ON THE POETICS OF CINEMATIC INFLUENCE: GROSSMAPPING GESTURES IN THE FILMS OF KIRA MURATOVA AND EVA NEYMANN

Irina Schulzki (University of Hagen)

KIRA MURATOVA AND THE CHALLENGES TO UKRAINIAN NATIONAL CINEMATIC IDENTITY AND THE (INTER)NATIONAL CANON

In discussions about national identity and cultural heritage, a spectrum of contested perspectives and concepts often emerges. The nature of national identity – whether innate, primordial, inherited, or imagined and therefore socially constructed, or acquired, chosen and thus subject to change and overlaps – is a topic of continuous discussion.[i] In contemporary Ukraine, amid the protracted Russian-Ukrainian war, this inquiry assumes existential significance as the nation grapples with the daunting task of articulating its identity and communicating its essence to the global community while simultaneously fighting for survival on multiple fronts. In this pursuit of identity, Ukrainians are striving to break free from the imperial, Russo-centric legacy while withstanding the current military aggression of the country's neighbouring empire, as the latter not only lays claim to parts of Ukrainian territories but also contests the very existence of a distinct Ukrainian culture, language, and ethnicity. These challenges unfold against the backdrop of globalisation and mediatisation, prompting a reevaluation of conventional narratives of national identity and nationalism and shifting towards transnationalism, multiculturalism, inclusion, and diversity.

As per Benedict Anderson's prominent assumption that the social psyche is shaped by the power of print media, cinema might be more adept at constructing and nurturing a sense of national unity and belonging by evoking affective responses in viewers. The risk associated with affective collective identifications lies in the potential for institutional control and manipulation that modern apparatuses entail. In the Foucauldian vein, Giorgio Agamben has notably attributed to apparatuses, including cinema, "the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, or discourses of living beings."[ii]

In light of what is said above, this article addresses the unique Ukrainian cultural space of Odesa, a city traditionally viewed as anything but homogeneous regarding the language, religion, origins, and ethnicity of its inhabitants and cultural bearers. The Odesite

multiculturalism, which teeters on the brink of self-mythologising[iii] and cultural superiority,[iv] presents an excellent case for probing the complexity of identificatory processes, where the concepts of "identity" and "nation" are seen as perpetually evolving entities subject to continual negotiation and reformulation. These dynamics – crucial for the emerging civic notion of Ukrainian identity and reflected in Odesa's long cinematic culture – contest rigid constructs of essentialism, hierarchisation, and normativity.

This article focuses on two female directors, Kira Muratova and Eva Neymann, representing two generations of filmmakers whose films were predominantly produced at the Odesa Film Studio. While their national identities might not be straightforward, I argue that their filmographies have played a significant role in shaping and advancing Ukrainian national cinema and its canon. Despite assertions by certain scholars that filmmakers from Odesa did not intend their work to represent "Ukrainian national cinema",[v] this article advocates for a versatile and nuanced understanding of national cinema in line with the diverse identity of Odesa. Furthermore, both directors epitomise *auteur*, or more appropriately, *autrice* cinema, consciously resisting ideological and aesthetic constraints. In this context, it is pertinent to introduce the term "intercultural cinema", a concept coined by Laura U. Marks to delineate experimental film styles that reflect the experience of navigating between multiple cultural knowledge systems. Marks explicates that "[i]ntercultural indicates a context that cannot be confined to a single culture. It also suggests movement between one culture and another [...]."[vi]

Kira Muratova (1934-2018) was born in Soroki, Romania (now Moldova), into a bilingual family – to a Romanian-Jewish mother and Russian father. She graduated from the world famous VGIK film school in Moscow, where she specialised in filmmaking, and following her first marriage to the Ukrainian director Oleksander Muratov, she relocated to Odesa, dedicating her entire career to making films in the Russian language and collaborating with artists from diverse backgrounds, including Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish, Roma, and others. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Muratova remained in Odesa, becoming a notable embodiment of intercultural negotiation, appropriation, and re-attribution between Russia and Ukraine. Yet, she seemingly maintained a poised detachment from these debates, appearing aloof and unaffected by their sway. Furthermore, Muratova has been predominantly acknowledged by film scholars as a director who transcends specific national boundaries. Her distinctive film style, unbridled freedom of expression, and intentional nonconformist self-positioning across her entire artistic trajectory led to years of artistic persecution during the Soviet era and culminated once in her dismissal from the Odesa Film Studio. Even after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, her unwavering defiance against any form of ideological and aesthetic conformism allowed her to resist emerging essentialist and hegemonic categorisations. Throughout this period, now within independent Ukraine and as an integral part of its cinematic landscape, Muratova created most of her films, maintaining her distinct artistic integrity.

However, Muratova's association with Ukrainian cinema has recently been vehemently rejected. Thus, film scholar Yuri Shevchuk characterises Muratova after 1991 as a prominent figure in what he terms "cinematic depopulation" and "cultural aggression" against Ukraine.[vii] This perspective suggests that certain filmmakers contribute to erasing a colonised nation's identity, language, and culture from its historical territory, replacing it with imperial culture, and regarding the territory as an extension of their own living space. According to Shevchuk, Muratova's film work (and Neymann's too, as Muratova's cinematic heir) "depopulates Ukraine most consistently" by reproducing Russian narratives within Ukraine, "devoid of any meaningful civilisational presence of Ukrainians and represented on the screen as an essentially Russian ethnoscape."[viii] He remarks that Ukrainian voices and the Ukrainian language are scarcely heard in her works and when they are, they represent the voices of the socially marginalised.

While Shevchuk's critique raises several valid concerns, considering that language can indeed serve as a sign of collective belonging, it may still oversimplify the heterogeneity of the Ukrainian filmscape, specifically represented by Odesa's cinema and Muratova's film work.[ix] I would argue that neither the colonisation nor assimilation of one culture by the other prevails in her films; instead, there is a productive intercultural intertwining, in Marks' terms. Additionally, her films primarily revolve around the marginalised, the excluded, and the neurodiverse, irrespective of ethnicity or language. While her characters may speak Russian and draw upon Russian culture, among other things, their marginalised status contradicts the idea of colonisation since hierarchies disintegrate in the decentred and ex-centric cinematic realm that she creates. Furthermore, the use of the Russian language in Muratova's films goes beyond imperial and colonising gestures. The dialogues create endless circulations of clichés, ranging from socialist rhetoric to snippets of Russian literature, trivial set expressions, and fragments of popular songs.[x] Characters transform into impersonal speaking automata, precluding the establishment of points of identification and, thus, destabilising power relations. The cumulative effect of language clichés and repetitions is strikingly evident – language, far from serving as a channel for ethical and power articulations, is laid bare as a meaningless, if not absurd, realm of human (in)actions.

Lastly, following the Russian annexation of Crimea and the ensuing war in Donbas in 2014, Muratova declared publicly and unequivocally her support for Ukraine, effectively affiliating herself with the Ukrainian nation and Ukrainian cinema.[xi] Notably, the overwhelming majority of Ukrainians, regardless of their primary language, identify themselves as part of a civic community bound by shared sentiments of national belonging, attachment to the land, and allegiance to the state. This collective sense of unity embraces a broader, inclusive concept of national identity in contrast to a narrow, ethno-linguistic understanding.[xii] Thus, it is unsurprising that Muratova identifies with this model of civic nationhood and intercultural identity.

It is just as important to note that all of Muratova's films, like the films analysed in this article, were produced before the onset of the Russo-Ukrainian war in 2014. This moment is

particularly significant as it precedes the turning point when the questions of national identity, including the paramount role of the Ukrainian language and cultural heritage, become particularly pressing concerns – arguably, a matter entwined with the very survival and resilience of the nation amidst the ongoing Russian aggression.

The question of canonisation in relation to Muratova is as equally complex and contradictory as the exploration of her national identity. After a contentious collaboration with a French production company on *The Sentimental Policeman* (*Chutlyvyi militsioner / Chuvstvitel'nyi militsioner,* 1992), the first film Muratova made in a newly independent Ukraine, her subsequent films faced limited international theatrical releases, being showcased primarily at sporadic screenings and film festival retrospectives. Muratova's leading expert, French film historian Eugénie Zvonkine, attributes this lack of interest to the apparent non-political nature of her films, a stark contrast to the political backdrop through which she gained initial recognition in the West during perestroika. Furthermore, her films are replete with 'insider' references to Soviet and post-Soviet culture, employ dialects and utilise the mix of non-literary Russian and Ukrainian language (so-called *surzhik*). These elements present a challenge for viewers unfamiliar with the languages or the regional cultural contexts. Such complexity may account for the attention her cinema garners among Western scholars rather than film critics and, even less so, the audience.[xiii]

In 2020, Tilda Swinton highlighted a glaring omission in the international film community by pointing out the lack of commemoration for Kira Muratova, who passed away in 2018, and urged for the long-overdue inclusion of her legacy in the global cinematic canon. Swinton emphasised that Muratova's "[e]pic, rebarbative, wildly chaotic, furious, visionary films have earned her a revered place in the international – intergalactic – canon for her work of five decades. It's high time she made it over the wider wire."[xiv] Elena Gorfinkel, an American film scholar of Ukrainian descent, echoes Swinton's stance: "Muratova's path toward inclusion in what Tilda Swinton calls the 'intergalactic canon' of cinematic masters has long been deterred by a lack of wider appraisal and exhibition of her work beyond Eastern Europe, despite resounding critical, scholarly, and cinephilic acclaim."[xv]

However, enshrining Muratova within a canon inherently clashes with the essence of her unconventional standing and artistic philosophy. As Toril Moi claims in her seminal work *Sexual/Textual Politics* (1988), canonisation by itself is an inherently prescriptive and, therefore, repressive practice.[xvi] The hierarchical structuring, exclusionary principles, and adherence to normative ideologies, prevalent in traditional canon formation, stand in stark contrast to Muratova's ethos, threatening to impose conventional standards on her oeuvre and curtail its idiosyncrasy.

The word "canon" possibly derives from Ancient Greek *κᾰνών,* denoting "any straight rod or bar; rule; standard of excellence," or from *κάννα* "reed."[xvii] According to the Merriam-

Webster dictionary, to canonise means "to declare (a deceased person) an officially recognised saint" or "to treat as illustrious, preeminent, or sacred."[xviii] I argue that the strength inherent in Muratova's cinema lies precisely in its de-canonising impulse, pivotal in forging an anti-hegemonic canon capable of destabilising prevailing power structures. It becomes imperative to confront and deconstruct the canon, and actively engage in *de*canonisation. One should also be aware of the homophony between "canon" and "cannon", framing the process of decan(n)onisation as a pacifist endeavour akin to a procedure of disarmament and demilitarisation. In the act of decan(n)onisation, one can discern a pacifist gesture reminiscent of Muratova's known ethos.

REPUDIATION AND APOLOGIA OF CANON.

In discussions surrounding canons, the implicit reference commonly pertains to the Western canon, encapsulating visual arts, literature, philosophy, and other spheres. The criticism directed at the Western canon from diverse intellectual quarters such as feminists, deconstructivists, and critical theorists have been notably incisive. These critiques purposefully seek to confront the inherent ideological biases and limitations embedded within the Western canon. Notably, Elena Gorfinkel elucidates the contentiousness of the canon discourse in her essay titled "Against Lists" published in 2019. Gorfinkel assertively posits the stance that the mere compilation of lists remains futile in the quest for engendering new canons, particularly ones that are inclusive of lost narratives of women, queer, trans, Black, Latinx, global south, decolonial, and anti-colonial filmmakers. "Who will ask Barbara Hammer, Kathleen Collins, *Kira Muratova*, and Sara Gómez for their lists?", Gorfinkel enquires.[xix] Gorfinkel's impassioned articulation dismantles the ostensible claims of lists, deeming them as anti-historical constructs fixated upon their temporal moment, even ensnared within the narrow ambits of contemporaneity. She denounces their tendency to reinforce entrenched predilections and consolidate and reaffirm the tastes of the epoch. Furthermore, Gorfinkel elucidates how lists, in their essence, operate as a form of intellectual colonisation, resulting in an impoverishment of the imagination.

> Lists pretend to make a claim about the present and the past, but are anti-historical, obsessed with their own moment, with the narrow horizon and tyranny of contemporaneity. They consolidate and reaffirm the hidebound tastes of the already heard.
> Lists colonise the mind and impoverish the imagination.[xx]

An opposing stance within the canon discourse finds its prominent voice in the seminal work, an elegiac ode to the Western literary canon, as the title suggests, by literary scholar Harold Bloom.[xxi] Central to this book is Bloom's contention that the process of canonisation is not solely

borne from contemporary ideologies or critical reactions to an artist's oeuvre. Instead, there are two determining forces: firstly, the "aesthetic strength" or "aesthetic dignity"[xxii] inherent within a specific work, and secondly, the profound influence exerted by preceding authors upon their successors.

Concerning the first aspect, Bloom believes that *"[o]ne breaks into the canon only by aesthetic strength, which is constituted primarily of an amalgam: mastery of figurative language, originality, cognitive power, knowledge, exuberance of diction"*.[xxiii] This distinct originality, alternately termed "strangeness", or "weirdness", is characterised as something that "cannot be assimilated, or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange. […] When you read a canonical work for the first time you encounter *a stranger, an uncanny startlement* rather than a fulfillment of expectations".[xxiv] This unconventional originality, Bloom contends, comprises a mosaic of elements that form the bedrock of aesthetic strength, propelling an oeuvre into the revered realm of the canon. As for the second facet, the connection between the canon and the concept of influence, Bloom's analysis increasingly gravitates towards Freudian ideas.[xxv] He notes that canons, too, are "achieved anxieties".[xxvi] In essence, literature and art do not aim to console or alleviate our anguish; instead, they expose us to what Bloom – arguing against Barthes – labels as "high unpleasure,"[xxvii] a force looming and poised to contaminate with its distinctive style.[xxviii] In another context, he characterises poetic influence as a manifestation of melancholy.[xxix]

In *A Map of Misreading* (1975) and *The Anxiety of Influence* (1997), Bloom propounds a perspective on the study of influence, transcending the confines of mere source study,[xxx] "the history of ideas," or "the patterning of images".[xxxi] Poetic influence further eschews a simplistic focus on verbal resemblances between poets[xxxii] and dismisses the notion of a mere transmission of images and ideas from predecessors to successors. Instead, influence signifies the absence of standalone texts, giving way solely to relationships between them. These relationships hinge upon a critical act – a "misreading" or "misprision" – that one poet enacts upon another.[xxxiii] Through this lens of revisionism and belatedness, an author is able to surmount anxiety and carve out a distinctive voice in relation to their predecessors. Bloom outlines six phases of progressive deviation from the influential Other – *clinamen, tessera, kenosis, demonisation, askesis, and apophrades*.[xxxiv] The ultimate and most significant phase, *apophrades*, or "the return of the precursors" stands precisely for the figure of influence, which Blooms understands primarily as a trope by likening it to the rhetorical figure of metalepsis, or transumption.[xxxv] Bloom elucidates *apophrades* as a profound juncture where the new poem's achievement imbues it with an uncanny semblance to the precursor's distinctive work, almost as if the later poet had authored the precursor's most characteristic work.[xxxvi] In other words, the notion of *apophrades* encapsulates the internalisation of the precursor, akin to the concepts of introjection in psychoanalysis and allusiveness in art.[xxxvii]

EVA NEYMANN: A MURATOVA'S SUCCESSOR?

Muratova unquestionably holds an iconic stature within Soviet and Ukrainian cinema, although recent discourse has featured critical voices asserting that Muratova, more than anyone else, epitomised the Russian colonisation of post-Soviet Ukrainian cinema.[xxxviii] This article is not intended to confirm or contest Muratova's rank in the cinematic hierarchy. Instead, aligning with Bloom's insights, it seeks to explore the principal structural elements that facilitate inclusion within a canon – be it national or global ("intergalactic" as Tilda Swinton terms it). As shown, Bloom's perspective underscores, on the one hand, the enduring significance of artistic merit and "strangeness"[xxxix] and, on the other hand, the interplay of literary lineage in the formulation of canonical works. I demonstrate how Ukrainian canonical film tradition, as represented by Muratova, is shaped by the circulation of images and their appropriation, citation, refiguration, misprision, and various engagements found within the works of her successor.

Muratova openly acknowledged the influence of global filmmakers like Charlie Chaplin and Federico Fellini alongside several Soviet filmmakers. The influences on her film work span beyond her VGIK teacher Sergei Gerasimov, extending to figures like Sergei Parajanov, a film director and artist with Armenian and Georgian background, one of the founders of Ukrainian poetic cinema, and Rustam Khamdamov, a Soviet and Russian director and artist of Uzbek origins.[xl] When discussing Muratova's influence on other directors, the conversation inevitably confronts the widely held belief that her style is so unique that identifying those influenced by her work is exceedingly complex, if not altogether impossible. However, in the quest for Kira Muratova's 'disciples', several names are frequently mentioned, including the Russian director and actress Renata Litvinova, along with Ukrainian filmmakers Eva Neymann and Oleksandr Shapiro.[xli] In the ensuing discussion, my attention will be directed toward Neymann's feature films, exploring the ways in which her film aesthetics draw from Muratova's visual repertoire, whether done consciously or through subconscious assimilation.

Eva Neymann [Ukrainian: Єва Нейман, Yeva Neiman] was born in 1974 in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, but she has been living in Germany since 1993, where she graduated from the German Film and Television Academy Berlin in 2006. Her filmography encompasses three short films,[xlii] four documentaries (all but one produced in Germany),[xliii] and three full-length feature films, all produced in Ukraine by Odesa Film Studio in the Russian language. These are: *By the River* (*Bilia richky / U reki*, 2007), *A House with a Turret* (*Budynok z vezhkoiu / Dom s bashenkoi*, 2011), and *The Song of Songs* (*Pisnia pisen' /Pesn' pesnei*, 2015). In my analysis, I concentrate on Neymann's first two feature films. Both are adaptations of short stories written by Friedrich Gorenstein (Fridrikh Gorenshtein), the Soviet Ukrainian prosaist and screenwriter, known for

scripting Andrei Tarkovsky's, Rezo Esadze's and Ali Khamraev's films, among other works. Neymann's most recent film, *The Song of Songs*, pays tribute to another luminary of Yiddish literature, Sholem Aleichem (Solomon Rabinovitch), and, in many ways, inherits the aesthetic traditions of Ukrainian poetic cinema.

Concerning her first two feature films, critics suggest that Neymann is an observant admirer of Soviet auteur cinema from the 1970s and 1980s, mainly drawing inspiration from the works of Aleksei German Sr., Andrei Tarkovsky, and specifically, Kira Muratova. However, Ukrainian critic Aksinya Kurina contests this view, asserting that linking Neymann's work to Muratova's is merely wishful thinking on the part of critics and enthusiasts of Muratova, who seek to anoint successors to her legacy.[xliv] Neymann adamantly dismisses any suspicion of being an epigone, a sentiment understandable in light of the Bloomian "anxiety of influence"[xlv] that any artist worries about vis-à-vis their precursors. Sheemphasises,

> I do not view myself a direct disciple of Kira Muratova or 'Kira Muratova-2' or a complete newcomer, as some journalists claim. It's simply not true! [...] She did contribute to my advancement! And I am immensely thankful to her! I learnt from my teachers in Berlin [...] and from watching classic films […]. In 1999, I had the chance to intern with Kira Muratova during the production of the film *Minor People*.[xlvi]

Yet, in the end credits of *Freeze, Fade Away* and *By the River*, she thanks Kira Muratova for her support. In another instance, she acknowledges the influence of Fellini, a figure widely regarded as having directly impacted Muratova's work. Neymann recounts,

> I watched Fellini's *Amarcord* when I was twelve, and it left a lasting impression on me. Would Fellini have ever imagined that someone in Zaporizhzhia, somewhere in Ukraine, would watch his film and start dreaming about making their own films?"[xlvii]

The fear of lacking originality and being unable to create something new persistently looms over artists as the anxiety of influence, Bloom asserts, is as powerful as inescapable.[xlviii] However, per Bloomian logic, greater denial often translates to increased influence, since denial functions as a defence mechanism against the anxiety of influence.

Several discernible, if not surface-level, parallels between Muratova and Neymann are evident: Firstly, both directors filmed their works primarily in Odesa, although the city is never explicitly named in either of their films.[xlix] Instead, they depict an indistinct, predominantly Russophone city or town far from the metropolitan centre. This ambiguity in space and time stands as a shared characteristic between both filmmakers.[l] Secondly, in both Muratova's and Neymann's films, we encounter recurring Ukrainian and Russian actors, namely Nina Ruslanova, Sergei Bekhterev, Nataliia Buz'ko, Yurii Nevhamonnyi, and Serhii Chetvertkov.[li] The third shared characteristic pertains to what is commonly termed as 'literariness' – both directors

extensively draw upon literary sources and engage in meticulous textual work.[lii] However, a notable difference in their approach to literary scripts is that Muratova frequently modifies and rewrites the original storyline, while Neymann usually adheres closely to the literary sources and makes no significant alterations therein. Finally, an enigmatic and elusive quality akin to what Bloom might have categorised as "strangeness" and "weirdness", which I define further as cinematic gesturality, comes into play. Neymann's films reveal a noticeable lineage to Muratova's oeuvre by demonstrating resemblances in image structure, narrative, repetitions, and rhythm. These components evoke Muratova's style while enabling Neymann to uphold her distinct cinematic signature. It is the latter point, from my perspective, that best explicates the deliberate or inadvertent reverberations (misprision) of Muratova's imagery found within Neymann's cinematic oeuvre.

CROSSMAPPING GESTURES: MURATOVA AND NEYMANN

Incorporating two separate narrative threads, *By the River* (2007, Odesa Film Studio) is based on two short stories by Friedrich Gorenstein, *Old Women* (*Starushki,* 1964) and *Conversation* (*Razgovor*, 1966), echoing Muratova's hallmark technique of interweaving two or more storylines into a single narrative. Neymann's film intertwines an episode of a riverboat captain (played by Yurii Nevhamonnyi), who spends his day off work by the riverside, with the storyline of two older women, a mother and her daughter (portrayed by Maria Politseimako and Nina Ruslanova, respectively), living under the same roof. It is the latter storyline that the film mainly focuses on – the complex and stirring relationship between the mother and the daughter, in which a role reversal occurs: the daughter assumes a maternal role, caring for her mother as if she were her own child, while the mother embraces a carefree and reckless demeanour. Tensions rise as the women argue, with the mother vehemently rejecting the daughter's attempts at control. Succumbing to her mother's latest whim, the daughter acquiesces and takes her to the riverbank for a walk and a boating trip. Throughout the day, they frequent a café and a restaurant and take a stroll. However, the daughter repeatedly finds herself embarrassed by her mother, feeling compelled to apologise to others for her misbehaviour. Eventually, they encounter two young girls who agree to transport them to an island in a flimsy boat, where tensions escalate. At the film's denouement, the daughter, caught in a downpour, burstsinto tears, prompting the mother to cease her pretence of mischievous playfulness. Instead, she embraces her maternal role by tenderly hugging and consoling her distraught daughter.

Curiously, a similar mother-daughter dynamic, albeit in a markedly more perverse manifestation, underpins one of Muratova's most acclaimed films, *Three Stories* (1997), specifically its second novella, *Ophelia* (written and performed by Renata Litvinova). Within this

storyline, the female protagonist, Ofa (shortened from Ophelia), a serial killer and morbid nurse, exhibits a manic fixation on her genealogy as she searches for her mother, who abandoned her after childbirth. In her pursuit of retribution, Ofa murders a young mother, Tania, who gives up her newborn baby for adoption. After that, Ofa surveils her own mother, mimicking her clothing, hairdo, and mannerisms. The story culminates with Ofa drowning her mother in the sea. However, another vignette depicting the relationship between a mother and daughter is inserted into this story, serving as a deviation and a sort of mise-en-abyme (**Video 1**). Chasing her mother through the streets of Odesa, Ofa passes by an elderly woman who, raising her head and gesticulating, calls out to her own mother in despair: "Mama! Why doesn't she come out? Mama! Mama! […] Oh, I'm worried! […]" In the subsequent scene, her elderly, deaf mother appears on the balcony, noticing her daughter but unable to hear her. With a trembling voice, she asks:

> Mother: "Why don't you call me on the phone? I've been worried."
> The daughter replies: "I'm calling and calling you."
> Mother: "Why don't you call me?"
> Daughter: "You don't hear the phone ringing!"
> Mother: "I'm waiting and waiting…"
> Daughter: "Mama, you don't hear the phone ringing. I've been worried."
> Mother: "I've been worried. Why don't you call me? I'm waiting and waiting…"
> Daughter: "Why don't you answer the phone?"
> Mother: "I'm worried."
> Daughter: "I've been worried so much."
> Mother: "What are you saying?"

Video 1: Clip from Kira Muratova's *Three Stories* (Part 2: "Ophelia"): Two mother-and-daughter couples, https://youtu.be/z28AO4xfPEw (or click on the image to view)

This quasi-accidental encounter with another similar-looking mother and daughter pair sheds new light on the primary narrative, creating a doubling and shifting effect akin to the relation and distribution of series as described by Gilles Deleuze. In this framework, the series are interrelated in a constant state of displacement and imbalance: "There is thus a double-sliding of one series over or under the other, which constitutes both, in a perpetual disequilibrium vis-à-vis each other."[liii] The series of doppelgangers, represented by Ofa and her mother, intersect or,

more precisely, slide past another pair of the older daughter-mother duality. These two pairs, or dualities, undergo displacement in relation to each other: Ofa's mother remains oblivious to being followed, and the mother in the other pair does not hear her daughter's reprimands. Both couples also exist in mutual ignorance of each other. Along the line of their fleeting contact, at the boundary of these series, a sense characterised by reduplication and displacement is formed.

In Neymann's *By the River*, the mother and daughter get ready for a walk (**Video 2**). An intriguing scene occurs before their departure when they welcome an administrative worker (portrayed by Sergei Bekhterev, a frequent actor in Muratova's films) into their old hoarded apartment. The man could equally be a swindler trying to gain the trust of the gullible ladies (like the piano tuner and con artist Andrei in Muratova's *The Tuner*). As the trio exits the flat, a prolonged static shot captures them in the rundown entrance hall, accompanied by the distant sound of howling dogs (another implicit nod to Muratova).[liv] Their conversation mirrors the absurdist tone and wordplay found in many of Muratova's later films:

> The man: "Gosh, I left my *barsetka* [leather pouch]. It's a small handbag for businessmen."
> The mother: "That's an interesting word. I thought it meant a dog, like a *levretka* [leurette]. Did I tell you that Masha has sclerosis?"
> The man: "And you have bedbugs."

Video 2: Clip from Eva Neymann's *By the River*: The mother and the daughter go for a walk, https://youtu.be/XZIJbcoy7_w (or click on the image to view)

After their bewildered visitor hastily departs, the exasperated daughter vents her frustration at her mother, pointing out her extravagant outfit: "Ribbons, beads, feathers – you're ridiculous!" The mother retaliates, exclaiming: "You are nothing to me. You are not my daughter!" Grumbling and laughing, the women step out into the courtyard typical of the Odesa old town, where the camera pauses on a series of variegated residents – from local drunkards to a neighbour puffing on a cigarette at an open window, then to a cat, and finally to a woman drying her nail polish by rhythmically shaking her hands. This episode, exquisitely captured by cinematographer Oleksii Ubieiwolk, could just as easily have been part of Muratova's Odesa film universe with its attention to minor details, somewhat quirky characters, cliched speech, repetitive

gestures, and, of course, animals. “Masha, don’t slouch. Keep your back straight”, the mother reproaches. This exchange echoes a similar parental dynamic in Muratova’s *The Long Farewell*, where a mother nags at her son: “Take a nailfile, get your hands cleaned up!”

Similarly to Muratova, in one of the subsequent scenes, the mother and daughter come across another mother-daughter duo: a young girl and her mother (portrayed by the renowned Ukrainian pantomime actress Nataliia Buz’ko), both clad in black-and-white checkered dresses (**Video 3**). However, unlike the fleeting, divergent interactions in *Three Stories*, the meeting between the two parent-child pairs in *By the River* takes a contentious turn, leading to a squabble. Nevertheless, the maternal metaphor seems crucial for both directors, evident not only at a narrative level but also within the aesthetic realm. It encapsulates notions of repetition, similarity, heredity, kinship, and genetic ties, opening up an immeasurable field of cinematic influence. Paraphrasing, or rather misprisioning Bloom’s patriarchal motto: to live, a director must misinterpret the mother.[lv]

Video 3: Clip from Neymann’s *By the River*: Two sets of mother-and-daughter duos, https://youtu.be/1_aKmt2olC4 (or click on the image to view)

The reduplication and twins, along with Nina Ruslanova’s, Yurii Nevhamonnyi’s, Nataliia Buz’ko’s, and Sergei Bekhterev’s distinctive acting, are not the sole inadvertent nods to Muratova within Neymann’s cinematic succession. Neymann’s films boast an array of visual motifs that echo Muratova’s style, discernible in the framing of shots and the decorative finesse exuding from the faktura. A juxtaposition of stills from Muratova’s and Neymann’s films reveals their profound artistic kinship. Thus, the ornamental style of the mother’s and daughter’s clothing in *By the River* (“ribbons, beads, feathers”) recalls the adornments, veils, necklaces, and hats that Muratova often used to embellish her characters. So do the arrangement of figures in space, or what Sergei Eisenstein termed mise-en-geste[lvi] – characters’ lining up in front of the wall, standing motionless behind window or mirror frames, and staring into the camera. The camera picks out the figures of eerie doubles and twins and shows close-ups of old memorabilia, useless trinkets, and green and red apples scattered around; it focuses on a woman’s hands gently touching a plant root, or a bright red ribbon in the water (**Video 4a**).

Video 4a: Fig. 1-38 (00:00-01:09). Crossmapping gestures in the films of Muratova and Neymann. A Juxtaposition, https://youtu.be/cwrnABdArNw (or click on the image to view the clip)

These and other similar images do not stem from direct quotations or intentional allusions to Muratova. They defy easy classification or description. Nevertheless, an astute viewer familiar with Muratova's work could discern the line of heredity in Neymann's film, even if such moments of recognition rest on a subtly perceptible sense of resemblance and reminiscence resisting systematic categorisation. *By the River* nearly flawlessly embodies Bloom's concept of *apophrades*, generating an effect as though Neymann were the creator of Muratova's most distinctive work.

Elisabeth Bronfen's concept of crossmapping, elaborated in several of her publications, most prominently in *Crossmappings: On Visual Culture* (2018), presents another pertinent theoretical framework for analysing the principle of productive, albeit not necessarily deliberate, influence evident in Neymann's films. According to Bronfen, crossmapping entails a comparative analysis that offers a cartography of image formulas and figures of thought "for which no simple or unequivocal intertextual relation can be determined".[lvii] This method draws attention to similarities between aesthetic formalisations that may have remained overlooked or uncharted. Bronfen's theory of crossmappings is based explicitly on Aby Warburg's pathos formulas, or gestures, and their comparative reading at different historical moments and different aesthetic media.[lviii] Another source for Bronfen's theory is Stephen Greenblatt's idea of the circulation of social energies, alongside Mieke Bal's notion of "preposterous history", or "reversal, which puts what came chronologically first ('pre') as an aftereffect behind ('post') its later recycling."[lix] (Here, one might feel reminded of Bloom's metaleptic figure of *apophrades* with its effect of reversed chronological order). Finally, Bronfen is indebted to Georges Didi-Huberman's discussion of "the survival of pathos formula as a poignant symptom of cultural haunting".[lx] In an earlier work, *Specters of War* (2012), she explains the persistence of image formulas by

highlighting their ability to expose the irregular and inconsistent connections they forge with subsequent realisations.

> The image formulas that reemerge are taken as evidence that we continue to be haunted by the past. At the same time, such survival of traces from the past through the incessant revival of past pathos formulas is best charted by tracing unconventional or unexpected correspondences. At stake is a more transversal knowledge […].[lxi]

These connections do not originate from intertextuality but rather from the haunting nature of visual formalisation. While Bronfen does not explicitly cite Bloom's theory of influence as a source for her idea of productive interlacement, the concept appears to align with the spirit of Bloom's anxiety of influence.

In my approach, I opt to employ the term "gesture" over "pathosformula" or "image" for various reasons. Firstly, I align with Agamben's perspective, who, an admirer of Aby Warburg and Gilles Deleuze, famously posited that the essence of cinema lies not in the image but in the gesture. More precisely, Agamben emphasises the urge to "extract" gestures from images to underline their mediality.[lxii] Secondly, gesture has semiotic potential that facilitates discussions concerning the subject, the author, and their unique signature, unlike the circulation of anonymous images, even though these aspects may coexist. Thus, gesture allows for establishing a discernible form of dissemination – an immediate lineage and (personal) genealogy between the precursor and the successor, anchored in the anxiety of influence. Moreover, in contrast to pathos formulas, gestures are not universal, symbolic, prescriptive, or iconic. Neither do they necessarily have any semantic meaning, nor do they perforce reflect the movements of history; they may even be ahistorical.[lxiii] Rather, they represent pre-symbolic, non-canonised, and often secondary and elusive components of cinematic imagery. Gestures encompass not only the characters' facial expressions and movements but also acting style, colour, sound, mise-en-scene, camera work, elements of the plot, and more. In other words, gestures embody a productive difference – transcending mere similarity and resisting assimilation – while preserving heredity and identity.

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In Neymann's second feature film, *A House with a Turret* (2011), the line of heredity with Muratova may appear less evident despite the film being made entirely in black and white (Muratova is known for her fondness for black and white). *A House with a Turret* remains utterly faithful to Gorenstein's eponymous short story *Domik s bashenkoi* (1964) regarding plot development and character lines.[lxiv] The film's narrative unfolds linearly and contains no vignettes or deviations from the main plot. It is set in winter or early spring, presumably around 1944, and revolves around a mother (Ekaterina Golubeva) and her roughly 8-year-old son (Dmytro Kobets'kyi) returning to Soviet Ukraine after having been evacuated. The mother comes down with typhus on the way home. She is taken off the train and transported to a hospital in an unnamed town. The story is experienced through the eyes of her son, who, left to fend for himself, sets out

to find his ailing mother. The image of a distinct house with a turret near the railway station is etched into the boy's memory, serving as a mnemonic sign reminding him of the place where he parted ways with his mother and guiding his path home. As he roams through the labyrinthine settings – the railway station, the unwelcoming town streets, a bus, and the post office – his journey ultimately brings him to the hospital. There, he witnesses his mother's passing. Left alone, he is compelled to find his way home, where his grandfather can take care of him.

Besides revisiting the theme of the mother-child relationship, *A House with a Turret* further crossmaps with Muratova's cinematic legacy, even if their interconnectedness is less pronounced than in *By the River*. The closest reference appears to be Muratova's *Melody for a Street-Organ* (*Melodiia dlia katerynky* / *Melodiia dlia sharmanki*, 2009), which likewise opens with a scene in a train carriage and portrays the plight of hungry half-siblings who have just lost their mother. They arrive in a big city (apparently Odesa) and wander through urban winter landscapes in search of their fathers. Muratova's film draws inspiration from literary sources, encompassing a rich tradition of Christmas literature that includes Charles Dickens' *Christmas Books* (1940s), Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Match Girl* (1945), and Fedor Dostoevsky's *The Beggar Boy at Christ's Christmas Tree* (1875), among others. Yet, Muratova playfully mocks the clichés of the genre: her film blends elements and codes from the Christmas narrative and early Christmas films (the Christmas tree, costumes, hungry and wandering children, the quest for food, the indifference of those around them, and the abundance behind glass or shop windows, as well as biblical prophecies). Muratova liberates these elements from their conventional Christian and sacred contexts, imparting them with a new, profane guise. Her film is intentionally devoid of the pathos of a traditional Christmas mysterium and the miracle of redemption, and it eschews the sentimental and melodramatic affectivity typically associated with the genre. It is utterly pessimistic and culminates with the death of a little boy named Nikita, one of the two main characters, who freezes to death.[lxv]

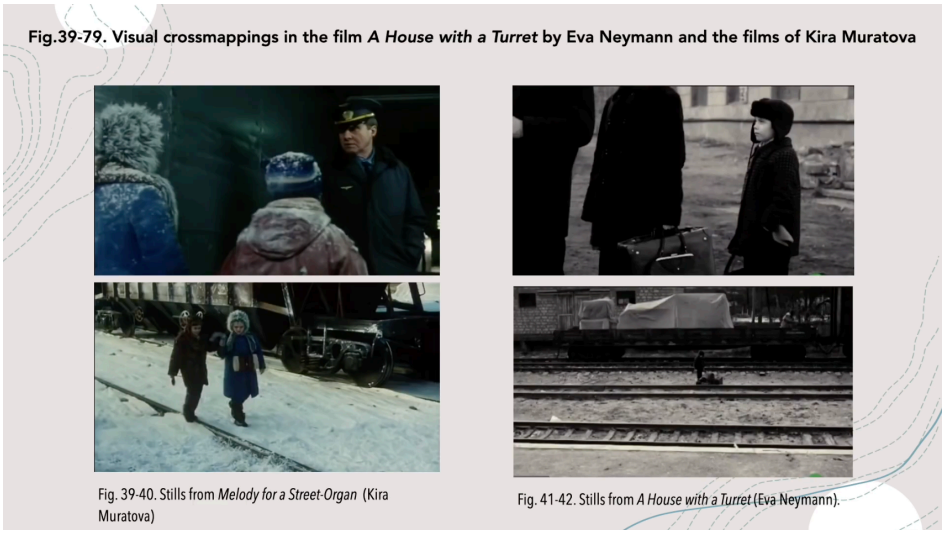
A House with a Turret, while subtly resonating with Muratova's film, mainly due to the horizon of expectations shaped by comparable situations, leading the viewer to anticipate a tragic outcome, ultimately takes a different direction. After his mother's death, the boy sets out to return home by train, accompanied by a family with a younger child. They seize the opportunity to travel with the newly orphaned child, as he is entitled to a train ticket without the wait. Particularly striking is the woman's character (masterfully portrayed by Vitalina Bibliv), a grotesque figure in the spirit of Muratova's cinematic universe. She is utterly insensitive and greedy, at one point lecturing her own son by pointing at the boy and saying, "Look, the boy disobeyed his mom, and [this is why] his mom died". Later on the train, she deftly extorts the boy's remaining money. However, the film ends on a positive note, as the other passengers stand up for the boy and help to return the stolen goods to him. Protected, he continues his journey home.

The final parallel between these two films is the subtly conveyed child's point of view that permeates both narratives. A telling episode in Muratova's film revisits a motif from the 19th-century Christmas novella of children gazing into windows, where a festive atmosphere and an abundance of gifts and food are displayed, contrasting with the children's own desperate situation. Frozen and hungry, they gaze in awe at the Christmas idyll behind the glass – a series of postcard-like images of festive family reunions unfolds before their eyes in a prolonged silent take, as if they were watching a silent film from the early 20th century (the only sounds are their breath and the snow squeaking underfoot). In *A House with a Turret*, the child's perspective is already embedded into Gorenstein's short story, where adults are often represented by synecdoches – typically by their coats, jackets, or simply by their backs. For instance, it is noted that "wherever the boy went, he ran into other people's backs".[lxvi] Neymann's film visualises the boy's perspective through the frequent use of low-angle camera perspective. Particularly moving, however, is the child's gaze in the scene of his mother's death: the camera focuses on the boy as he approaches her bed, saying, "You know, I was scared at night when you were lying there and didn't move." The camera lingers on his still, silent face, capturing the unspoken emotion in his intensely peering eyes. Although the mother is not shown, it is evident that he is witnessing her final moments, a fact confirmed by an off-screen patient's voice calling, "Nurse, a woman is dying!" The boy closes his eyes at the exact moment, then, swaying slightly, opens them and looks at his mother's body, which remains out of the camera's view. Simultaneously, the music playing on the radio comes to a halt. Contrasting with Muratova's film, where the child's gaze is placed within an artificial, grotesque, and somewhat alienated frame, here it is imbued with profound psychological realism and utter emotive force (**Video 5**).

Video 5: The child's gaze. Clips from *Melody for a Street-Organ* and *A House with a Turret*, https://youtu.be/o83K6G2MoZM (or click on the image to view)

The visual language of Neymann's film, while more restrained than in *By the River*, nevertheless bears discernible similarities to Muratova's works. This connection is clear in the

portrayal of settings such as trains, platforms, and railway stations, and in the detailed depiction of certain bodily postures and attitudes – including children seeking assistance from apathetic adults, the hustle of busy crowds, passengers sleeping while waiting for trains, and even the feet occasionally captured in the frame. The sequence of images below illustrates how *A House with a Turret* engages in a visual dialogue with Muratova's films through bodily movements, camera angles, or the arrangement of props, whether intentionally or accidentally (**Video 4b**). Thus, a boy on his way to the hospital gets hit with mud by a passing lorry, just like the heroine of the short *Spring Rain* (*Vesennii dozhd'*, Kira Muratova and Oleksandr Muratov, 1958). The image of the turreted house, with its shabby balustrade, the dog, and the little girl is reminiscent of the mise-en-scène in *The Long Farewell* and *Three Stories (*part 3: *The Little Girl and Death)*. In the picture of the austere, unfriendly hospital ward, one easily recognises similar spaces depicted in *The Asthenic Syndrome* and *Three Stories* (part 2: *Ophelia*).



Video 4b: Fig. 39-79 (01:10-02:31). Crossmapping gestures in the films of Muratova and Neymann. A Juxtaposition, https://youtu.be/pYG4bHK-Wkg?t=72 (or click on the image to view the clip)

The similarities extend to close-ups of hands pressing against window panes (an evocative image that also opens Muratova's *Melody for a Street-Organ*), a smoked fish placed on a piece of paper (echoing the long close-up of a smoked fish that female hands tear apart in *The Asthenic Syndrome*), and the square-shaped hat worn by an unnamed woman at the railway station, reminiscent of the nearly identical hat worn by the protagonist of Muratova's *The Long Farewell*, Evgeniia Vasil'evna. The latter detail is hardly accidental: similar to the protagonist of *The Long Farewell,* who writes a letter dictated by a man at the railway station, the woman in the hat (Marina Politseimako) in *A House with a Turret* dictates a letter to another woman herself. The theme of dictation and writing recurs when the boy takes a seat next to the woman in the hat and requests a stranger (Yurii Nevhamonnyi) to pen a telegram to his grandfather.

Both Muratova's and Neymann's films feature numerous instances of figures, adults and children, framed within windows and mirrors or other structured and superimposed surfaces. These secondary screens not only flatten the space and eliminate depth but also accentuate the two-dimensionality of the filmic image, distorting visual perception in the process. Furthermore, particular intonations of voice, the monotony of repetition, or the abruptness of grotesque cackling laughter induce a feeling of déjà vu. (**Video 6**).

Video 6: Repetitions and laughter in Neymann's *A House with a Turret* and in Kira Muratova's films, https://youtu.be/Ow-jvOBIv-w (or click on the image).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Any canon formation, be it in cinema, literature, or any field, relies on crossmapping – artists borrowing from their predecessors. Simultaneously, canonisation necessarily involves deviation from the precursors, revisiting and de-canonisation, a necessary step within the deconstructivist framework. This view of influence encompasses both its dangerous, contagious nature (akin to *influenza*), which can overshadow one's voice and ideas, and a mode of *fluent* production, protean creativity predicated on prolific crossmapping and an embrace of otherness. Bronfen rightly observes that

> *We cannot get rid of images that haunt us from the past, even though […] these images are often hard to grasp, let alone apprehend. While they influence the image formulas that have succeeded them, they are often screened out by what they themselves have engendered.*[lxvii]

Using Bronfen's concept, which has itself been born under the influence of other cultural theorists, I have demonstrated how Muratova's iconography lives on in these works and how this process of cine-poetic heredity relying on the iterability of images and gestures and their aesthetic formalisation creates lines of continuity and contributes to the ongoing formation and reconfiguration of the contemporary Ukrainian cinematic canon in all its intercultural diversity and complexity.

While this comparison, based on formal similarities and often fortuitous coincidences, may seem more intuitive than methodical, the perceived randomness does not detract from the result. What emerges is a visual and auditory cartography – an atlas of images and gestures that reflects the intercultural cinepoetic environment of Odesa. As Vitaly Chernetsky rightly observes, the Odesa myth warrants reevaluation.[lxviii] This cartographic exploration, therefore, serves a dual purpose: on the one hand, it reveals the processuality and fundamental openness of any aesthetic configuration, and on the other hand, it fosters a reimagining and potential redefinition of the 'Odesa Myth', redirecting it towards subverting patriarchal narratives and celebrating female authorship – a bold stride towards an inclusive cinematic legacy.

List of visuals

Video 1: Clip from Kira Muratova's *Three Stories* (Part 2: "Ophelia"): Two mother-and-daughter couples, https://youtu.be/z28AO4xfPEw.

Video 2: Clip from Eva Neymann's *By the River*: The mother and the daughter go for a walk, https://youtu.be/XZIJbcoy7_w.

Video 3: Clip from Neymann's *By the River*: Two sets of mother-and-daughter duos, https://youtu.be/1_aKmt2olC4.

Video 4: Fig. 1-79. Crossmapping gestures in the films of Muratova and Neymann. A Juxtaposition of stills, https://youtu.be/cwrnABdArNw.

Video 5: The child's gaze. Clips from *Melody for a Street-Organ* and *A House with a Turret*.

Video 6: Repetitions and laughter in Neymann's *A House with a Turret* and in Kira Muratova's films, https://youtu.be/Ow-jvOBIv-w

Acknowledgment.

My sincere thanks to Mariia Lihus, Irina Denischenko, and Adelaide McGinity-Peebles for their insightful feedback as the initial readers of this essay.

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[i] Cf. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* [1983] (London, New York: Verso, 2006); Eric R. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

[ii] Giorgio Agamben, "What is an Apparatus?" In *What is an Apparatus? And Other Essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 14.

[iii] Cf. Patricia Herlihy, *Odessa Recollected: The Port and the People* (Boston, USA: Academic Studies Press, 2018), 2-26.

[iv] Cf. Chernetsky, Vitaly, "Ivan Kozlenko's *Tanzher* and the Odesa Myth: Multidirectional Memory As a Strategy of Subversion." *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, 9(2), 2022: 43–63. https://doi.org/10.21226/ewjus605.

[v] "The Odessity did not, like the Dovzhenkovtsy, consider themselves 'Ukrainian filmmakers', nor did they consider their work to be emblematic of 'Ukrainian national cinema'." Joshua First, *Ukrainian Cinema. Belonging and Identity during the Soviet Thaw* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 18.
[vi] Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film. Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, London: Duke UP, 2000), 6.
[vii] Yuri Shevchuk, "Filmmaking as Cultural Aggression," *Images. The International Journal of European Film, Performing Arts and Audiovisual Communication*, 34(43), 2023: 29–48. https://doi.org/10.14746/i.2023.34.43.2.
[viii] Schevchuk, "Filmmaking as Cultural Aggression," 40-41.
[ix] Regrettably, Shevchuk's argument inadvertently weakens the Ukrainian resistance and paradoxically supports the linguistic principle that underpins the Russian Federation's claims to Ukrainian territories and cultural heritage.
[x] According to Nancy Condee, Muratova's characters are not so much individuals or identities but rather "fragments left behind from the world's conversations", or simply "disconnected utterances". Nancy Condee, *The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema* (Oxford, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 126, 128.
[xi] Cf. Kira Muratova, "'Pust' ostaviat Ukrainu v pokoe': Izvestnyi rezhisser – o situatsii v rodnoi dlia nee Ukraine. I o povedenii rossiiskogo rukovodstva," interview by Iurii Safronov, *Novaia gazeta*, April 12, 2014, https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2014/04/12/59173-kira-muratova-pust-ostavyat-ukrainu-v-pokoe; Kira Muratova, "'Net, ia ne nad skhvatkoi, ia prinimaiu storonu Ukrainy': Znamenityi rezhisser o voine, Odesse i antivoennom kino," interview by Ian Shenkman, *Novaia gazeta,* July 20, 2015: 19. https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2015/07/16/64919-kira-muratova-171-net-ya-ne-nad-shvatkoy-ya-prinimayu-storonu-ukrainy-187.
[xii] On the prevalence of Ukrainian civic identity over the ethnic and linguistic ones among the Russophone population in Ukraine, see Volodymyr Kulyk, "Competing Identities of Ukraine's Russian Speakers," in *Ukraine's Many Faces: Land, People, and Culture Revisited*, ed. Olena Palko, Manuel Férez Gil (Bielefeld: transcript, 2023), 315-330.
[xiii] Cf. Eugénie Zvonkine, *Kira Mouratova: Un cinéma de la dissonance* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 2012), 190f.
[xiv] Tilda Swinton, "Last and first movie memories," interview, *Metrograph* Vol. 25, Spring 2020, https://metrograph.com/last-and-first-movie-memories-tilda-swinton/.
[xv] Elena Gorfinkel, "Kira Muratova's Searing World," *Close-up*, 2019. https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/library/essay/kira-muratovas-searing-world
[xvi] Toril Moi, *Sexual /Textual Politics* [1988] (London, New York: Routledge, 2002), 77.
[xvii] "Canon," Online Etymology Dictionary, https://www.etymonline.com/word/canon.
[xviii] "Canonize," Merriam-Webster Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/canonize.
[xix] Elena Gorfinkel, "Against Lists," *Another Gaze*, November 29, 2019, https://www.anothergaze.com/elena-gorfinkel-manifesto-against-lists/; emphasis added.
[xx] Gorfinkel, "Against Lists."
[xxi] Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1994).
[xxii] Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 29, 36.
[xxiii] Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 29.
[xxiv] Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 3, 26; emphasis added.
[xxv] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997), xxviii.
[xxvi] Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 38.
[xxvii] Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 30.
[xxviii] On contamination, see Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 523.
[xxix] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence,* 7.
[xxx] Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York: Oxford UP, 1975), 74.
[xxxi] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence,* 7.
[xxxii] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence,* 19.

[xxxiii] Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, 3.
[xxxiv] I will spare the details, as these stages are expounded upon comprehensively in Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*.
[xxxv] Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, 73.
[xxxvi] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence,* 15-16.
[xxxvii] Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, 152.
[xxxviii] Shevchuk, "Filmmaking as Cultural Aggression," 40-41.
[xxxix] Muratova's film style is frequently labeled as "eccentric" or "weird" – a clear sign of material's defiance and, as per Bloom's view, of artistic merit of Muratova's oeuvre. This characteristic has become commonplace in every introduction to her body of work, which is why I refrain from providing specific references.
[xl] See Viktor Bozhovich, *Kira Muratova: Tvorcheskii portret* (Moskva: Soiuzinformkino, 1988), 3 (references to Chaplin, Fellini, Gerasimov, and Parajanov); Zara Abullaeva, *Kira Muratova: Iskusstvo kino* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2008), 209, and Kira Muratova, "Ženščina, kotoroj skučen alfavitnyj porjadok," interview by and Viktor Matizen, *Film.ru*, July 20, 2001, https://www.film.ru/articles/zhenshchina-kotoroy-skuchen-alfavitnyy-poryadok; (references to Khamdamov). Studies on Muratova's creative dialogues and (possible) mutual influences are not as extensive. Among them: Lilya Kaganovsky, "Ways of Seeing: on Kira Muratova's Brief Encounters and Larisa Shepit'ko's Wings". *Russian Review*, Vol. 71, No. 3 (July 2012): 482-499. On a detailed analysis of Parajanov's and Muratova's similarities, see Olha Briukhovetska, "Through the Looking-Water: Ex-Centric Visions in Sergei Parajanov's *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* and Kira Muratova's *Brief Encounters*," (manuscript, courtesy of the author) in *The Films of Kira Muratova: Essays on Cinematic Rebellion from the Margins*, ed. Irina Gradinari & Irina Schulzki (forthcoming). In the same volume, Michael Niehaus compares Muratova to Agnès Varda, and Ilja Kukuj draws parallels with the German filmmaker Herbert Achternbusch (manuscripts, courtesy of the authors).
[xli] Shevchuk mentions in passing Neymann and Shapiro as Muratova's followers ("Filmmaking as Cultural Aggression," 41). On Litvinova, see Irina Schulzki, "The Genealogy of Gesture: From Kira Muratova to Renata Litvinova". *Gesture*, special issue of *Practices & Interpretations. A Journal of Philology, Teaching and Cultural Studies* 6(3), 2021: 22-48. DOI: https://doi.org/10.18522/2415-8852-2021-3-22-48.
[xlii] Neymann's short films: *Chrysanthemums in Yellow* (*Khrizantemy v zheltom*, 1998), *Chronicle of a Farewell* (*Khronika proshchaniia*, 2000), *Freeze, Unfreeze* (*Halt still, mach weite*r, 2001).
[xliii] Neymann's documentaries: *It's the same old thing* (*Alles beim Alten,* Germany, 2005), *To See the Sea* (*Das Meer sehen,* Germany, 2006), *God's Moves* (*Wege Gottes,* Germany, 2006), and *The Market* (*Pryvoz,* Ukraine, 2021).
[xliv] Aksinya Kurina, Andrei Alferov, Anton Dolin, "Dom s bashenkoi – fil'm Evy Neiman o mal'chike, ostavshemsia v polnom odinochestve vo vremia voiny," *Meduza*, June 9, 2022, https://meduza.io/feature/2022/06/09/dom-s-bashenkoy-film-evy-neyman-o-malchike-ostavshemsya-v-polnom-odinochestve-vo-vremya-voyny?fbclid=IwAR3KId72kJJe8PP-t8tbFjxGX-kwtzj2escsVJ5L7_WeSoen6mEXkfk15mA&fs=e&s=cl.
[xlv] Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, 13.
[xlvi] Snezhana Pavlova, "Eva Neiman: Ia ochen' blagodarna Kire Muratovoi!", *Korotko pro*, July 17, 2007, https://kp.ua/odessa/7451-eva-neiman-ya-ochen-blahodarna-kyre-muratovoi
[xlvii] „Die Suche nach Licht", *Deutschlandrundfunk*, Oktober 25, 2007, https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/die-suche-nach-licht-100.html.
[xlviii] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, xviii.
[xlix] Muratova only shot one film, *Getting to Know the Big Wide World* (*Piznaiuchy bilyi svit /Poznavaja belyj svet*, 1979) at Lenfilm Studio; *Change of Fate* (*Zmina doli / Peremena uchasti*, 1987) was made in Central Asia, while *Passions* (*Zakhoplennia /Uvlechen'ia*, 1994) was filmed in Piatigorsk, Russia. Neymann's film *By the River* was shot in Odesa and Berdychiv (Zhytomyr Oblast), *A House with A Turret* was filmed exclusively in Odesa, and *The Song of Songs* in Odesa and Vylkovo (Odesa Oblast).
[l] It is also the central argument of Shevchuk's critique. Thus, he resents the fact that Neymann's *By the River* takes place in the post-Soviet Berdychiv, "yet once again completely cleansed of

Ukrainians and depicted as a provincial corner of the Russian cultural and geographic space. […] Thus, depopulated of Ukrainians, Berdychiv is cinematically appropriated for the coloniser as a Russian city." ("Filmmaking as Cultural Aggression," 41-42).

[li] Notably, Chetvertkov not only portrayed diverse characters across Muratova's films but also served as a scriptwriter for all her short films, including *Letter to America* (*Lyst do Ameryku / Pis'mo v Ameriku*, 1999), *The Certificate* (*Dovidka / Spravka*, 2005), *The Dummy* (*Lial'ka / Kukla*, 2006), as well as for the feature *The Tuner* (*Nastroiuvach / Nastroishchik*, 2004). Additionally, Chetvertkov penned the screenplay for Neymann's debut short film *Freeze, Unfreeze* (approx. 19 min, Germany/Ukraine), in which he played the lead role.

[lii] On the literary sources of Muratova's film, see Denis Larionov's talk within the international symposium *"People don't like to look at this…": The Cinema of Kira Muratova* (May 14, 2021), https://youtu.be/wle7csDz7XY?list=PLdR6GfPTyMsVQaVY08yLqWOJuzgXpabO8&t=84.

[liii] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* [1969] (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), 40.

[liv] See, for example, dog's barking and whimpering in *The Asthenic Syndrome /Astenichnyi syndrom/ Astenicheskii sindrom* (1989) and *The Sentimental Policeman*, as well as a tiger's growling in the soundtrack of *A Change of Fate* and peacock cries in *Three Stories* (Part 1: *Boiler-Room Nr 6*).

[lv] The original reads as follows: "To live, the poet must misinterpret the father, by the crucial act of misprision, which is the re-writing of the father." (Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, 19)

[lvi] Sergei Eisenstein, *Mise en jeu and mise en geste* [1948], trans. Sergey Levchin (Montréal: Caboose, 2014).

[lvii] Elisabeth Bronfen, *Crossmappings: On Visual Culture* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 4-5.

[lviii] Bronfen, *Crossmappings*, 2.

[lix] Bronfen, *Crossmappings*, 7-8.

[lx] Elisabeth Bronfen, *Specters of War: Hollywood's Engagement with Military Conflict* (Rutgers University Press, 2012), 8.

[lxilxi] Bronfen, *Specters of War*, 8-9.

[lxii] Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics* [1996], trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 49–60.

[lxiii] Consider, for instance, Georges Didi-Huberman's examination of uprising-pathosformulas as the fundamental motion underpinning cultural and historical phenomena, ranging from collective emotions to mass movement and upheavals : "Uprisings occur as *gestures*." (*Soulèvements / Uprisings*, Exhibition booklet, Jeu de Paume, Paris, 2016, https://jeudepaume.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/PetitJournal_Soulevements.pdf).

[lxiv] Fridrikh Gorenshtein, "Dom s bashenkoi," *Iunost'* 6 (1964): 47-57.

[lxv] Eugénie Zvonkine contends that *Melody for a Street-Organ* exhibits a Kafkaesque narrative structure, where each action and spatial movement of the main characters consistently brings them into increasingly dire circumstances (Zvonkine, *Kira Mouratova*, 251).

[lxvi] "куда бы мальчик ни подходил, он всюду натыкался на спины." Fridrikh Gorenshtein, "Dom s bashenkoi," *Iunost'* 6 (1964): 49.

[lxvii] Bronfen, *Crossmappings*, 7.

[lxviii] Chernetsky, "Ivan Kozlenko's *Tanzher*…", 52.