further or closer spatial point, whereas “zoom”²⁴ impacts the frame but camera stays at the same point in space. Similarly, the camera stays in the location when a camera man “pans” it left or right. The “pan”²⁵ movement is based on the rotation of the camera to both sides what unfolds the field of view. For instance, this technique may be applied to expose a panorama or follow a dynamic scene in which the object is moving to either side. In case of high or low angles, filmmakers employ “tilt”²⁶ as an upward or downward move. Furthermore, the movement of a camera position from lower to higher level constitutes a technique called “pedestal”²⁷, and it excludes any angle calibration or adjustment moves. And lastly, the “truck” movement refers to the camera locked to a truck enabling move along one axis.

Above mentioned basic camera movements belong to the vast palette of techniques in TV production which expand the possibilities of framing and allow various angling perspectives.

Spence and Navarro claim that the primary aim of camerawork is to draw attention and adequately switch focus to the subject. Their simple assumption (2011: 192) establishes that “as a means of gathering information, the camera movements help establish the nature and scale of the subject represented.” The critical aspect of this work in documentaries is the flexibility and reach of the camera. The theorists argue that, especially for documentarists, shots taken from track scarcely

23 Dolly in: the camera moves close; dolly out: the camera backs away.

24 Zoom in: the lens adjusts to decrease the field of view; zoom out: to increase the field of view.

25 Pan left or right.

26 Tilt up (upward) or down (downward)

27 Pedestal up or down

restrain the possibilities to involve some flexibility into them, whereas handheld cameras let camera operators to work dynamically and quickly respond to changing profilmic environment, “while not as elegant as tracking shots, handheld movements can provide a more effective response to unplanned events.” The handheld in documentary enhances the quality of material making it more realistic and vivacious, evoking the feeling of “being there” and expanding the visual field. Similar effect is achieved through abrupt zoom what evokes an effect of vividness. The camera stays in one position, there is no movement involved in the process but the “motion” in frame is achieved by adjustment in focus through reduction or expanding of focal length. Theorists (2011: 193) explain that “zooming in, for example, can quickly single out a certain detail or capture a sudden change in the profilmic space.” On the other side using zoom means devoiding the space of depth, flattening the image, “and therefore tends to imply a less direct assessment of the space photographed.”

Profilmic and reconstruction

The analysis of documentary production techniques underscores the use of proper camerawork and editing, not only to implement artistic and aesthetic elements but most importantly to arrange scenes into desired logical sequence. The above stages in the process of production revolve around the pivotal element of profilmic, which means the recorded environment, also known as the “mise-en-scène”²⁸, as Spence and Navarro explain. Profilmic involves specially prepared and characterised settings, mainly concerning the staging, reconstruction of recorded events, and lighting which fulfils aesthetic functions and supports narrative.

“The creative treatment of profilmic reality is one important way in which visual display can be used in order to generate meaning.” (2011: 213) Such assumption is made by Spence and Navarro who convince that profilmic is genuinely set, or meticulously prepared for narrative. It adopts interventionist techniques by arranging objects, events, whole scenery in front of the camera. Engaging profilmic means “[...] assigning meaning to situations or settings that already exist in the historical world.” (2011: 214)

Every movie requires a pinch of interventionism to make its production possible. The technique of reconstruction is undeniably a part of documentary and it co-existed with the genre since its beginnings. In fact, the occurrence of reconstruction, also known as staging, had been noted before the genre itself was identified as documentary. In Przylipiak’s opinion the concept of reconstruction technique jeopardises the core principles of documentary, as it is in fact, mimesis of

²⁸ “Mise-en-scène” – “the arrangement of scenery, furniture, etc. used on the stage for a play in the theatre” as defined by Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 7th Edition).

reality or its reproduction. He (2000: 28) argues that the existence of the technique and its further employment in productions proves the impossibility to create a documentary cinema according to its truth legitimations. Consequently, Przylipiak (2000: 28) attempts to answer the profound questions referring to reconstruction and justify its place in documentary productions.

First of all, reconstruction technique is the outcome of specific requirements during documentary production. Different situations appearing in society, which are supposedly the subject of documentary, may appear extremely hard to capture. In many cases it is connected with logistical, sociological or time and space problems, as well as setting up equipment to capture interesting situation or object which require proper lighting and sound equipment, adequate conditions to record material in satisfying quality. Very often for filming crew it occurs to be impossible. Instantly, protagonists need to be filmed in a specific condition or during action that would consume a lot of time and effort. For such purpose reconstruction is being prepared and protagonists are usually engaged in the process. Moreover, some situations that belong to the scope of documentary happen in place where there is no possibility to intervene with camera and equipment and reconstruction may be only way adapted to reproduce such conditions. Instantly, to above mentioned belong institutions like courts, penitentiaries or headquarters of corporations. Furthermore, according to Przylipiak (2000: 29)²⁹, a documentary may possess content that could be harmful for a topic discussed in such film. In order to avoid any damaging consequences filmmakers apply reconstruction. Przylipiak provides an example of judicial case and a documentary as a testimony which might be harmful for anyone involved. And lastly, reconstruction works as a lever on mechanisms that exist in reality. It reproduces conditions and reveals these patterns that normally are hard to observe. Przylipiak states that “the same rule concerns inscenizations, let’s call them ‘complex’, in which whole situations are reconstructed, or for instance an actor is implemented into body of reality, whose role is to ‘move’ reality, ‘push’ it or ‘ignite’ it, to reveal its real facade. Such inscenizations are legit, if [implemented] fictional element, which is programmed by [filming] crew, supports and reacts with reality that itself is real and not reconstructed.” Krzysztof Kieślowski, quoted by Przylipiak, provides a very vivid explanation of reconstruction, elaborating on the complexity of the technique. According to Kieślowski (quoted by Przylipiak), in order to employ reconstruction, it is necessary to use a specific element that ignites the reaction of documentary’s subject. For instance, the topic concerns a group of boys who pick up girls. The ignition point: girls programmed to react on the subject, a group of boys, to observe expected reactions. However, to programme the subject within reconstruction is forbidden.

²⁹ All translations are mine.

Reconstruction surrounds the subject but does not involve it into the confines. (Przylipiak, 2000: 29)

The history of documentary film witnessed reconstructions that had direct impact on the phenomenon itself. Przylipiak (2000: 26) points out that the famous the battle of Santiago Bay where American ships defeated Spanish fleet at the turn of nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The reconstruction was based on small models of ships in a bathtub which imitated Santiago Bay. Even basic special effects were applied, for instance, smoke coming out from a lit cigarette. The documentary (Albert Smith and James Blackton) appeared to be a major success and mesmerised the public. Reconstructions of battles belonged to major field of interest for filmmakers. Nonetheless, George Melies, a famous cinematographer and director known for specialisation in effects, reconstructed many key events in modern history (such reconstructions are called re-enactments, about them later in the chapter), as Przylipiak enumerates: “the Mount Pelee volcano eruption, the case of President McKinley murder, the coronation of Edward the XIIIth, the sinking of battleship ‘Maine’, the Turkish-Greek war, [...] the Dreyfuss affair.”³⁰ The latter occurred to be a revolutionary reconstruction that strongly imprinted in the history of documentary. Melies reconstructed the case even in small details what was exceptional for his specialty and other works. That included even clothing on the basis of pictures. Moreover, Przylipiak adds that reconstructions presented by Melies involved information that in fact they are reconstructions.³¹ Other prominent filmmakers like Robert Flaherty and John Grierson widely used reconstruction in their documentaries. However, in their work they involved fewer details into reconstructions and even tended to reproduce untrue elements. As Przylipiak suggests, Flaherty encompassed variety of procedures to reconstruct scenes, he pushed himself to involve documented protagonists into activities that were never truly done by them, or when it comes to scenography aspects, he implemented elements that did not appear in captured reality. Instantly, Przylipiak (2000: 27) enlists that Flaherty “falsified reality in which protagonists lived [...] reconstructing scenes of hunting and provided dead animals for scenery, inducing inhabitants (not seldom financially) to engage into actions [...] never carried out by them.” Grierson movement took similar attitude towards reconstruction which constituted the core concept of documentary production. In Grierson’s famous movie *Drifters* (1929), the reconstruction happened to be advanced in terms of reproduced

30 “Dreyfus affair, political crisis, beginning in 1894 and continuing through 1906, in France during the Third Republic. The controversy centred on the question of the guilt or innocence of army captain Alfred Dreyfus, who had been convicted of treason for allegedly selling military secrets to the Germans in December 1894.” (Encyclopedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/171538/Dreyfus-affair>).

31 Similar information is attached nowadays to TV documentary programmes.

scenography. The protagonists were filmed inside the cabin which was especially designed to reproduce conditions of fishing ship. The crew, protagonists “acted” their everyday duties within the artificial environment. Filming in this case, involved fishes in a swimming pool, the scene imitated real fishing process. Spence and Navarro (2011: 26) suggest that “re-creation [reconstruction], however, does not necessarily mean falsification. It is sometimes legitimately accepted procedure in nonfictional representation.” They provide an example of a documentary about three British Muslims held at Guantanamo prison that during travel to Afghanistan had been captured and transported to US. The main footage of the film consists of reconstructions which develop the story and enhance dramatic aspects in it. Theorists claim that the implementation of the technique tends to present solemn events that happened in the story. Reconstructions are based on gathered data and testimonies and aim not to deform reality. Spence and Navarro (2011: 27) claim that “[...] the staged material can function as an extension or illustration of the testimonies documented by the filmmaker, a filmic rendition of events that are firmly grounded in lived reality.”

The specific type of reconstruction or staging is “re-enactment” which strictly concentrates on reality specifically in historical terms, whereas the above given examples also refer to history but more generally treat in revealing sociological mechanisms and aspects. Spence and Navarro (2011: 215) explain that “a re-enactment is the repetition of an action – or series of actions – that has already taken place. It is a staged event, not an ‘original’ occurrence.” Re-enactments involve active participation of actors, role-playing past events and unveiling true stories according to testimonies. However, reconstruction also involves actors but they usually interact with true reality elements to evoke specific actions. The historical period full of re-enactments occurred in-between time of World Wars. The technique was widely cultivated due to restraints of technical possibilities. Moreover, it mainly concentrates on historical context like wars or politics. A perfect example of re-enactment reproducing Polish political events is *Far from Poland* (1984). The documentary depicts a story that happened in Gdansk in 1980 where protests and scuffles broke out between militia and demonstrators. The maker of the documentary, Jill Godmilow, faced a situation in which she was unable to access the country because of authorities’ directives. Nevertheless Godmilow did not surrender and, as Spence and Navarro (2011: 215) describe, the documentary became “[...] provocative experiment in documentary filmmaking.” The whole footage of the documentary bases on staged events recreating actual developments in Poland. Staging in the film involved information gathered by mass media, commenting on situation. Not only, the key places were involved in the process of re-enactment but also, and especially, interviews which reproduced authentic interviews that happened in reality. In this case, actors replaced real interviewees and the theorists (2011: 217) suggest that “yet it is not this discrepancy [actors as interviewees] that stands out but the emotional

impact of the scene, especially the affective quality of the performance [...], which invites sympathy and emotional identification with interviewee.”



Figure 18. An actress Ruth Maleczek, as Anna Walentynowicz, a crane operator that started the protest in 1980 in Gdansk, *Far from Poland* (1984) (photography taken from: Facets EDU, <http://www.facets.org/edu/far-from-poland/>).

Reconstruction technique proves to be an invaluable tool for filmmakers to present past events. However, a specific nature of some historical moments requires other measures to be undertaken. CGI presents possibilities, to depict scenes impossible to reconstruct in terms of traditional techniques. Spence and Navarro (2011: 217) enumerate documentaries like *Waltz with Bashir* (2008) a production that required CGI technology to reconstruct Israel and Lebanon’s war; or documentary *Protagonist* (2007) by Jessica Ju, where actual events were staged with theatre puppets. Due to exponential development of technology in CGI, the technique is on the verge of immense changes, commencing a shift of its facets in traditional methods of production.

Subsequently, following the topic of profilmic and having introduced and exploited the notion of reconstruction, it is crucial to underscore the function of lighting in the documentary production process. Lighting is a mean of performance; it weaves the surfaces of profilmic environment in proper shapes, highlights objects and unravels the meaning of specific representations. It controls the language of contrasting and focusing. Lighting is varied accordingly to specific purposes of the profilmic reality. Spence and Navarro (2011: 223) distinguish natural and artificial lighting. They claim that due to the fact that natural lighting reigns beyond the capabilities to tame it; it is artificial lighting that plays the major role in the production process, “Controlled or artificial lighting, on the other hand, indicates that a particular environment has been altered or created specifically for the purposes of the film.” As theoreticians explain it focuses on the perception itself, or on taking particular perspective in order to evoke desired effect. Emphases, similarity, mimesis of reality are the key elements to be achieved in the proper setting of lighting. Instantly, it is used to modify or enrich climate of a specific momentum by enhancing visual effects of a setting. The mean of contrasting, lightening up of specific objects helps in gaining focus on particular objects, and distinguishes them from the background. Spence and Navarro mention the

standard three-point lighting technique that is widely used in overall non-fiction and fiction genres of films.

Dr Robert G. Nulph³² in his article about the three-point lighting technique mentions about three main elements which are crucial to the style, namely the key light, the fill light and the back light. The first component is set in front of the object or slightly on the side (at the 45° angle). The key light functions as the primary source of light. The second, the fill light, lights shadows cast by the key light. It is usually less sharp and weaker than the main one, located directly to the object, next to the key light. The last element, the back light is set to contrast the object with the background. It is located behind the object and in opposite way to the key light. The whole set is illustrated by the picture:

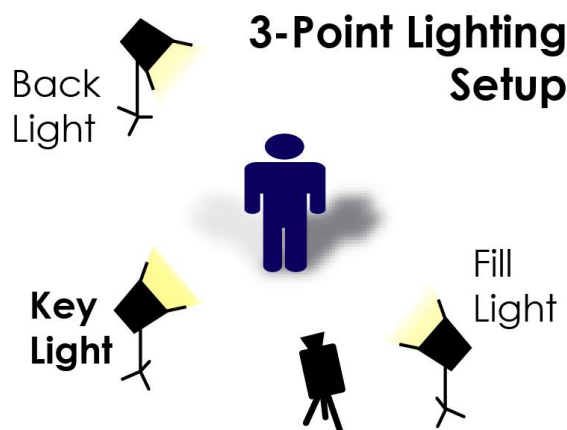


Figure 19. The three-point lighting style (photography taken from: <http://mediacommons.psu.edu/students/video-production-tips/>).

The proper set of power in the fill light is the key factor that characterises the mood of a scene. To achieve more dramatic effect, the fill light must be weaker than normally or placed more in wider angle, resulting with a mere shadow cast on one of the object's side. Such set of lights is called "low key lighting" and is commonly used to evoke more dramatic atmosphere. However, the high key lighting, as Nulph describes, is applied when the scene requires evenly lit object, achieving lower contrast. In this case, it brings more clarity and brighter visual effects. It is characteristic for any interviews and newsroom; and non-dramatic related audio-visual material.

Proper lighting is a particular mean in communication between audience and author of material. It emphasises the meaning of particular scenes and underscores the significant elements by separating them from background.

³² <http://www.videomaker.com/article/12230-applying-3-point-lighting>.

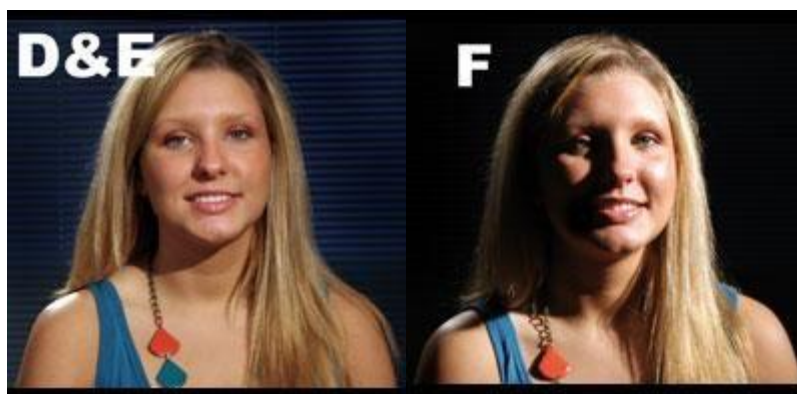


Figure 20. D&E – high key lighting; E – low key lighting (adapted from: <http://www.videomaker.com/article/12230-applying-3-point-lighting>).

Spence and Navarro emphasise the importance of performance in documentary film. They (2011: 225) argue that acting is an element that is typical for other fiction productions; however, in non-fiction films it appears as a problematic issue. Theorists convince that performing “[...] acting is often associated with artifice and pretense, attributes that seem more suitable to fantasy and entertainment genres than to serious representations of the historical world.” It affects the authenticity in documentaries, and in genuine non-fiction productions it should be avoided. Nonetheless, acting persists to be elemental component of every re-enactment and reconstruction. As Spence and Navarro explain, the history of the documentary cinema is filled with such examples. The most primal productions like *Nanook of the North* (1922) and *Night Mail* (1936)³³ involve performing. Basically, it concentrates on the cooperation of the filmmaker and actors. In contemporary non-fiction production it is used notoriously to unveil the plot and follow the narrative. Instantly, a film produced by Michał Marczak *At the Edge of Russia* (2010) involves hired social actors who specifically perform their roles accordingly to the narrative. The acting in a film is a mixture of improvisation and directed scenes, creating an effect of naturally captured sequences of reality. The film is to be analysed later in the next chapter; and actors’ performance pondered respectively. Both theorists comment that “Some filmmakers take a less orthodox approach to documentary acting. They cast performers – professional or not – to play roles that are unrelated, or only partly related, to their actual lives.” (2011: 226) Interviews belong to the capacity of staged events, in which protagonists perform their roles. In most cases, the interviewee is carefully chosen to adequately play, describe his or her experience, or stage it for the purpose of the narrative. The element of interview in non-fiction cinema is employed to take on informative or explanatory functions or clearly as a narrative one.

³³ Produced by Basil Wright and Harry Watt and narrated by John Grierson, the film features workers of the travelling post office and L.M.S. Railway.

All stages of editing, pre-production and post-production techniques are imperative in creating logical and readable output for audience, a documentary which is coherent and properly ordered in its narrative that conveys clear message. Filmmakers employ above mentioned techniques to achieve the best quality, underscore aesthetic values or create original narratives. They originate rules and apply frameworks to follow traditional conventions of production. Simultaneously, they try to break the rules in order to produce outstanding documentaries, attempt to experiment to evoke desired effects on audience. Most frequently production process is limited by actual technological advancement and acquired budget for its purposes. However, non-fiction films seem to belong to the category of cinema which even with low budget and amateur equipment is capable to produce films with astonishing narratives and amazing material.

Chapter three: New landscape of documentary films

The ideological turn in contemporary documentary films that appeared on the basis of technological advancement resulted in expansion of the genre's tenets and frameworks, particularly in terms of modes which appeared, and continue to appear, along the process of the transformation. There is a possibility to observe stretching in the boundaries of truth claims and artistic and aesthetic values of productions. It is apparent in the traditional ones which are undergoing not slow, but swift changes. A tendency towards merging with elements of fiction is the issue of emerging of new landscape of documentary. The following genres are experiencing the most vivid and vibrant development: drama-documentary, mock-documentary and animated documentary.

Drama-documentary

The drama-documentary genre is in fact deeply rooted in the historical background of the traditional documentary conventions. The genre is widely used among film makers as a form that combines factuality and elements of fiction. On that basis the genre is perceived as a one that complicates the discourse about theoretical and practical side of documentary production.

The form and content of the genre raise a vibrant dispute due to the fact that drama-documentary possesses vague boundaries between fiction and non-fiction. Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight (2001: 42-43) argue that "This concern over the blurring of the boundaries of documentary and drama relies on the notion of a fact/fiction dichotomy." For that fact the drama-documentary is being criticised, not only by film makers, but also audience who may feel led astray by the content. Roscoe and Hight (2001: 43) provide Derek Paget's³⁴ definition and differentiations of the drama-

³⁴ Paget, Derek (1998): *No Other Way to Tell It: Dramadoc/Docudrama on Television*, Manchester University Press,

documentary genre: “Drama-documentary is best described as the form that attempts to stay closest to the actual historical event or persons. It follows the sequences from a real historical occurrence or situation.” The form sticks to real events and to big degree employs drama elements to support the narrative. It aims to highlight and describe socio-historical issues. It disobeys traditionalistic documentary modes and rarely uses genuine documentary material. The next form, “documentary drama” characterises with a creative perspective towards narrative, events and protagonists are specially created for the narrative. “This form does not necessarily conform to a realist narrative. If documentary elements are presented they may actively disrupt narrative, for example by being presented non-naturalistically.” Subsequently, the theorists mention “faction” as another form, which qualities implement authentic personalities and events, although narrative is based on these authentic elements, most often is fictional. And the last form, “dramadoc” or “docudrama”, are TV programmes which follow drama-documentary conventions, however they are not produced in feature length form. The theoretical knowledge of presented forms outlines the fundamentals of the sub-genre in overall terms. The genre generally follows the principles of factuality and actual representations and occurrences within the productions tend to appear as truthful. Roscoe and Hight state that “In making a drama-documentary the film maker’s intention is to operate within the expectations of factual discourse and to produce a text that is historically accurate.” (2001: 44) Film makers aim to emphasise the documentary values of their productions by for example putting captions that are directly related to facts. Roscoe and Hight proclaim that Drama-documentaries are a perfect form of representation of “human experience” or possess qualities to portray events with no evidentiary material. Theoreticians attempt to assess the credibility and validity of drama-documentary genre. Some of the productions implement “documentary material” to support the narrative in terms of credibility. It may be original footage like photographs, short video sequences, media materials, or “At other times there will be simulations of documentary material or a mix of archive and library material, and acted reconstructions.”(2001: 48) These prerequisites are vital to build proper setting and background for protagonists and events in a drama. By such mean credibility is being built in the genre’s productions. However, Roscoe and Hight (2001: 45) cite Steve Lipkin’s³⁵ observations which assume that drama-documentary “argues with the seriousness of documentary to the extent that it draws upon direct, motivated resemblances to its actual materials.” The genre serves as a useful source of commentaries and “attractive arguments” related to actual characters or places, “[...] it is on the basis of its close resemblances to actuality that

Manchester (1998: 82-3).

³⁵ Lipkin, Steve (1999): *Defining Docudrama: In the Name of the Father, Schindler’s List and JFK*, in A. Rosenthal (ed.), *Why Docudrama? Fact-Fiction on Film and TV*, Southern Illinois University Press (371).

docudrama argues for the validity of its metaphors.” Through such qualities drama-documentary goes beyond documentary genre by filling the gaps with narratives, presenting insightful perspectives, associations and interpretation. It may be used as a creative answer to raised questions and solve perplexing issues. Drama-documentary rather tends to use documentary footage as an “identifiable narrative”, and not as an argument. (Roscoe and Hight, 2001: 48) Here important role plays dramatic effect which is supported by appropriate application of specific techniques like camera set ups, lighting, preparation of profilmic and sound and editing. (2001: 49) Such ploys are used to enhance the unfolding of narrative. Further elements employed to underscore drama effects involve fictional protagonists, who expose the issues in their actions and relations.

“The audience approaches drama-documentaries with similar expectations to those of documentaries, in the sense that they are viewing a truthful (if heightened) reality which is based on a familiarity with factual discourse and its associated codes and conventions.” (Roscoe and Hight, 2001: 50) The specific form of the drama-documentary attains to find the compromise between facts and fiction, by applying documentary material. Film makers understand that the genre aspires to possess similar qualities as documentary genre and aims to answer audience expectations in terms of truth claims. Theoreticians have been questioning the awareness of audience to differentiate between fact and fiction. Roscoe and Hight (2001: 51) basing on Leslie Woodhead’s statements, answer that audience possesses such understanding “that they will not confuse a drama for a documentary and so on.” Some studies conducted on audience support these statements.

Drama-documentary is definitely a form that achieves a specific quality to merge both fiction and fact elements through construction of narrative. The consequence of such precedence is the questioning of authenticity of presented material, although attempts of sticking to factuality and documentary evidences are strong. The genre appears as a powerful tool to perform as a commentary and interpretation of socio-historical aspects.

Mock-documentary (Mockumentary)

As the tendency towards crossing the line between fiction and fact is growing, the new documentary modes persist to stick to traditional conventions, they attempt to follow the framework, but along the ideological and technological shift they lose their typical characteristics of a documentary film and acquire not only different values but also different names, such as: “pseudo-documentary”, “quasi-documentary” or “mock-documentary”. The latter name is popularly used for the mode of documentary that is about to be described in the paper.

By Roscoe and Hight (2001: 36) mock-documentary is characterised as a new hybrid form that complicates the issue concerning traditional boundaries of documentary. Mock-documentary

goes beyond the conventional documentary role by representing reality in subjective style leaving the concept of truth to be demarked by the audience. Roscoe and Hight explain “Mock-documentary looks to ‘mock’³⁶ central tenets of classic documentary; in particular beliefs in science (and scientific experts) and in the essential integrity of referential image.” (2001: 8) Mockumentary purposefully changes the concept of truth and puts in somewhat contradictive way towards its traditional legitimations in documentary films. Therefore, on the basis of the existing framework within mockumentary, it may be assumed that the genre is totally different from fundamentals of documentary, when the core ideology is against truth then it must belong to other genre. However, mockumentary still attempts to unravel the truth mechanisms from “outside” the genre, as Roscoe and Hight explain (2001: 33), while traditional documentary does the same from “within” its conventions. In mockumentary it is done by employing parody and irony form, whereas in documentary a one observes attempt to reveal the whole mechanism of truth. “The differences derive from the degree of referentiality that each constructs towards the socio-historical world; reflexive documentaries are constructed from images with a *direct relationship towards the real*, while mock-documentaries content is purely fictional.” The mean of parody is the core principle in mock-documentary genre, it demarks the line “what is fact and fictional in this documentary.” Roscoe and Hight (2001: 32) suggest that mockumentary possesses distinctive characteristics of documentary reflexive mode, referring to such productions like *The Thin Blue Line* (1988)³⁷ and *Roger & Me* (1989)³⁸. According to the theorists the films use conventions of parody, irony and satire to present the narrative. Furthermore, above mentioned reflexive mode questions the conventions of a documentary itself, its boundaries in terms of its rhetoric, of content; whereas the characteristics of performative mode focus on revealing the mechanisms of reality, most often in socio-political context. Roscoe and Hight (2001: 36) state: “By prioritising the personal and subjective over the pretence of an objective stance, these modes challenge the notion that there is only one truth to tell, yet they are still able to retain the notion that there is some (small portion) of ‘truth’ to be discovered or revealed by documentary.” As it has been mentioned before, mockumentary stays loyal to the most fundamental principles of truth; the genre does not try to obliterate it but to expose it. To simplify the understanding of the genre, a one may assume that

³⁶ “Syn: make fun of; to laugh at sb/sth in an unkind way, especially by copying what they say or do; to show no respect for sth” (as defined by Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 7th Edition).

³⁷ Produced by Errol Morris in 1988; a story of a man accused of murder and proved to be innocent, later freed of charges.

³⁸ Produced by Michael Moore in 1989. After closing down of several General Motors factories in Flint, Michigan, Moore attempts to deep in the topic by investigating the reasons and impact of unfortunate happenings.

within a mock-documentary questions about truth are raised and are only to be answered by audience itself.

Roscoe and Hight (2001: 47) tend to define mock-documentary genre with such assumptions: “Mock-documentary’s agenda is ultimately to parody the assumptions and expectations associated with factual discourse to ‘mock’ the cultural status of documentary’s generic codes and conventions.” And also “Mock-documentaries are fictional texts which in some form ‘look’ like documentaries. These texts tend to appropriate certain documentary modes, as well as full range of documentary codes and conventions.”(2001: 49) Subsequently, they add that “The appropriation of documentary codes and conventions is used not so much to anchor the argument in the real world or to bolster claims to truth, but rather to offer critical commentary.” (2001: 50) Within the content of commentaries a filmmaker may refer to various cultural, social or political notions, depending on the pressing issues that are discussed in a film. The pivotal element within the mock-documentary genre is a specific relation with audience which needs to have at least superficial awareness about fictional elements in a production and understand appearing parody or ironical means of rhetoric. Roscoe and Hight (2001: 52-53) convince that such use of codes and conventions (factual discourse and fiction, cues and hoaxes³⁹) needs to trigger reflexive attitude in audience. Moreover, this “breaking away” from documentary conventions is to some degree expected by audience.

Mock-documentary seems undoubtedly one of the most interesting genres originated from traditional documentary modes. It enables to enter into discourse of facts, reality, and present it in various ways basing on parody, irony and performative and reflexive modes of documentary. With such codes and conventions it allows audience to individually set boundaries of truth and build critical attitudes towards discourse. Mock-documentary by its particular means of parody lets into the traditional form of documentary a hint of entertainment.

Animated-documentary

To a big degree animated documentary obscures the issue of traditional codes and conventions of the genre. On the epistemological ground it has become a nuisance in terms of indexical relation between images and reality. Theorists strive to find compromise in assessing where the merits of representation are set within this rapidly developing genre.

Jonathan Rozenkrantz (2011) in his study observes that “Objects that look real can even turn

³⁹ Roscoe and Hight give examples of documentaries: *Alien Abduction* (1998) and *Forgotten Silver* (1995) which aim to confuse audience and attempt to make it believe in completely fictional notions. (2001: 72)

out to be computer generated, that is to say digitally ‘drawn’. This, of course, becomes quite a problem for documentary film, since its primary proof – the photographic image – no longer seems to prove anything.” The phrase cited above touches the notion of animated documentary genre, non-fiction films produced with specific technology using collage, puppets, models and cut-out animation techniques. These techniques of production raise questions of representations and indexical relations. Paul Ward (2008) attempts to address the issue by referencing to relative realism and corresponding representations in animated productions. His argumentation emphasises that animations are based on fictional space; he argues that “no matter how ‘realistic’ the imagery might look, we still know we are looking at - and are being asked to consider – a world, not the world.” Thus, one needs to consider a distance of animation documentaries from reality. Rozenkrantz argues that “Suddenly we have a ‘photograph’ in which a physical referent is no longer necessary, and when there is one, it is digitally deconstructed into a symbolic code and reconstituted into an iconic likeness. Indexicality, insofar as we understand it as the causal bond between image and object, prevails merely as a possibility.” The image that constitutes the fundamental of documentary is not anymore raw material captured by camera, but becomes an animation, an alteration attempting to claim the real. He convinces that in this case the evidentiary quality of the genre is almost compromised. It means a big disadvantage in the genre’s credibility. Nonetheless, theoreticians attempt to define the genre in terms of the genre’s subjective values. The issue of “subjectivity” in documentaries seems to be the pivot along which the dispute about the genre is being conducted. Instantly, here Rozenkrantz dictates Paul Wells⁴⁰, a primal theoretician in terms of animated documentary, who convinces that employment of animation within documentary genre means for reality difficulties in its proper representation. It is also supported by the fact that such genre cannot be objective and may only “mimic” traditional documentary codes and conventions. Furthermore, Paul Ward shares this concept in his observations; he concludes that “It is certainly the case that, as a general tendency, animated films will operate on a more ‘subjective’ level than live action representations.” It is due to the fact that material is put into a conceptual form, it undergoes specific interpretation of the film maker/ animator rather than direct reconstruction of objective reality. Ward also implies that the same process may undergo “live material”, prone to certain “manipulations” as in case of animation. He convinces that “In terms of creating/constructing an argument about ‘the real’, however, neither mode of representation has a monopoly.” Subsequently, Brian Winston (2008: 164) states that “The films are claimed as objective evidence of the subjective

⁴⁰ Wells, Paul (1997), “The Beautiful Village and the True Village: A Consideration of Animation and the Documentary Aesthetic”.

experience of the film maker.” He disdains objectivity in terms of documentary films and on the basis of that proclaims that “objectivity is bullshit.” Ward consequently looks for a solution in his study and tries to solve the issue with appropriate attachment of Nichol’s mode to the genre. Initially, he addresses the expository mode which qualities are associated with traditional documentaries in correspondence to their didactic values. However, animated documentaries cannot be pondered in such way due to belonging to different indexical and reality relation category. Rozenkrantz provides Wells differentiations referring to animation documentary sub-genres; he distinguishes: the imitative mode – it references to Nichols’ expository mode; the subjective mode – a combination of Nichols’ observational and interactive mode, “the role of the animator as observer, re-creating what has happened from the stimulus of aural sources”; the fantastic mode – imitates the reflexive mode; and post-modern mode – it corresponds with performative mode.

The specific “subjective” qualities of animated documentary are obvious for audience that is conscious of its form, of something that differs from “live” reality. Ward states that these qualities are related specifically to narratives and mimicry, not actually genuinely presenting authentic world around us. Therefore, such observation means that audience is exposed not to reality, but as Rozenkrantz proves, “leads the audience away from that objective truth that constitutes what Wells considers to be documentary’s primary intention.” However, Ward solves the issue by claiming that audience reads animatic image as reality, but “in terms of its extraordinary mimetic qualities.” Furthermore, Rozenkrantz comments the genre’s credibility by basing on Sybil DelGaudio’s⁴¹ statements which claim that image non-credibility through animation becomes credible, convincing that animation is appropriate for documentary genre. To support this statement Bella Honess Roe (2013) in her article suggests that animation is a perfect tool for representation of past events or memories, “I think that animation is a representational strategy that is particularly suited to documentaries that explore fragmented pasts of forgotten, perplexing, yet often formative memories. The use of animation can emphasise that history and, importantly, memory, are ephemeral and can be a mean to counter official and written histories.” For her animation is an enhanced mean to project the complexity of relations within an inner world/reality of a film maker. She also adds “It may seem counter-intuitive that non-indexical media may be the most vibrant and evocative way of remembering the past. But, the absence of indexical evidence of the past combines with the rich tapestry of animation’s visual excesses, which go beyond merely re-presenting the past, to convey the meaning of both personal history and the act of remembering it.”

⁴¹ A professor of radio, television and film theory at Hofstra University; directed *Independent Spirits: the Faith and John Hubley Story* and (2001) *Animated Women* (1995).

To conclude the genre's characteristics, which re-define the issue of representation in documentary genre, a one may refer to Wards assumptions that due to its indexical relation with reality, animated documentary constitutes a perfect mean as a "commentary on real events and real people." Through the genre's subjective qualities and imaginative production techniques a multiple number of film makers' perspectives can be displayed and portrayed, giving an opportunity to relate to reality in a personal way. Eventually, Ward sates that "The relationship between reality, documentary and animation could therefore be described as 'creating the real.'"

	Intentions of the film maker	Construction of the text	Role constructed for the audience	Implications for factual discourse
Documentary	To present an argument about the social-historical world, in order to inform, educate and/or entertain	Offers a rational and 'objective' argument about the social-historical world, using the codes and conventions of the documentary form	The text offers a relatively unmediated reflection of reality (complicated by the expansion of the documentary genre)	Either explicit reinforcement of factual discourse or possible expansion of the documentary genre.
Drama-documentary	To construct a dramatised representation of the social-historical world	A fictional text, which offers an argument about the social-historical world in the form of a narrative	The text does not have the visual integrity of a documentary	Reinforcement of factual discourse, by allowing for forms of expression outside documentary codes and conventions
	Assume they are able to represent reality, rather than to directly record reality	Draws upon the expectations and assumptions of factual discourse (but not the sustained appropriation of documentary codes and conventions)	Factual assumptions (accuracy, objectivity) combined with some latitude for fictional representation	
Mock-documentary	To present a fictional text, with varying degrees of intent to parody or critique an aspect of culture or the documentary genre itself	A fictional text which offers a dramatic narrative presented in the form of an argument	Tension between factual expectations (documentary) and suspension of disbelief (fictional text)	Reinforcement of factual discourse through expansion of documentary codes and conventions, and reflexive and performative modes; a degree of subjective form
		Appropriates documentary codes and conventions Draws upon the expectations and assumptions of factual discourse with varying degrees of reflexivity	Degree of reflexivity, either latent within, or activated by, the text	
Animated documentary	To construct a commentary, argument or presentation of real events. Most often related to individual past memories or subjective interpretations of real events	A fictional text, which offers a dramatic narrative, a subjective interpretation of historical events in a form of animation	Representation of non-indexical relation, suspension of disbelief and degree of reflexivity	Implicit reinforcement of fact/fiction, letting subjectivity into narrative forms
Fictional text	To construct a dramatic story which focuses on fictional characters and events, primarily for the purposes of entertainment	Primarily uses classic realist narrative, with conventions of character and action, and drawing upon variety of cultural and intertextual resources	Suspension of disbelief, with the assumption that the parameters of reality are determined by the text itself	Implicit reinforcement of fact/fiction dichotomy

Figure 21 Situating the mock-documentary, drama-documentary and animated documentary (adapted from Roscoe and Hight 2001: 54).

Chapter four: Playing with reality (analysis)

Case study: (Drama-documentary) *At the Edge of Russia* (2010)

Background information

At the Edge of Russia was produced in 2010 and directed by Michał Marczak. The director in order to capture footage to his film decided on a special profilmic technique by building scenography (barracks) in the outskirts of Moscow territories. According to Jędrzej Morawiecki⁴² (the interpreter of the filming crew) it is due to the fact that Marczak's crew was denied to enter any military facilities where they originally planned to capture footage. The barracks were built to imitate the outposts of Russian border patrols far away in Siberian terrain. Russian social actors were specially hired to play the roles of soldiers that fulfilled their duties in the "outpost". As Marczak confesses in an interview⁴³ some of the actors had to be "trained" in order to know how to behave in front of camera, he says that "Some of the subjects, from the start, were great [at ignoring the camera]. The young guy, the main subject, was great from the start. Three of the other subjects were really, really difficult. It took us two weeks, in some cases, to tire them out." Nonetheless, Marczak stood for the idea to create the proper documentary atmosphere and wanted actors not to perform but to get to their real identities and capture genuine social relations within the outpost, "And then when I felt that they're not acting, that's when we really started filming with them - scenes that were of importance – because that's what's really important to me, to give off that truth, to establish that sort of climate – and that's the director's job, to establish that sort of atmosphere, one where the camera is invisible, and trust is established." Marczak reveals some of the details of production in the interview: "There are three locations within the base that we shot in. Corridor, kitchen, and sleeping area. From the start, we knew we had to tell the film using long lenses to get a feeling of claustrophobia inside. That also helped us in editing because, in using only one camera with the same lens, we could edit anything with anything. We could edit a two or three-minute scene from something we shot over the course of two or three hours. And because everything looked the same, we could cut one dinner scene from ten dinners, or cut in some shots from breakfast. We shot our cutaways at one dinner, and so didn't have to worry about getting them when we were shooting a

⁴² Dr. Morawiecki conducted a lecture on the film in 2012 at Journalism and Social Communication Institute, The University of Wrocław.

⁴³ <https://truefalse.org/wtf/michal-marczak-interview.php>

later dinner scene. So when we're shooting something, we were really able to concentrate on the action and emotion of the people. We never made the characters go back or repeat something or ask them to sit down again."

As Morawiecki explains the outstanding fact about the film is that Marczak never officially informed about the subjective style of filming and that events shown are not even reconstructions of actual events. However, he (the director) also never hidden the fact about the way it had been produced.

Directed by: Michal Marczak

Produced by: Marianna Rowinska

Cinematography by: Radoslaw Ladczuk

Editor: Dorota Wardeszkiewicz

Synopsis

The main protagonist Alexei is a recruit whose duty is to be carried out in far northern outpost on Siberian border. He is transported with a helicopter to fulfil his duty with other men already settled in barracks. Each man has his own mystery, a story to tell, the reason of being there. The plot consequently concentrates on soldiers' cooperation and everyday interactions, secrets they reveal while drinking vodka or singing a song. Meanwhile, they do their routine tasks, patrol the border, keep the place tidy and obey orders. They incorporate the new recruit into their lives.

Analysis

At the Edge of Russia comprises of sequences captured with handheld camera and static camera shots. These are mainly MSs⁴⁴ and CUPs⁴⁵ to enhance the dynamism of the scenes and to bring dramatic effect into narrative. The overall tempo of the film is slow and the filming style concentrates on details to show facial expressions and protagonists' faces and shoulders and other subjects concentrating on everyday tasks of characters. Although, the camera movements are swift and provide feeling of fast pacing action and environment especially in the beginning of the film, the narrative progresses relatively slowly. There is a multiple number of EWSs⁴⁶ and WSSs⁴⁷ of the near vicinity (covered with snow) of the outpost. The most often used technique is shot-reverse-shot

⁴⁴ "Medium Shot"; -s plural; Please check "Appendix" section for abbreviations.

⁴⁵ "Close up".

⁴⁶ "Extreme wide shot".

⁴⁷ "Wide shot".

formation; editing for development (used once); however completely no techniques as editing for clarification nor contrast and contradiction are witnessed. The subject of the narrative is the relation built within the small society of soldiers. The director of the film Michał Marczak confessed that characters are hired social actors who construct their own hierarchy and apply their own lifestyle within the artificial military facility. It is probable that some of the scenes are captured according to script and some may be repeated ones, though the director denies such fact.

In the beginning of the film there is a sequence with shots captured from the board of a helicopter and interchangeably sequenced with CUP of Alexei, his arm and face (introduction of the protagonist); and also WSs of soldiers at the landing zone awaiting the helicopter sitting. The shots are dark and mysterious as they are captured during the night; LkL⁴⁸. The camera movement is dynamic and chaotic in order to enhance dramatic effect and fast-pacing action. Then the camera follows the subjects (WS) and captures three soldiers passing through the snow corridor into the military facility. The scene evokes feeling of danger and uncertainty as the captured shot portrays snow storm and hazy, unclear view of the surroundings and the settlement. The shots seem very natural and genuine as the new recruit naturally falls during the scene. The swift beginning embraces the atmosphere of an action film. However, after the end of the sequence the narrative enters its slow rhythm. The most of the following sequences include MSs and CUPs which seem really claustrophobic (probably due to limited space within facility and long lenses), though they build feeling of intimacy and close relationship among characters. There are MSs and CUPs of Alexei when he prepares his sleeping place and organises around the unit. A scene in the dining room is important. It introduces other characters and presents the second most important protagonist, Valera the sergeant, who tells others about his dream. The next sequence presents Alexei performing his duties under supervision of older colleagues, this is where the dwellers of the settlement build and ground the relations with Alexei; through such development of the narrative audience is uniting with the protagonist and the relationship is maintained. Moreover, MSs and WSs of protagonists (e.g. quarrelling over snow mobile) are intertwined together with shots of Alexei conducting his mundane tasks. There are few EWSs of the settlement and vast territories of snow covered vicinity. Alexei during his tasks is amused by the behaviour of two of the guards who run naked in the snow and freezing cold, there are MSs and EWSs of the scene what brings a dose of humour into serious and severe atmosphere. The narrative builds up a suspension in the next sequence where through LkL and MSs and CUPs a one observes Alexei and Valera going to patrol the border. In the dark they use only one flashlight and together with chaotic camera movements the

⁴⁸ "Low key lighting".

suspension is enhanced. The scene ends with scolding of Alexei that he moved away on his own what could be dangerous. It supports the feeling of seriousness of patrol work. Furthermore, there are CUPs of Alexei being questioned of his behaviour in case of trespassers near the border. Probably, the scene belongs to earlier captured scenes and as a cut away is implemented later into narrative. Then the narrative goes back to Alexei's training with Valera and other characters, similar scenes and shots (MSs and CUPs) within the facility and in the field; again the feeling of disruption of order in narrative. Next, shots of Alexei's training are captured outside the facility where he needs to spend two nights on his own; a one sees his preparation of the shelter what seems convincing and genuine. However, it is impossible to conclude if the actor really spent three nights in this way. Shots of Alexei's survival nights are intertwined together with shots (MSs and CUPs) of Valera and others entertaining, doing mundane tasks (chopping wood, etc.) and resting in the facility. Here is editing for development used to show contrast between both conditions they have to cope with. Alexei is brought back to the facility and holiday dinner begins. Through this sequence stronger relationship with audience is grounded presenting nicer and more entertaining side of characters. There are shots outside the facility showing protagonists struggling to dig out wood frozen under snow cover; these are mainly CUPs and MSs which present genuine task to survive and a mean to preserve facility. At this point, the narrative concentrates more on relationships among protagonists with WSs and CUPs through scenes of Alexei and other guard warming up in snow, Valera arm wrestling with others and Alexei's training. These scenes symbolise the maintenance of stronger relationship among guards and build stronger relationship with audience. The scene with one of the soldier's telling the story of his life brings more intimacy. In the following scenes almost each member of the patrol teaches Alexei new useful abilities and skills. Then, during similar patrol as earlier a one learns the story of Valera which enhances the connection with audience. Following this, there is a sequence with Valera as the main protagonist; CUPs and MSs show him playing songs, drinking vodka and telling about his wives. Next, there is a back to mundane tasks of protagonists; WSs, MSs and CUPs presenting them working. In the next sequence soldiers celebrate the day of victory 9th May; this is an important scene in the documentary as audience may perceive them beyond their everyday duties. There are shots of them performing, singing and dancing. Then there is a jump to a sequence with one of the guards patrolling the border and narrative goes back to scene within the facility (Valera and Alexei). It arises the feeling of discontinuation of time and disruption in order of events. The climax scene is when Valera announces that he ends his duty in a month and confesses to others about his suspicion that his wife is disloyal. Audience may not know if Valera's issues are genuine or if they are staged out. The follow up scene is captured during Valera's and Alexei's mundane tasks (chopping wood) and

Valera's concerns continue. There are MSs and CUPs of both of them doing tricks with an axe what seems completely genuine and risky. The end of documentary commences a EWS of Valera going to awaiting helicopter. Then, there is a WS of Alexei smoking a cigarette and EWS of the settlement from within the helicopter (the caption includes text information about the units located along the northern border).

Summary

Michał Marczak in his production *At the Edge of Russia* constructed a fictional narrative with fictional characters based on non-evidentiary material. He only used a sociological concept. The director didn't implement any testimonies or authentic documentary materials in order to enhance production's credibility (except from the caption at the end of the film). The production may be treated as an interpretation grounded on factual discourse concerning several isolated military units along the northern border of Russia. It is more of a simulation, not even a reconstruction as Marczak possessed no actual information on existing military units. It is due to a fact that his crew was simply denied to enter Russian military facilities. Therefore, Marczak decided on an artificial representation of reality. However, on the basis of provided analysis it can be assumed that the director used appropriate techniques within the tenets of drama-documentary genre. Furthermore, to support this statement, it is obvious that the narration is based on sociological occurrences. The profilmic (including the whole facility) was purposefully created for the needs of the film. It is probable that overall order of scenes in narrative was originally scripted but most of them included improvised performances of actors. Vast use of MSs and CUPs enhanced the dynamism in scenes and evoke the feeling of fast-pacing rhythm in the narrative. The editing in the film, however, brings disruption in time whereas the feeling of continuity is preserved. It is due to the fact that editing included material deployment not in chronological order. As Marczak claims, the whole sociological part of the documentary is genuine and on the basis of the analysis it may be concluded that this statement is true. The relations built within this small society of soldiers/actors seem natural and not really acted out. Only the role (soldier) to play is artificial.

To conclude, Marczak's production possesses high degree of fiction (narrative, characters and profilmic); however it is based on factual discourse concerning Russian border military outposts. The production doesn't include any evidentiary material to support its credibility. The use of editing and capturing techniques constructs clear storyline from selected fragments of material. Authentic elements of the production incorporate relations among actors. Undoubtedly, the film fits into drama-documentary conventions; however its credibility values are almost diminished and appear as an interpretation of reality, being merely its true representation.

Case study: (Mock-documentary) *I'm Still Here* (2010)

Background information

The film produced by Casey Affleck in 2010 bases on a hoax that involves of Joaquin Phoenix who draws Hollywood stars environment into his performance. Affleck shortly after the premiere of the film confessed⁴⁹ that almost whole material was fiction; even the archival footage in the narrative proves to be artificial. As the director claims only the scene when Joaquin is shown with his siblings performing a song, the rest is staged. Affleck convinces that part of the material was produced and prepared in a studio with actors. During the performance, Phoenix attempts to convince everybody to genuine nature of his deeds. Some of the people in the film were directly involved in the “hoax”, Affleck mentions here Phoenix’s agent Patrick Whitesell, and his friend musician-assistant who was later accused of betraying the hoax to media. Scenes with prostitutes were also staged elements of the narrative, involving actors. In the interview is stated that “There were multiple takes, these are performances, Mr. Affleck said of unsettling sequences in which Mr. Phoenix appears to snort drugs, consort with hookers, and hunt to the ground an assistant who has betrayed him to the press – again, mostly actors.” Affleck also mentions that due to perplexed Phoenix’s family story⁵⁰ the hoax was more convincing and some part of Hollywood environment was apparently sure of genuity of the protagonist’s disturbing behaviour and decadent lifestyle. It involved even critics who treated the story seriously and perceived the film as a full scale documentary.

Synopsis

The film begins with a scene of Joaquin Phoenix in his childhood, where he tries to jump off the cliff into a river in Panama. Later on, Phoenix as an adult man and a famous actor confesses that he decides to quit his career and from there on wants to become a hip hop star. During performance of “The World of Nick Adams” Joaquin proclaims his abundance of acting career. The consequences of such proclamation are Phoenix's performances on stage what seem hilarious for audience. Phoenix in order to release his debut album engages in contact with Sean Combs (P. Diddy). Their cooperation appears to be pointless and disappointing for the protagonist. Soon after, Phoenix appears on “The Late Show with David Letterman” what consequently ruins Joaquin’s image as an actor. The story has its finish back in Panama where the protagonist pursues to find peace and contemplation on his ruined public live.

⁴⁹ New York Times interview with Casey Affleck, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/17/movies/17affleck.html?_r=1&.

⁵⁰ Joaquin’s brother died of drugs overdose in 1993; the family was also involved in a religious cult.

Analysis

The whole film is captured with handheld camera which allows Casey Affleck to capture material in various scenes which embrace intimacy, secrecy and dynamism of the presented situations. It also involves static camera shots when necessary; these are moments when the narration is supported with interview eye shots working as a mean in editing for clarification fragments when protagonists introduce themselves, like Antony or Larry, and comment on Joaquin's decisions or situations. Static camera is also used in panoramic extreme wide shots of Los Angeles. The whole film is edited in a way to draw the audience with each scene deeper into the hoax and make "everybody" believe that the transformation of the protagonist is full of genuity. In order to achieve this aim Casey Affleck supported the narration with archival footage from media. It is especially seen in the beginning of the film when the shocking transformation of the protagonist is presented.

In the beginning of the film the narration is accumulated over the pivotal decision of the protagonist to give up his career as an actor and pursue a career of a hip hop star. Affleck to expose this idea uses symbolism of specific scenes. In the opening sequence it is done through use of archival footage. Joaquin as a young boy jumps off the cliff of the waterfall of river Huigra in Panama. Joaquin after the hesitation leaps into the water. It is a symbolic scene which refers to the content of the film. The sequence is a montage captured from handheld camera. However, the director confesses that the sequence was filmed in a studio with hired actors; and in fact it only imitates true archival footage. From thereof, the narration uses the dialectic of contrast and contradiction and application of authentic archival footage of street performance of Joaquin's band in Westwood CA in 1982, exposing J's⁵¹ past and showing his career as an adult by interweaving genuine footage from media which involves SCs⁵² and MWSs⁵³ of J during "red carpet" events, showing his fame and popularity in Hollywood environment among other famous actors. After the archival footage is presented Affleck contrasts it with the shocking change of the protagonist. A one sees Joaquin in his backyard in LkL to evoke dramatic effect. The scene's intimacy and secrecy is supported with camera shots taken from the back of the protagonist whose face is covered in a hood of a shirt, he conducts a monologue on his complex personality and reason of taking part in the documentary. This is the moment that emphasises the contrast and contradiction within the narrative and shows the motive of that drives him through the whole transformation. The next scene is captured in Joaquin's house lobby; he explains why he resigned from acting, voice-over narration is used. Again at this point of narration a one may see the use of symbolic scene; he catches a small

⁵¹ J – Joaquin Phoenix

⁵² "Straight cut".

⁵³ „Medium wide shot“.

bird that is prisoned under the roof; the sequence is to induce Joaquin's decision of letting himself "out of the cage" (CUP of the moment of freeing the bird; the moment of achieving freedom, synchronised with voice-over narration, words: "It's to bring what is inside me out"). The narration proceeds to show how the protagonist goes on his new path. J goes to Los Angeles in 2008; an interview together with Joaquin (explaining his crisis) and his assistant Antony talking about their friendship. The sequence is captured in traditional documentary interview style, mixed with archival footage. It is used in order to underscore genuity of the situation and draw audience into the initial process of setting up the hoax; editing for clarification, presenting protagonists and building relationship with audience. The protagonists go to San Francisco in October 2008; the sequence provides information and forecasts the future events in Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall where J is going to take part in a play organised for charity fund and to honour Paul Newman's death. The sequence is captured in traditional interview style. Over-voice narration of the director of the event, who explains the reason of the event, than switching to interview mode. The sequence involves handheld and static camera, EWS and WS to provide necessary information, editing for clarification. Then there is an introduction of J's friend Larry and the environment. The sequence evokes feeling of strong reference to reality, reinforcing familiarity and connection with audience. J in voice-over narration talks about his star-friends and their meeting. In one MS J is in a hotel room makes subtle remarks that it is a documentary; reinforcing in audience the idea of him not being truly himself. The moment of meeting the prime actors of Hollywood reinforces in audience the connection with reality. The director induces the hoax by showing the moments of J's weird behaviour among actors' environment. J "plays out" his confusion during the rehearsal of "The World of Nick Adams" play. He starts to expose his abnormal behaviour and attempts to convince others that he retires from acting. At this point editing through clarification is applied through interview with Victor (actor) and presentation of J's weird behaviour bringing elements of comedy. In the next sequence J confesses to media his plan to retire from acting; it is the point where the media are catching the hoax; some media footage is shown to reinforce the effect of the hoax. The further grounding of the hoax is expressed in the scene with Sue Patricola (J's assistant who confronts media about J's shocking proclamation) when J confesses that he wants to record a hip hop album. J wants to surprise audience with his idea. Nobody knows about J's abrupt and astonishing decisions, however they seem hilarious. At this point he "plays out" his inability to control the situation; the director tries to expose it in the confrontation scene where Affleck and J together appear. The next sequence involves voice-over narration edited as radio hustle involving random information about J's resignation from acting and a series of EWS panoramic shots of Los Angeles. It shows how the media react to his announcement; through this way a false situation is

created and it has its impact in show business world. Audience catches the hoax and is eager to know its consequences. At “Endeavor Talent Agency” J speaks with his agent Patrick Whitesell (who is involved in the hoax and performs his role for the needs of the documentary). Whitesell appears to be not satisfied with J’s announcement. The whole scene in the sequence is genuinely staged. The same way the scene concerning J’s recording the album at his home studio. It aims to convince audience of J’s decisions as true and prepare future events. The sequence concerning J’s hip hop performance in Venice, California is genuine; J’s “acting out” is to ground the hoax among audience. His confession after the performance (that is a total disaster) also aims to show how his character is losing the sense of reality. It is in traditional interview style. His friend is trying to cheer him up. Mat apparently doesn’t know it is a hoax. The sequence evokes feelings of defeat, depression and seriousness of the situation. Later on, one sees his attempts to find a producer for his hip hop album. The intimacy is built by dark shots from “hidden” perspective in LkL and his confessions to his friends. It reinforces the connection with audience. J spreads his hoax among other artists (Mos Def) that he meets along his journey to New York. In the next sequence the contrast and change in the protagonist is progressing, how his weird and absurd behaviour is escalating through “fooling” around with Antony and Larry using a sequence of several quick shots. Sean Combs that was supposed to meet with J and take care of production of his album doesn’t want to meet with him; it is a consequence of a leak in media which claim that J is not really retiring and that he is involved in a hoax. This is the first time audience may be stating questions if it is really a hoax and if everything is really staged and acted out. It is done through a short interview (cutaway) with Christine Spines, an editor at “Entertainment weekly” Casey asks about the revelation and she doesn’t want to confess who the source of the leak is. Nevertheless, the narration still continues to persuade audience that recent situations are genuine by showing J in depressed state on the roof of the building with sunset in the background (CUP of his depressed face). Antony and J invite prostitutes to their private party. J takes drugs and forgets himself in immoral pleasures. The sequence is to enhance the effect of depression of the protagonist and the process of becoming decadent and lost, especially the drug scene when J takes a dose from prostitute’s breast. The scene is completely staged, as suggested by the director. The prostitutes are hired actresses who expose their nudity (their faces are censored) and drugs seen as white powder are fake. The whole scene is to evoke a shock in audience and support scene’s authenticity. After this sequence, the narration is pulling up the tension and dynamism when J and his friends travel to Miami and J wants to meet up with Sean Combs to talk about the album. There is a set of CSs and CUPs from within J’s limousine which presents his tension and embarrassment with the situation. The narration is developed in a way to build up a tension up to a moment when J meets with Sean

Combs in a hotel in Miami. The appearance of Sean Combs in the narration empowers the authenticity of the documentary values, especially when Sean Combs initially doesn't know about the filming and is cautious about the meeting. J during the meeting plays out his ridiculous attitude and decadent behaviour towards Combs. After the scene there are shots of J's celebration at the LIV nightclub where he manages to show with other stars on the scene. The camera movement is chaotic and "shaken" to endure dynamism. The tempo of the sequence paces up when J takes some random girls to his apartment; then there is SC and slow down and jump to other sequence showing his house in Los Angeles. Ben Stiller appears at his place to talk over the script with J who again seems to behave in odd way. The scene includes WS of them sitting together in the yard, and enhances the feeling of grounding the hoax in the presence of Ben Stiller. The next sequence presents how the protagonist is lost by acting out (MS J mumbles to the camera that he has no money to keep his house) the critical situation he is facing. Casey Affleck in his interviews never really revealed which of the "situations" were completely staged and which were genuine. Then archival media footage is used (as CA's) to announce J's start in music career and forecasting his future performance in Las Vegas. There are several shots of short interviews with event organisers. Furthermore, the CAs of J's unprofessional behaviour is exposed (refusing to take part in sound check). The narration includes media review from his performance which is perceived as a total disaster. It is shown when J's friend reads a review (voice-over narration) meanwhile there is a shot of J falling off the scene amidst the crowd; the protagonist is not happy about the reviews. The whole sequence is to show the protagonist's confusion and false perception of himself and his new career. From there on, the director concentrates on showing this falling down of the protagonist; his confusion in shots of silence, mumbling moments about completely unimportant things and especially the moment of insight in the meeting with actor Edward James Olmos. The director tries to expose that J is living a dream and he's a victim of his himself in this dream. It is done through the shots as J plays computer game "Second Life" and plays paintball; meanwhile a one hears voice-over narration of hip hop lyrics with a "dream" motive. The degradation in his live is proceeding by showing scenes how he cannot handle the situation; these are shots when J is acting nervously not only because of no success in his musical career but also because of drug addiction he is following. The narration involves argument scenes with Larry and Antony. The complete decadency is exposed in a scene in a mini-van where J argues it should be a private jet. One of the most important scenes in the film is when J and Casey accuse Antony of selling the information about the hoax to the press. The sequence is completely staged and acted out even by the director himself who for a moment appears in the shot (as confessed by the Affleck). Several MSs, CUPs (showing astonished face of Antony; and angry facial expressions of J) and LkL bring dramatic effect to the scene and seem as a peak in

J's depression. The scene devoted to Sue Patricola comments refers to neglected part of J's live as a celebrity. It is shown as a partial interview with (eye level shots) and CAs, CUPs showing J's fitting the suit. J's MSs and WSs showing his neglected appearance as he tries to get in touch with Sean Combs and meet to record his album. The director exposes J's stray attitude in a scene where he tries to meet up with Combs and drives into the rant of the road. The scene seems to be totally staged out. J at the studio acts as a lost and stressed man what can be seen in MS as he nervously bites his finger nails and reveals excitement. The whole scene at the studio is a complete mockery of cooperation of musicians. J is serious and confused, however Combs is getting irritated and he asks J why he got involved with hip hop music ('[...] you think it's [...] funny?') The MS when they sit in front the studio set and look at each other is a masterpiece in terms of tension and confrontation of J's immature behaviour. Affleck decides to show the protagonist's shock and depression after meeting with Sean Combs and presents J taking drugs in the car (CUP). In the narration there's media footage commenting and mocking J's decision to pursue music career and his neglected appearance. In the next sequence there are shots in which journalists are confronting J and his decisions remarking about the hoax; J nervously acts out his firm attitude and defends himself. The turning moment is his appearance in "David Letterman's Late Show" where everything is genuine apart from J's confused and weird behaviour for the needs of the performance of the documentary. There is authentic material from the show edited together with shots captured by Casey who filmed Sue Patricola (in CAs there are her reactions to awkward moments for J) in the time of the show. The show is a comedy and mockery at the same time; it is a climax of the whole documentary. There is confusion as to the fact if David Letterman was also in on the hoax, but apart from that his reactions to J's attitude seem authentic. In the next sequence there's a CUP of J shocked and depressed reaction to his failure in Letterman show; meanwhile there are MSs of Sue Patricola who looks compassionately at J. Shouts of "booing", crowd of journalists is seen as J walks out the building, what reinforces in audience the feeling that what happens to the protagonist is real. Then there's a completely staged scene when J gets out the limousine and cries in nearby bushes and Larry comforts him. J perfectly plays out his desperation at the premiere time of the film *Two Lovers*, to enhance the effect there is dynamic camera movement. The narration again is building up a tension by adapting scenes of argument between J and Antony. It ends with a staged night scene (MS) (the camera equipment is supported with night vision) where Antony (in an act of retribution) secretly excretes some substances on J's face (asleep). Audience is made to believe these are in fact human excrements; however Casey Affleck confessed that for the needs of the scene it is a sort of food mixture. In the next sequence, a time lapse of New York is implemented to show passing time and again media footage to expose the whole spectrum of media reactions to J's failures; it is a

mockery of his life style as it can be seen in authentic footage from Oscar Academy Awards where Ben Stiller appears next to Natalie Portman and dresses as J mocking his ridiculous behaviour. Meanwhile, there are CAs of J watching the ceremony. His full depression is embraced in a shot where he blindly looks through a window in a dark room. The narration is coming to the finale and it includes more silent moments and dark shots to enhance the feeling of overwhelming depression. There is more concentration on Larry as he is organising another performance for J at LIV nightclub. The tension in the narration once again is rising up what can be seen in the scenes of J's preparation for his performance, these are EWSs and WSs of the hall and MSs of people who watch at J's vocal preparation in a doubtful manner. Then there are shots in the hotel room where J silently prepares for the event. These long shots are building up suspension, forecasting that something is going to happen during this performance, especially when Larry states that this is his last chance and the scene when J and Larry are holding hands and praying. In the next scene J does his performance and suddenly jumps off the scene and attacks somebody in the crowd. It is definitely acted out however for the audience the whole situation is ultimately authentic. There are mainly EWSs to show the atmosphere in the club and masses of people who are witnessing the fight. The scene ends with camera following J as he is assisted by security and with MS of J vomiting in a toilet and EWS of the club still having fun and partying. There are shots of people wearing fake beards imitating J's appearance. Then there's a sequence of shots of Miami, Florida in order to present J's travel to visit his dad; meanwhile silent shots of J are imitating his culminating depression; J doesn't speak any word until the end of narration. Only Larry tells the audience that J decides to visit his father. Shots of silent J are captured and mixed together with panoramic shots of Panama during the travel; in the background piano music. In the almost final sequence there's a MS of J and his father sitting silently together at the table; the shot enhances J depression and a feeling of failure; more panoramic shots of Panama and people living there. This sequence may symbolise the moment of "cooling down" and J's seeking for peace and silence. J visits Huigra river, the one that was shown in archival footage at the beginning of the film. There are shots of him sitting silently in front of the same waterfall. Then there is again implemented the moment of "jumping" with the same archival footage; and through MSs there are underwater shots of J diving in the depths of the river. The shots are aesthetic and poetic; in the background plays calming piano music. Next, there's a long scene where camera is following J as he steps again into the river, walks along the river bed and disappears in the water ending with SC. The whole finale sequence brings symbolic connotations of the protagonist coming back to his true self or just his disappearance and resignation. The audience is left to decide itself.

Summary

I'm Still Here addresses the most fundamental conventions of mock documentary genre through adaptation of scenes which are overly fictional in terms of narrative. It refers to sequences where performs Joaquin Phoenix and the nearest environment of actor, friends involved in and aware of the hoax; these are: Antony, Larry, the director himself Casey Affleck, Phoenix's agents and other among his friends, etc. The most scenes in the film involve staged material which presents fictional situations and trigger false protagonists' behaviour. The narrative of the film follows some typical documentary modes through implementation of reflexive and performative mode. The reflexive mode is seen in the specific rhetoric and relationship built with audience which questions throughout the whole film the authenticity of almost every scene. Although the indexical values concerning reality are preserved, i.e. there aren't any abstract and CGI technology images; the questions of authenticity are stated each time whenever Joaquin Phoenix performs, grounding and escalating the hoax in the environment. Audience is put in a position of permanent inquiry if the production is really a documentary film; and the answer to the question stubbornly oscillates between both poles. Joaquin's performance actually unveils the way in which falsity is implemented into the reality and how it exists within specific societal structures like media (in this way the performative mode emerges, but probably only for the needs of the hoax and not for research demands). Audience at some point of the narrative gains this awareness; audience judges what is real in the presented material. Furthermore, the tension between factuality and suspension of disbelief is steadily growing through the whole film. The factual incorporates the whole environmental responses to the protagonist's actions. This includes reactions of appearing people in the narrative (unaware of the hoax) and especially the media. The narration concentrates very often on the material produced by not dependant to production sources by showing authentic media footage and interviews with key protagonists. The impact is almost global, entangling the most powerful media potentates in the world into viral news concerning Joaquin Phoenix's deeds. It is a global experiment on reality and its boundaries, especially within the media and celebrities' environments. Casey Affleck's film not only records the (staged) transformation of the protagonist on micro level of sociological degree of study, but captures the changes on macro level undergoing within wide structure of society. Moreover, this triggers temporal change in reality and captures it in its form, what is in fact a direct impact of grounding and preparing the hoax. The film foregrounds an explicit expansion of boundaries of documentary modes and conventions, realising more than the audience could imagine.

To sum up the film possesses all necessary characteristics of mock documentary genre and even infringes its conventions through its transitional effect on reality. It is a perfect example of a

film which starting from basic codes and conventions of documentary became a concept that would artifice the reality, but merely captures it.

Case study: (Animated documentary) *Waltz with Bashir* (2008)

Background information

Waltz with Bashir is an animated production, written, directed and produced by Ari Folman in 2008. This animated documentary is produced in animated 3d drawings, and involves some archival footage of Israeli army mission in South Lebanon in 1982. Folman apart from implementing archival footage into the film incorporated real interview recordings of interviewees who were filmed and recorded in a sound studio. Only two protagonists (Boaz Rein Buskila and Carmi Can'an) are played by hired actors; however Folman convinces that their testimonies are genuine. The animated drawings represent the director's and his interviewees' personal memories of the war. Here is the director's confession (interviewed by Richard Lormand in Cannes, 2008) of the production process: "*Waltz with Bashir* was made first as a real video based on a 90-page script. It was shot in a sound studio and cut as a 90-minute length video film. It was made into a story board, and then drawn with 2300 illustrations that were turned into animation. The animation format was invented in our studio "Bridgit Folman Film Gang" by the director of animation Yoni Goodman. It's a combination of Flash animation, classic animation and 3D. It's important for me to make clear that by all means this film was not made by rotoscope animation, meaning that we did not illustrate and paint over the real video. We drew it again from scratch with the great talent of art director David Polonsky and his three assistants."

Written, directed and produced by: Ari Folman

Producers: Yael Nahlieli, Bridgit Folman Film Gang, Israel

The interviewees: Boaz Rein Buskila, Ori Sivan, Roni Dayg, Carmi Cnaa'n, Shmuel Frenkel, Ron Ben Yisahi, Dror Harazi, Prof. Zahava Solomon

Length: 87 min.

Synopsis

Ari Folman, a former soldier of Israeli Defence Forces, took part in the offensive in Lebanon war in 1982. Years after, he tries to reconstruct his memories as he is facing a post-trauma amnesia of these events. Ari intrigued by many questions of his own part in the mission, decides to interview his colleagues from former unit and strives to learn the truth. At the initial point of his journey he meets his friend in a bar who tells him about a recurring nightmare of twenty-six aggressive dogs that

chase him. Both friends agree that it has to do something with the Israeli mission in Lebanon. Subsequently, Ari visits other people that took part in the invasion. The film ends with the archival footage of the consequences right after the massacre of refugees in Sabra and Shatila camp.

Analysis

The film *Waltz with Bashir* uses animation material and authentic footage that supports the factual discourse and credibility of the production. Folman decided to incorporate animation as a representation of subjective elements of testimonies (his own and colleagues). He needed to present memories and past events with this technique, although he possessed authentic material captured during interviews. Such way of representation in the film attempts to endure not only credibility values but also aesthetic. However, by application of animation the indexical relation in the film is compromised. On the other hand, the implementation of genuine footage from the invasion in Lebanon attempts to supplement this drawback and to embody the reference with true reality (events) representation. In order to conduct analysis the same techniques are to be pondered as in other documentary cases.

In the beginning one sees an animated series of dynamic MSs of a pack of dogs. Their run stops when they come to a block of flats with a window above (EWS). In the window appears a man and the dogs are barking at him. Another shot WS shows the aggressive behaviour of the dogs. Then the over-voice starts. The whole sequence imitates a dream that Boaz Rein Buskila (a friend of Ari Folman who took part in Israeli invasion) experiences each night, exactly of 26 six dogs. It is a subjective representation of a dream projected with an animated sequence. Boaz was played by an actor; however the director assures that his friend's testimony was genuine. Then there is a jump to another sequence showing Ari Folman and Boaz sitting in a bar and talking about the dream and mission to Lebanon; the voice-over continues and transcends into a dialogue between both men. There are MSs of them sitting at the bar; shot-reverse-shot formation is applied. The sequence jumps into WS of Boaz's unit trespassing Lebanese territory in the search for wanted Palestinians. The animation is dark as the action is happening during the night. The sequence presents reminiscent events as Boaz tells the story in over-voice narration; there are MSs of Boaz walking among soldiers. He continues the story about the dogs. Then, there are WSs of dogs coming out and barking out from the village to warn that somebody is coming (soldiers). Jump back to MSs of both men talking in the bar; shot-reverse-shot formation. Then, MS and CUPs of Boaz pulling the trigger of a rifle and shooting one of the dogs. Come back to scene in a bar; Boaz explains he had to shoot 26 dogs to quiet them down and asks Ari about any Lebanon memories, Ari denies having any. In another sequence there are shots of Ari driving a car and talking in over-voice narration of his

flashback of the massacre in Shabra and Shatila refugee camps. The animation swiftly moves from WS of him standing near the sea shore and going to the past (MWSs and MSs) presenting young Ari in water with a rifle in his hand going towards the sea shore together with other young soldiers; in the background there are military flares falling in the sky and lighting up the nearest vicinity of Beirut. Next, there is a WS of boy-soldiers dressing up on the background of rising sun; and EWS of them coming out on the streets of Beirut. The sequence ends with MS of young Ari surrounded by shocked passing-by refugees. The whole animation sequence presents Ari's flashback memories of Beirut. It is impossible to assess if such testimony is credible. Then, there is a jump to sequence with Ari visiting his friend Ori Sivan in the early morning. Both talk about past memories and psychological experiment on memory. There are MSs and MWSs of them talking in the kitchen. The cutaway technique is used when Ori talks about psychological experiment on memory. The cutaway is a small sequence of animation images to present abstract theories Ori is talking about. After the cutaway narration comes back to the shots in the kitchen. Ori's voice is a genuine element captured during the interview with him. It can be assumed that the whole scene is true; however it is presented with animation. Here's a cut and narration moves to next sequence with Ari visiting his friend Carmi Cna'an in Netherlands. There are shots of them both driving in a car and talking about Carmi's life since he moved to Netherlands. Carmi is played by an actor, although as Ari claims his testimony is true. The narration swiftly jumps from EWS of Carmi's vast lands to EWS of a ship and people dancing on its deck. These are army people having fun; the scene is a start to representation of Carmi's testimony that they were transported on a ship leased by army. The sequence moves to MWS of Ari interviewing Carmi inside saloon in his house. Carmi talks about his hallucinations at that time of being on the deck of the ship. His delusions are projected in a cutaway presenting him on the ship and being saved by a gigantic woman coming out of the sea (EWSs and MWSs). Again there are shots of Carmi and Ari talking in saloon; and Carmi continues the story as they disembarked on the shore with soldiers and killed a whole family in Mercedes car. There are (MWSs and MSs) of soldiers shooting, of a Mercedes car devastated with projectiles, of dead people in it, and soldiers trespassing slowly the nearby area. Then narration comes back to the saloon and both men talking. Ari talks about his vision, as earlier the same cutaway sequence of him and other boy-soldiers coming out of sea water when the sky is lit up with falling flares. And then back to saloon sequence of them talking in shot-reverse-shot formation. It is the way how Ari projected the whole scene of interview interchangeably together with representation of both men's past memories. After the sequence there's a cut and jump into sequence with Ari in a taxi to Amsterdam airport where he suddenly remembers all. The animation presents MSs of Ari sitting in a taxi and in one moment the Netherlands surroundings change into Lebanon war area. Ari's over-

voice enters to tell the story of the first day of war. It is a sequence of WSs showing him and other soldiers in a tank desperately and aimlessly shooting at the field; and then talking about the dead ones to dump them. They get to the landing zone and see more dead and wounded (EWSs and WSs). The ending shot (WS) of the sequence presents him and his crew driving back into war zone. Next sequence includes Ari's visit to interview Ronny Dayag (who is a former tank loader); there are several shots (MSs) of Ari and Ronny in an office. Ari asks about people who could be there at the time when he was transporting wounded and dead; he shows his picture from that time. There's a cutaway sequence of some soldier boys trying to do a self-photo at the tank together. Ronny is talking about his time during the excursion on the coast during the war. A one sees cutaway shots of soldiers in rather warm-hearted manner, singing songs and move across the war area in tanks. Meanwhile, there's an over-voice of Ronny describing the scenery and his feelings during the excursion. The idyllic story suddenly stops when the commander dies in an attack and they need to abandon the tank and run for their lives. The shots from interview are intertwined together with the shots from Ronny's story which is presented as in previous interview cases. There are EWSs and WSs of the battleground. Ronny talks about his fear how his mother would react if he died and there is a small cutaway sequence showing Ronny working together with her mother in the kitchen. Then, there is a comeback to battleground sequence and Ronny hiding from enemy soldiers. In over-voice he describes what they were doing. After nightfall Ronny gets (WSs) into the sea and swims south; they try to shoot him and look for him with a helicopter. Meanwhile, he continues his story in over-voice and in several EWSs a one sees how he reaches the land and exhausted is found by his regiment. Next, there are several WSs and MSs of graves of his friends; and his confession of feeling guilty for not helping them; there is a shot of him hiding in the shadow of the tree and EWS showing him walking the same shore where he was hiding. The last sequence is symbolic in a way to show Ronny's guilt. It is a genuine testimony as these are true recordings of him. At the same shot of this sequence Ronny's figure disappears and appears a figure of soldier playing a rock'n'roll tune on a rifle. In this way is presented a subjective commentary of Ari on war. A sequence of shots starts presenting in a fast-paced tempo war fights (a sort of a time lapse) over the same area where Ronny presented his story and shots of Israeli soldiers having fun at the same beach; and over-voice narration of Ari explaining that the area was taken over by Israeli army one month after. In the same sequence there is a MS of Shmuel Frenkel, Ari's friend. The sequence moves to several "contemporary" shots of Shmuel training karate in order to present his temperament. Then there are interview shots and Shmuel explains how he survived the war. There are cutaway shots (MSs and WSs) of Shmuel and his team of soldiers walking at night and Shmuel using patchouli scent to track him so he is easily smelt by his fellow soldiers in the dark. After that there is a sequence of war

shots presenting absurdity of war. It is hard to assess if these shots resemble memories of Ari Folman or of any other interviewees. Then there is a continuation of interview with Shmuel who describes daily routine; his words are matched with shots presenting their daily routine. There's a MS with Ari asking about his (Ari's) presence in the stories Shmuel described and he gets an affirmative answer. The sequence involves animated shots of interviewing of Shmuel but also all abstract descriptions and stories the interviewee presented. Next sequence projects an interview (in MSs and MWS; interview style) with prof. Zahava Solomon describing the example of post trauma stress disorder; it is a story of amateur war photographer. In a cutaway his animated photos are shown and shots matching prof. Solomon's story. Then, Ari describes his past memories which are also represented as a series of shots with him in time lapse manner (very rhythmic background music). The sequence ends with straight cut and jump into scene with Ari and Boaz at the bar drinking vodka and talking about recollected Ari's memories; Ari starts telling the story of Russian soldiers in Stalingrad. Similarly, as in previous presented past stories; there's a cut away sequence with MSs of Russian soldiers and their families reuniting at furloughs, only for few minutes. The narrative comes back to the bar and again both friends are talking; car blasts is the topic and another Ari's story in Beirut is projected as a cutaway sequence of shots of soldiers relaxing in a villa. Then, few shots of Ari with Boaz and again cutaway sequence with soldiers waiting for a car-bomb trap and the story of a flight to Beirut after president elect gets killed; and the invasion of Beirut itself (Ari tells the story in over-voice). The cutaway sequences are to present Ari's story and make them more imaginative and more interesting. During the invasion of Beirut Ari's team gets into rifle fire; there are EWS and WS of soldiers crawling and ambushing. Suddenly, a TV journalist Ron Ben Yishai appears (who is another interviewee) and walks among the battlefield in an upright position with no fear, his camera man is crawling terrified (EWSs and WSs). There's a cutaway showing Ron describing the situation. Again there are shots of the street in Beirut in war chaos and cutaway with Shmuel's describing the situation from his perspective; then there are shots of Shmuel who gets into the centre of fire power and in a crazy manner fires in all directions and dances. There's a cut. Folman used genuine testimonies of his, Shmuel's and Ron's to present the marching into Beirut right before the Sabra and Shatila massacre; he made a reconstruction to relatively expose all the facts. After the cut there is a WS of Ari and Carmi sitting in Carmi's garden and discussing the following events in Beirut. There's a cutaway sequence presenting the situation after the execution of Palestinians (Carmi's over-voice). The way Carmi describes it is very abstract and scary. The same cutaway sequence includes dark and very terrifying shots of the place (horror style) where execution happened; after that there are shots of Bashir's posters and pictures (in order to match the content of over-voice narration of Carmi and Ari). The sequence ends with Ari's hallucination of the

night with falling flares. This is a symbolic scene as it projects the mystery Ari wants to solve; the day of the massacre (Carmi doesn't remember anything from the massacre). A one sees Ari together with Ori MWS discussing Ari's revelations. This scene is to conclude and prepare audience for further findings and developments of the narrative. Another interview with Dror Harazi (a former tank commander) is conducted in the same structure as previous interviews. Dror tells the story and there are cutaway sequences projecting his descriptions. Then there's a jump to Ron's testimony (cutaways are intertwined to fill the gaps). He explains how he learned about the massacre. Both sequences (testimonies) are to present the background information about the Sabra and Shatila massacre and about the official position of army about refugee killings incidents happening. Extremely important scene is included in Ron's testimony as he decided to call Israeli defence minister to report the massacre; there are shots of him drinking whiskey and making the call. Ari consolidates information in a scene together with Ori (MWS). Ari gives his testimony and there's a cutaway sequence with EWSs and WSs of flares lighting up the sky; Ari and Ori are in over-voice narration. Next, Ron's testimony with projections continues. When Ron's testimony ends there is again the same shot of young Ari standing in the crowd of lamenting and shouting crowd of passers-by. It is a continuation of his vision from the beginning of the narration. The sequence is also continued with genuine archival video footage (captured with handheld camera) of women crying and shouting (MSs), shots of dead people lying in the streets of Sabra and Shatila (MWSs and MSs). The authentic footage is extremely shocking and terrifying; it gives the credibility to the whole story and supports the rest of animated material.

Summary

Waltz with Bashir is an attempt to present real events based on several testimonies merged into dramatic narrative of Ari Folman who pursues to regain his memories of the Israeli invasion into South Lebanon where the actual massacre of refugee camp took place. It is a production that balances on the verge of fact and fiction.

The factual side of the production includes several testimonies of the interviewees whose stories were actually captured on video material; and also archival footage constitutes the most credible element that was implemented at the end of the narrative. It supports the whole evidentiary part of the film and fills the gap in the narrative that is left by the animation techniques. Fiction in the film mostly concerns the use of animation to present the subjective representation of the events embedded into the dramatic narrative. Subjectivity, however, refers to the past memories which are represented in the bigger part of the film. It is a journey to regain memories, right into Ari Folman's psyche what is itself very subjective in its form and idea. The same concerns Ari's perspective in

war, or rather his commentary, which is implemented into most of the animated cutaways. Structure of the narrative follows the same pattern almost throughout the whole production; these are interview shots mixed together with cutaways of the content (testimonies of the interviewees).

It may be assessed that in the production only the content that directly concerns the testimonies of the interviewees is true, the rest of the material lets high degree of subjectivity into the film and it is hard to distinguish between fact and fiction. Animation enables to use wide variety of shots and means to represent abstract idea that is why the director decided on this way of representation of the material. Otherwise, the traditional methods would have restrained productions capabilities (entertaining values). Animated material not only allowed to present the imaginative way of putting testimonies into the narratives but also let the director to implement his own conclusion and commentaries into the production.

Chapter five: Conclusions

The apparent commencement of new era in technological and ideological shifts has left behind the post-Griersonian phase of documentary films. On the basis of conducted research a one is witnessing the emergence of the new form of documentary films which has laid its foundations on the traditional codes and conventions; however the landscape that is to be seen is unconditionally different. Technological shift underwrites the transformation of reality what is experienced in its representations in contemporary documentary films. To support that statement the conducted analysis provides multitude of evidences. These evidences are experienced in the characteristic tendency that three analysed films are in constant upheavals concerning amounts of fact and fiction they include. These films characterise with high degree of fiction on factual basis. However, this basis vary as it can be proven on the example of drama-documentary *At the Edge of Russia* in which the factual discourse is a sociological assumption about military Russian bases; in mock-documentary *I'm Still Here* the authentic response of society to fictional hoax; and in animated documentary *Waltz with Bashir* the historic occurrence through subjective perspective. The place of truth within these genres is misplaced as they possess less evidentiary material than in traditional documentaries or even sometimes lack of it what has its imprint on credibility values. Furthermore, a one witnesses the distortion of indexical relations through CGI enhanced narratives. Filmmaker's range of possibilities extended to such proportions that only simple assumption or a prepared hoax is sufficient to produce feature-length documentary films. As it has been proven the subjective perspective becomes the major driver of these productions. The comparison to the Griersonian phase would result in an assumption that "creative treatment of actuality" is no longer valid. This theory would transcend to something similar to "creative dramatisation of actuality" with the

emphasis on “creative” and “dramatisation” and not the overall picture of credibility. Probably, a one should proclaim the emergence of simulacrum. It means that documentary as a genre is slowly losing its scientific side; because of it becomes less evidentiary through methods of material representation, and through ideological means more enhanced dramatically; the “actuality” is not the pivotal factor anymore. Traditional theorists emphasised the sociological aspect of documentary films which concerned the revelation of mechanisms that control reality. However, discovering of the mechanisms of reality has become seemingly outdated; it is the change, the transition of reality that is in the centre of filmmakers’ attention. It is done through high degree of interventionism what in given productions becomes their main aspect. The principles and ideological tenets of Cinema Direct have been laid aside what means the commencement of the slow “death” of non-interventionism in documentary films. This phenomenon leads to gaps in definitions which framework was born in such philosophical and ideological struggles throughout the whole previous century. Moreover, it leads to further expansion of documentary codes and conventions; and probably realisation of completely new ones.

At this point a one needs to consider a few important questions. What does this really mean in terms of representation of reality in documentary films? Is the new emerging “landscape” answers the questions of truth or it buries them? If a one takes documentary films as “content” and would put them in “content-to-world” relation then the analysis proofs that the films possess non-credible values and they compromise modern truth theories. On that basis it may be assumed that ideologically documentaries are witnessing the complete abundance of classical perspective towards reality, and rather attempt to put reality into other direction, into its transition. Preferably this expansion of documentary modes and conventions is a search for new solutions through technological advancement and ideological shift. Maybe behind the usage of contemporary modes to create reality hides the archaic drive to discover it; or human kind being still the symbolic in the Platonian den attempts to project what is unable to see. Following this trail of thoughts a one may assume that if it is impossible to perceive the whole truth, then it is easier to create it. As Baudrillard claims there’s a tendency to resolve reality with technical simulation. Probably contemporary filmmakers stepped fully and uncompromisingly into the role of the Platonian artist and put all their endurance into aesthetic framework, illusory beauty of their work, and the same leaving the true “carpenter” work behind.

Suggestions and inclinations for further studies

The thesis covered sub-genres which indicated as the most developing and expanding in terms of codes and conventions. However, documentary genre experiences the emergence of other sub-

genres which are still developing. These are: “pseudo-documentary”, “music documentary”, “semi-documentary” and other which haven’t been properly labelled yet. Such sub-genres can be also analysed according to similar principles presented in this thesis or other evaluated framework. The objective would be to expose the representations of reality in the mentioned sub-genres.

Another issue that may be explored in a separate research refers to wider topic of cinematography industry (media) and the phenomenon of “indexing”. Theorists claim that each film is labelled accordingly to its content. A one could analyse on what basis documentary films are classified and labelled in relation to amounts of fact and fiction, and relation to representations of reality. The undertaking for such study would undoubtedly expose in fact the process of films becoming documentaries in a formal way. The line between fact and fiction is starting to blur, it is essential to reveal what context for the industry is identified as documentary and how it relates to reality.

Appendix

Editing and camerawork techniques

Editing

Straight cut (SC) – transposes action into different space and time; into different set, contradicts scenes or ceases action

Cutaway (CA) – provides feeling of continuity, smooth flow of narrative; clarifies or comments presented footage; forecasts future events

Rhythm and tempo – control the pace of narrative; usually go along with cuts

Editing for development – presents separate story lines which merge later into one narrative line

Contrast and contradiction – used to achieve impartiality in documentaries; presents counter arguments about material or various perspectives

Editing for clarification – reinforces logical connection within narratives; usually uses cutaways to present necessary material to clarify narrative

Montage – used archival footage

Camerawork

Extreme wide shot (EWS) and wide shot (WS) – provide most basic information of time and space in narrative

Medium wide shot (MWS) – provides basic information on scenery and characters

Medium shot (MS) – provides more information e.g. mood, posture, facial expression, etc.

Close-up shot (CS) – provides detailed information

Zoom in and zoom out – increases or decreases the field of view; concentrates on details or provides basic information if necessary

Handheld camera – enhance the narrative with dynamism; more realistic and vivacious

Profilmic

Low key lighting (LkL) – provides dramatic atmosphere; brings a partial shadow

High key lighting (HkL) – achieves low contrast; scenes are evenly lit

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