

Representing the Self. Cinematic Autobiography and Auto-Fiction in Post 1990 Slovak Nonfiction Cinema

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Techniques of representing the Self in literature and pictorial arts have a long-standing tradition in the genres of autobiography and self-portraiture. Cinematic self-documentation enables the filmmakers to capture memories and images as part of their journey toward self-knowledge in response to coping with both global and personal changes. This paper explores selected Slovak documentary films in which the directors employ essayistic forms of the cinematic medium to represent the Self through a multiplication of identities with varying degrees of referentiality to the real world. It analyses autobiographical films *Home Movie*, *A New Life of a Family Album*, *Self-Portrait*, *The Last Self-Portrait*, *Notes from Eremocene*, *+90*, and *wave vs. shore*, examining the spectrum of referential autobiographic alter egos created by the authors of these nonfiction films.

Keywords: autobiography, autofiction, nonfiction cinema, Slovak cinema, essay film.

Cinematic self-documentation enables filmmakers to capture memories and images as part of their journey toward self-knowledge. Although self-documenting works are constructed around subjective forms, they often refer to global issues, positioning the authorial/narrating/representing Self at the centre. In doing so, they open a gap between the real world and its representation and blur their boundaries: they draw on the autobiographical contract, yet offer only the authority of the author as its guarantee. By freeing documentary cinema from the obligations of reproduction and reconstruction, the essayistic form opens new avenues for self-documentation in a broader framework of the first-person documentary.

The essayistic form in cinema is characterized by openness, dialogical nature, fluidity, and fragmentariness.¹ It often emphasizes subjectivity, where, as in essay writing, personal experiences are valued more highly than objective knowledge.² Although autobiography and the essay share several common features, and both are discursive forms that resist strict genre delineation, they differ primarily in thematic focus. While the essay places a key emphasis on the author's personal stance *toward* the subject, autobiography centres on the author's own person *as* the subject.³

Although the essay film as a discursive practice has been studied since the 1940s, its "unmethodical method," as described by Timothy Corrigan referencing Theodor Adorno, lends it a somewhat ephemeral quality. This paper aims to specify the relationship between the personal aspects of the essay film and cinematic autobiographical discourse. The essayistic form presents new questions to autobiography regarding the construction of the Self and its relationship to the world, allowing autobiographical discourse to explore new possibilities for integrating subjectivity into public life. Autobiographical discourse is not merely a practice of narcissism, gazing fondly at one's own reflection, but rather a practice of self-examination,

- 1 These traits are most often attributed to the essay film by various scholars (see, for example, Elizabeth A. Papazian – Caroline Eades, "Introduction," In *The Essay Film. Dialogue, Politics, Utopia* (London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2016), 1–11.
- 2 The personal and subjective aspects of the essay film have been emphasized by Laura Rascaroli, *The Personal Camera: Subjective Cinema and the Essay Film* (London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2009).
- 3 One of the key aspects of the essay film is how it connects personal experience with the public sphere. See, for example, Timothy Corrigan, *The Essay Film. From Montaigne, After Marker* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

introspection, and interaction. When delving into memory or self-representation, the autobiographical subject not only looks inward but also gazes outward at the surrounding world. In this sense, autobiographical discourse becomes a discourse about the relationship between the individual and society, a conversation about the possibilities of mediating personal experience with the world and understanding the world through personal experience. This interactive quality of autobiography is often overlooked, yet it can be highlighted by defining the procedures filmmakers use to relate their personal experiences to the viewers. For Corrigan, “the essayistic indicates a kind of encounter between the self and the public domain,”⁴ which he further analyses along three axes: 1. personal – autobiographical; 2. factual – particular; 3. abstract – universal.⁵ As the essayistic form is characterized by the testing of expressive subjectivity through experiential encounters in the public sphere, addressing the viewers’ active stance, it must translate personal experiences (which are singular, private, and often abstract) into autobiographical expressions (which are public and to a certain degree universal). It means that the autobiographical Self needs to interact with the world. To articulate personal experiences, authors multiply their identities, create their own representations, doppelgangers, and oscillate between multiple perspectives.

In another context,⁶ I focused on the dominant strategies within autobiographical discourse in Slovak documentary filmmaking. I specifically analysed the strategies of investigation/interview (*Vyvliekanie z vlastnej kože* [Undressing Your Own Skin] by Alena Čermáková (1992) and *Salto Mortale* by Anabela Žigová (2014)), self-portrait (*Home Movie* by Mišo Suchý (2003) and *Autoportrét* [Self-Portrait] by Martin Kollár (2012)), diary (*Čisté srdce* [Pure Heart] by Daniela Rusnoková (2004) and *Biele na bielej* [White on White] by Viera Čákanyová (2021)), and auto-fiction (*Posledný autoportrét* [The Last Self-Portrait] by Marek Kuboš (2018) and *Poznámky z Eremocénu* [Notes from Eremocene] by Viera Čákanyová

4 Corrigan, *The Essay Film*, 6.

5 Ibid, 14.

6 Katarína Mišíková, “Seba-dokumentácia a seba-prezentácia ako starostlivosť o seba. Stratégie autobiografie, autoportrétu a autofikcie v slovenskom dokumentárnom filme [Self-documentation and Self-representations as Self-care. Strategies of Autobiography, Self-portrait and Auto-fiction in Slovak Nonfiction Cinema],” *Kino-Ikon* 27, no. 1 (53): 5–27.

(2013)). My premise was that autobiography, self-portraiture, and auto-fiction all contribute to the autobiographical discourse, which can exhibit varying degrees of referential connections to the real world. Here, I would like to explore the fluidity of their boundaries and present a spectrum of these connections, ranging from personal confession to the construction of autofiction on one side to individual autobiography and personal cultural history on the other.

Each pole of these spectrums is characterized not only by a different degree of intimacy but also by a distinct form of the author's alter ego. In each case, visual materials play a crucial role, embodying this alter ego through photography and film, serving as vehicles for memory and identity. Before delving into the analysis of alter egos of cinematic autobiographies, I will provide preliminary insights into the nature of autobiographical discourse as developed in literary theory and discuss its possible application in nonfiction cinema.

Autobiography and autofiction

Autobiography, self-portrait, and autofiction are interconnected forms of discourse where the author, narrator, and protagonist share the same identity and name. However, the referential relationship among them can vary. Autobiographical works belong to the realm of nonfiction, where authors recount factual events from their own lives, assuring readers of their authenticity according to Philippe Lejeune's concept of the autobiographical contract.⁷ Yet, Paul de Man⁸ suggests that autobiography can also be viewed as an illusion of reference, as it involves a defacement of the author's soul to create an intelligible mask or face. The authorial alter ego in autobiography serves as a mask through which the author can speak on their own behalf. Thus, the relationship between autobiography and fiction can be indeterminate, functioning as both testimony and projection. Autofiction, a term coined by Serge Doubrovsky,⁹ adds another layer to this representation, as it operates within a dual contract framework, where the autobiographical contract obliges the author to recount actual events, while

7 Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

8 Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-Facement," in *Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 67–81.

9 Serge Doubrovsky, *Fils* (Paris: Galilée, 1977).

the fictional contract allows for fabrication and invention. As Karen Ferreira-Meyers¹⁰ suggests, auto-fiction represents a hybrid mode in which fiction becomes referential and reality is fictionalized.

The concept of defacement in auto-fiction does not create an illusion of reference but rather oscillates between factual and fictional events, the actual and virtual Self. Thus, the distinction between autobiography and self-portrait on one hand and auto-fiction on the other lies not in the truth versus fabrication boundary, but rather at the borders of representation, between documentary authenticity and aesthetic authenticity. As these borders are permeable, the specific positioning is determined by a pragmatic framework that specifies the degree of referential ties between the cinematic work and the real world.

Autobiographic discourse in nonfiction film

Although personal experiences have been a part of cinema since the era of silent films – exemplified by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou*, inspired by the authors' dreams – autobiographical discourse became a specific cinematic program only in the 1960s, along with the concept of camera-stylo, auteur theory, personal cinema, and the expansion of film essay practices.¹¹ However, while autobiographical elements in fiction films by directors such as François Truffaut (*The 400 Blows*), Ingmar Bergman (*Fanny and Alexander*), Federico Fellini (*8 ½*), Andrei Tarkovsky (*Mirror*), Orson Welles (*Citizen Kane*), Woody Allen (*Annie Hall*), Martin Scorsese (*Who's That Knocking at My Door?*), Steven Spielberg (*The Fabelmans*), Rainer Werner Fassbinder (*The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*), Pedro Almodóvar (*Pain and Glory*), Atom Egoyan (*Calendar*), Juraj Jakubisko (*Crucial Years*), and many others have often been analysed to clarify the relationship between the director and their work, autobiographical documentary films have often remained on the fringes of artistic mainstream. These filmmakers frequently use self-documentation in experimental/avant-garde ways (such

10 Karen Ferreira-Meyers, "Autobiography and Autofiction: No Need to Fight for a Place in the Limelight, There is Space enough for both of these Concepts," in *Writing the Self. Essays on Autobiography and Autofiction*, ed. Kerstin W. Shands et al. (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2015), 203–218.

11 A comprehensive overview of the history of the essay film is offered by Timothy Corrigan, *The Essay Film*, 50–75.

as Jonas Mekas's *Walden*), hybrid forms (Sarah Polley's *Stories We Tell*), or essayistic approaches (as seen in Agnès Varda's *The Beaches of Agnès*) to delve into personal themes of family, racial or gender identity, relationships, illnesses, and traumas. The territory of autobiographical documentary film is thematically and formally rich, and with the advent of digital recording techniques, it is experiencing a boom.¹²

Autobiographical documentaries adopt an assertive stance¹³ by explicitly stating their reference to actual events. The author of the film assumes a role of a social actor and presents themselves under their own name. However, the essayistic form of autobiographical documentary invites extensive hybridization techniques, encompassing voiceover narration, collage, and the staging of past events or fantasies – all aimed at depicting the rich inner life of the authorial subject.

The purpose of autobiographical documentary is not merely to present objective facts to the viewer but to create a testimony of self-knowledge. This self-knowledge is conveyed not only through the author's signature but also through their physical presence within the film. As a result, the temporal structure of autobiographical documentary fluidly shifts between various levels of time, including the immediate experiences of the autobiographical subject, recollections of past events, and contemplative or imaginative reflections by the narrator. These levels encompass both temporal dimensions and cognitive frames that articulate different functions of the author. The combinations and permutations of these levels determine the diverse strategies employed within the autobiographical discourse in documentary film.

12 Although it might seem that not much has been written on autobiography in nonfiction cinema, some notable contributions on the subject include Elizabeth Bruss, "Eye for I: Making and Unmaking Autobiography in Film," in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 296–320; Catherine Portugues, "Seeing Subjects: Women Directors and Cinematic Autobiography," in *Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography*, ed. Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenck (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 338–350; Susanna Egan, "Encounters in Camera: Autobiography as Interaction," in *Modern Fiction Studies* 40, no. 3 (Fall 1994), 593–618; and Jill Daniels, *Memory, Place and Autobiography* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019).

13 According to Carl Plantinga, the assertive stance is an essential characteristic of nonfiction discourse per se. See Carl Plantinga, *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction film* (Grand Rapids: Chapbook Press, 2010).

In the realm of documentary autobiographical discourse, the traditional autobiographical unity of the author, narrator, and protagonist can be fragmented through the multiplication of identities. This multiplicity strips the cinematic autobiography of a singular controlling perspective in favour of contemplation, constructing the author's subjective testimony in relation to others and to the cinematic medium itself. This process transforms autobiography into an interactive genre.¹⁴

Seven Slovak autobiographical documentary essays exemplify a spectrum of autobiographical alter egos. The films range from personal confessions that construct doppelgangers from the authors' personal lives to autofictions that create fictional alter egos through which the authors articulate various levels of their mental worlds, to collective identities of artistic groups portrayed in collective self-portraits. In line with essayistic forms, the films employ metacinematic techniques, blending elements of nonfiction and fiction while merging various media through staging and self-staging. They manipulate digital images and sounds, incorporate self-reflexive techniques, utilize photographs, and draw on archival materials. Characteristic techniques of autobiographical discourse, such as voiceover narration, point-of-view shots, and handheld camera work are frequently employed, and visual tropes associated with identity and memory, including mirror shots, revisiting old photo albums, various forms of writing, depictions of roads and travels, and explorations of multiple identities are often featured.

Personal confession: *Home Movie / A New Life of a Family Album / Self-Portrait*

At one end of the spectrum that references actual events in the author's life are personal film confessions. These works may vary in their level of intimacy but consistently strive to maintain strong referential connections between the author and the autobiographical subject by relating to close, often familial, relationships. To reinforce this reference, they frequently make use of photographs and films from personal archives.

14 Susanna Egan notes that autobiography is an inherently interactive mode of representation, which refers to relationships of subjects, genres, autobiographers and readers/viewers, and life and text/film. See Egan, "Encounters in Camera: Autobiography as Interaction," 594.

Home Movie by Mišo Suchý combines elements of home movies, diary entries, and photographs to depict the experience of multigenerational emigration. After the downfall of communism, Suchý moved to the USA to live with his wife, a daughter of Ukrainian refugees, whom he met while she was travelling through Eastern Europe to discover her roots. The film portrays the transmission of family history through everyday interactions and the preservation of fragments from the past and present for the director's young son. Rather than focusing on the trauma of emigration, the film reflects on the director's process of redefining himself and his place in the world. By revisiting his memories of home in Slovakia, Suchý observes and reflects on the rituals of American life while trying to maintain a sense of continuity with his own self. He connects with his family on both sides of the Atlantic to understand his own evolving identity.

Using old home movies, photographs, and self-reflective shots, Suchý estranges moments of family gatherings and highlights the cinematic mediation of memories. The Super 8 mm film language serves as both an imprint of family intimacy and a cinematic record of family memory. Ultimately, Suchý embraces his new identity by purchasing a home with his wife and adopting new family rituals, symbolizing his acceptance of change, a new sense of belonging, and a new identity.

New Life of a Family Album by Adam Ol'ha also adopts the form of a home movie, exploring the divorce of the director's parents, well-known theatre director Matúš Ol'ha and actress Jana Ol'hová, and its impact on their six children. However, in this work, the author does not project himself onto various family members to construct a new identity from their experiences. As the oldest son and the only male, he assumes the role of his father, who left the family to start anew. Through photographs and film recordings that his father used to document family life, along with interviews with his mother, grandmother, and five sisters, he pieces together the family's history and investigates the reasons behind the family's breakdown. However, he refrains from directly questioning his father about the divorce, instead seeking to adopt his father's perspective. Following the divorce, the father ceased to take photographs and film, prompting the son to begin

documenting family life and stage scenes of holidays and vacations featuring his mother, grandmother, and sisters, echoing the types of moments his father used to capture.

The disparity between old photographs and new recordings emphasizes not only the father's absence but also the definitive loss of the family's idyllic past. The negative identification with the father is further reinforced by the similarity in the director's voice, heard in voiceover. Without explicitly condemning his father's estrangement from the family, the director primarily examines his own role in the family, delineating himself in opposition to the father through complex parallels that connect them.

In *Self-Portrait* by cameraman and photographer Martin Kollár, the director's face and voice are completely absent as he explores his identity through the perspectives of friends, colleagues, and loved ones. Their observations are presented through photographs animated by stop-motion technique, complemented by Kollar's own photographic projects that reflect his unique vision. Sometimes, these photographs function as a protective barrier: when the film delves into more personal aspects, Kollár employs images from his cycle of landscapes with "no trespassing" signs. Through this approach, Kollar allows others to define his identity while remaining a latent subject behind his viewpoint.

The method of defacement, which enables authors to address and explore themselves through alter egos, manifests differently in each film. In Suchý's work, this method involves relating to all his relatives, with a particular emphasis on the male figures in his life, including his father, father-in-law, and son. Olha, on the other hand, identifies himself through negation in contrast to his father. Kollár employs a defacing technique by portraying his friends. Each filmmaker's unique approach to defacement reflects their individual perspective on self-exploration and identity within the context of their real-life relationships.

Auto-fiction: The Last Self-Portrait / Notes from Eremocene

At the opposite pole of the autobiographical spectrum lies the realm of auto-fiction, where directors construct narratives around their

lives rather than directly documenting them. This approach blurs the line between fiction and nonfiction, allowing the filmmakers to explore their personal experiences through a creative lens.

The Last Self-Portrait is labelled a “fiction film by documentary filmmaker Marek Kuboš.” After a 14-year-long creative hiatus, the director explores how both the world and he himself have changed over time. Through revisiting his past films and their protagonists, he examines the representation of reality and contrasts it with the present. The film intertwines footage from his old films with re-enactments, incorporating voice-over reflections on his creative evolution. Through interviews with fellow filmmakers, Kuboš delves into ethical questions of documentary filmmaking. The film also features a special effects sequence where he encounters his doppelganger, who challenges his ethical responsibilities in pursuit of artistic genius.

Kuboš’s self-representation takes the form of a journey, utilizing visual elements like rear-view mirrors and car windows. The archival footage of his past films highlights the temporal difference between then and now, prompting viewers to contemplate the nature of change over time and experience the emotional impact of irrevocable loss. The past is symbolized by an antique closet, while the director is personified through a camera, paying homage to Vertov’s *Man with a Movie Camera*. The film’s self-reflexive techniques acknowledge that *The Last Self-Portrait* serves as a portrayal of the director’s cinematic persona and his authentic Self.

In *Notes from Eremocene*, Viera Čákanyová also explores a world that no longer exists but adopts a broader global perspective. Employing conceptual experimental film techniques and science fiction themes, the film revolves around a conversation between the director and artificial intelligence. Through a collage of digitally manipulated images and sounds, the fragmented remnants of a digitally devastated world are presented. As the film progresses, the viewer constructs a peculiar memory of the future – a post-apocalyptic testament stitched together by the director’s digital avatar with the assistance of AI. This fictional dystopian narrative, where autonomous digital systems reign, intertwines with reportage-like footage

capturing public life in Slovakia, climate change protests, traces of the immigration crisis, and social rituals and landscapes from various parts of the world.

Čakányová's film, set within a simulated space of an artificial neural network, highlights the intricate workings of the human mind in constructing subjects, associations, and narratives. Visual and structural analogies between biological and social systems, represented by tropes of trees, webs, and the sea, are juxtaposed with the digital realm. The digital decomposition of images reflects the loss of human subject. The director creates a multiplicity of authorial subjects: the original character who provides an analogue testimony in Slovak with a voiceover, and her digital doppelganger, who communicates with the voice of artificial intelligence in English. The film portrays a digital world devoid of meaningful representation, emphasizing the significance of storytelling. Images simulating messages from the future gain meaning through the autofictional narrative created by the director, who fabricates both her past and present experiences.

Kuboš's film presents the world through an anthropocentric lens, focusing on the human perspective and defacing himself through his alter ego, the protagonists of his films, and other documentary filmmakers. In contrast, Čakányová's film explores a fantasy of a post-anthropocentric perspective through the multiplication of identity via artificial intelligence. Kuboš maintains a constant visual presence throughout his film, while Čakányová is seen in only two shots, where her physical appearance is deconstructed by digital manipulation. Kuboš carefully selects his images, while Čakányová's visuals are random, stored in a vector space until the human mind constructs meaning and brings her cinematic testimony to life.

Generational group (self-)portrait: *wave vs. shore* / +- 90

Another type of autobiographical alter ego places the author/narrator/protagonist within a broader context, exemplified by a generational group (self-)portrait.

wave vs. shore by cameraman and photographer Martin Štrba focuses on the Slovak New Wave in photography – a group of Slovak photographers

who studied cinematography and photography at the Prague Film Academy in the 1980s. These artists diverged from contemporary documentary photography, infusing elements of avant-garde playfulness and staging into their work, drawing inspiration from the intersections between photography and painting. Martin Štrba, one of the most prominent contemporary Slovak cinematographers, revisits the roots of this artistic movement in preparation for a collective retrospective of the Slovak New Wave. He captures the testimonies of his generational companions, now internationally recognized photographers active in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and abroad. The process of preparing for the exhibition provides a stable framework for collage-like interviews, interconnected by common themes related to their perspectives on art and the world. The individual accounts of the film's protagonists are not juxtaposed; instead, they complement each other, collectively creating a portrait of the atmosphere of the times to which they return. The friendly and familial character of the film is evident, even when Štrba becomes his own respondent, filmed by close acquaintances. Both the exhibition and the documentary facilitate the renewal of personal and creative connections that have been continually established and interrupted over thirty years. While Štrba captures the current work of the members of this informal group, the film carries a strong nostalgic tone, enriched by archival material showcasing the protagonists during their studies. The film introduces seemingly unrelated testimony from an oceanologist about sea waves, emphasizing the central metaphor of the film: the wave as a collective, spontaneous act of a group of artists who creatively grew together at a specific time and place, only to become fragmented later in different directions along the shore of time. This metaphor also represents the wave as a memory trace that ebbs and flows, breaking against the needs of the present.

The foundation for the film +-90 lies in the material of interviews with filmmakers that Kuboš gathered after shooting *The Last Self-Portrait*. It can be perceived as a continuation of his previous film: the director employs similar tropes of journey and mirrors, again utilizing archives and self-staging. However, he expands and shifts his focus from a semi-detailed

self-portrait to a comprehensive group portrait, examining his own documentary film generation, labelled as Generation 90, in the continuum of Slovak documentary cinema from representatives of the older generation (pre-1990s) to the younger generation (post-1990s). These filmmakers are literally his companions both in the passenger seat of the car where all interviews take place and in the story of Slovak documentary. In the first part of the film, Kuboš attempts to define the generational characteristics of documentary filmmaking with respect to technology, subject matter, ethics, and collective cooperation. The second part shifts to confront filmmakers' perspectives on key issues in the realm of documentary filmmaking. One could argue that the first part is dominated by the diachronic and collective dimensions of historical circumstances, while the second part emphasizes synchronicity and the individuality of personal viewpoints. However, although Kuboš structures his film around clear formal principles, he approaches the material in a bricolage manner. This unbridled thinking allows for the unrestrained reorganization of elements, creating new structures. Kuboš is not a historian; he is not bound by the rules of scientific discourse and can afford to be unsystematic, approximate, and non-analytical. While he draws clear boundaries between generations, he also shows how reality transcends these boundaries. He engages in a dialogue with filmmakers, comments on their testimonies using excerpts from their own films and responding with staged retakes. Visual interventions, such as stylized paper titles and image frames, further emphasize the film's bricolage quality.

In both of these films, the authors' alter egos manifest as a collective identity within an artistic community, intertwining personal biography with cultural history. While *wave vs. shore* emphasizes intimate and slightly sentimental aspects of the history of the Slovak New Wave in photography, *+90* presents a personal account of the history of Slovak documentary film, through which the director seeks to understand his own creative position in the present day. Both films combine traditional techniques of art documentaries, such as historical context, excerpts from artworks, and interviews with experts, with more personal elements that inscribe the auteur persona into the historical narrative.¹⁵

15 I examined in greater depth the relationship between these two collective autobiographies and more traditional documentaries about art and analyzed how autobiographies can contribute to the canonization of specific artistic groups, movements, or generations,

Conclusion

The two ends of the autobiographical spectrum, situated along the nonfiction / fiction axis, do not differ in the degree of intimacy that the filmmakers are willing to share with their viewers. This is evident in Martin Kollár's rather distanced self-representation in *Self-Portrait* on one side and Marek Kuboš's confidential yet playfully ironic self-representation in *The Last Self-Portrait* on the other. Instead, the distinction lies in the assertive stance each author takes toward the referential world and how they articulate the relative distance between their real-life persona and their autobiographical alter egos. Another axis of distinction can be drawn between personal and collective identity, particularly in collective group (self)portraits that shift from autobiography to personal cultural history. In films like *wave vs. shore* and *+90*, the authors maintain their personal imprint within the film's structure, mirroring themselves through others to create a shared collective identity representative of their generational and professional group. In doing so, they stress the interactive character of autobiography, portraying a narrative of life and work constructed through the relationship of the Self to others.

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Santrauka

Vaizduojant save. Kinematografinė autobiografija ir autofikcija slovakų nevaidybiniame kine po 1990 m.

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Reikšminiai žodžiai: autobiografija, autofikcija, nevaidybinis kinas, slovakų kinas, eseistinis filmas.

Straipsnio tyrimo objektas – autobiografiniai, autoportreto ir autofikcijos žanro dokumentiniai slovakų filmai. Straipsnyje nagrinėjama, kaip eseistinis formatas padeda filmų kūrėjams, siekiantiems perteikti žiūrovams savo gyvenimą ir savivoką, artikuliuoti subjektyvumą ir asmenines perspektyvas. Per literatūros ir dokumentinio kino teorijų autobiografinės koncepcijas eseistinė forma priartėja prie autobiografinio diskurso kaip interaktyvaus vaizdavimo būdo, stiprinančio subjektyvumą per autoriaus *alter ego* ir leidžiančio balansuoti tarp gyvenimo patyrimo ir jo dokumentavimo.

Straipsnyje apibūrinamos dažnai naudojamos stilistinės priemonės ir vizualiniai tropai bei specifinis archyvinės vaizdo medžiagos traktavimas. Autorė siūlo analizuoti autobiografinį diskursą pagal dvi ašis, kuriomis yra paremtas autoriaus *alter ego*. Pirmoji yra teigimo pozicijos referencialumo ašis, kuri atskiria autobiografijas ir autoportretus kaip asmeninius prisipažinimus nuo autofikcijų, kuriančių pasakojimus apie autorių gyvenimus, bet ne juos dokumentuojančių. Antroji ašis veda nuo individualios prie kolektyvinės autobiografijos. Jei atskirose autobiografijose, autoportretuose ir autofikcijose autoriai savo asmeninę patirtį sieja su pasauliniu kontekstu, kolektyviniuose autoportretuose jie save pozicionuoja kaip didesnės grupės dalį, kad perteiktų ir kolektyvinę patirtį, ir istorinę reikšmę.

Toliau straipsnyje analizuojami asmeniniai prisipažinimai filmuose *Home Movie* (Namų kinas, rež. Mišo Suchý), *New Life of a Family Album* (Naujas šeimos albumo gyvenimas, rež. Adam Olša) ir *Self-Portrait* (Autoportretas, rež. Martin Kollár), kuriuose autoriai save reprezentuoja per savo artimuosius ir fotografinius bei kinematografinius atminties pėdsakus asmeniniuose albumuose. Tuo tarpu Mareko Kubošo filme *The Last Self-Portrait* (Paskutinis autoportretas) ir Vieros Čákanyovos *Notes from Eremocene*

(*Užrašuose iš Eremoceno*) autoriai apmąsto praeitį ir ateitį per savo išgalvotus antrinius, kalbėdami ne tik apie save, bet ir apie juos supantį besikeičiantį pasaulį. Grupiniai kartų (auto)portretai, tokiuose filmuose kaip Martino Štrbos *Wave vs. Shore* (*Banga prieš krantą*) ir Mareko Kubošo *+90*, laužo autobiografinius rėmus, priartėdami prie kultūros istorijos per asmeninius liudijimus apie meninius judėjimus, kuriuose dalyvaavo patys kūrėjai.