REFLECTION OF PUBLIC POLICY IN CINEMA: SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS ON THE EXAMPLE OF KAZAKHSTAN

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Abstract. *The article examines the features of the Kazakhstani film industry in terms of broadcasted ideological messages. The article analyzes the representation of social problems, state messages, and social values in cinema. On the example of films that have become widely known among the Kazakhstani audience, this article examines the main directions of public policy, directly or indirectly reflected in the production of Kazakhstani cinema. The study analyzed the content of key state policy documents and development concepts in comparison with the ideological messages of domestic films released for mass distribution. The timing of the analysis begins in 1992 and ends in the second half of 2020. This period can be divided into several stages of social development, each of which is characterized by modernization processes in particular areas: 1) from 1992 to the end of the 90s: institutional modernization; 2) from the late 90s to 2012: economic modernization; 3) from 2012 to 2016: social modernization; 4) from 2017 to the present: modernization of public consciousness. It should be noted that this division is arbitrary and belonging to the category of the "ideal type". To put it in other words, each stage is featured by complex modernization processes, affecting all aspects of social life. The selection of certain stages is due to the predominance of any component, which, however, does not mean the absence of the influence of other factors. Changes in the social sphere and political transformations were reflected in art in general and in cinema in particular.*

Keywords: *public policy, cinema, values, modernization of public consciousness, identity, the culture code.*

Introduction

During the period of gaining independence in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the government adopted several program documents that determined the main directions of public policy. At different stages of social development, the government set particular priorities, but on the whole, it took into account a set of central issues. The most important of the latter were the issues of national identity, economic, industrial, technological development, foreign policy, education, family policy, and the attitude of the population to work. Later, a new direction-youth policy emerged. All those aspects are reflected in the cinema. Art has always responded to the social context and its changes, and cinema is no exception here (Pryshlyak, 2019).

Cinema is a kind of conductor of a certain ideology, that is, a system of world perception of a complex of knowledge, experience, traditions, customs, mores, ideals, and morals, corresponding to a particular society. Cinema influences the formation of value attitudes that support the preservation of society and its structure (Mikhailova, 2018; Kozhevnikova and Merkulova, 2020). It is important to note that at present, the state ideology is expressed in a direct or indirect form not only in films shot under the state order or pitched by the State Center for Support of National Cinema, but also in the production of frequent film studios and author projects. One can explain this in terms of Michel Foucault's theory of the discourse of power. Discourse is a tool for executing the power. It is a network of "speeches, texts, and practices" organized in such a way that subjects can interact fully only within a specific discourse (Foucault, 2006). Some discourses limit the production of knowledge, disagreement, and difference, and some that "allow" new knowledge and differences. The questions that arise within this structure relate to how some discourses maintain their authority, and how some "voices" are heard, while others are silenced.

The analysis of the value-normative sphere through the prism of public policy is an important subject of research from the standpoint of the theory of public administration, social psychology, and sociology of culture and may be of interest to government agencies, the scientific community and people of arts.

Literature Review

Since characters tend to operate within social institutions, films necessarily tell something about aspects of life in society. The sociological aspect of film studies focuses primarily on the following topics: identity, interaction, inequality, and social institutions (Sutherland and Feltey, 2010; Pankevych, 2019). Also, their "visual power" and narrative characteristics can influence the formation of the viewer's social attitudes (Nascimento, 2019). In 1970, in the publication of *Towards a Sociology of the Cinema*, sociologist Ian Charles Jarvie proposed the idea of cinema as an "entertainment industry". He attempted to answer the following questions 1) "Who makes films, how and why?"; 2) "Who watches films and why?" and 3) How do we study and evaluate the film? "He identified three main focuses of analysis: film production, audience, and transmitted values (Jarvie, 2013).

Casetti viewed cinema as an ideological state instrument, reflecting the cultural values of different historical eras (Casetti, 1999). Sociologist Dieter Prokop, in his work *Sociology of Cinema* (Prokop, 1982), criticized the postulates of functionalism in film studies, believing that the film industry is a "neutral environment" in the formation of public opinion. He perceived cinema as a mirror reflecting reality, rather than forming attitudes. Another German researcher, Siegfried Kracauer (1960), argued that "hidden truths" are always already discovered, but we often cannot recognize them, not because their appearance is deceiving, but because the public has internalized the dominant ideologies that are disseminated by state institutions such as schools, church, and media. According to Paulo Menezes, in addition to significantly influencing personal and collective emotions and behavior, cinema can also be a determining factor in creating an individual outlook on life and plans for the future (Menezes, 2007; Kosinova, 2019).

Russian sociologist Mikhail Zhabskiy (2012) defined cinema as "the mirror and hammer of the transformation of social reality". Thus, cinema not only reflects but also creates reality. Reflecting real-life and acting as a mechanism of "suggestion and infection", it captures the mind of the viewer, conveys certain messages (Mikhailova, 2018). After all, the product of cinema is not only a form of entertainment but also an effective tool of cognition associated with the direct multiplication of its components (Stein, 2012). In his study of the manipulative impact of cinema on the mass consciousness, M.V. Skripar (2009) noted that "the process of forming the value orientations of young people is spontaneous", while cinema, as a means of social manipulation, "allows to control and increase the effectiveness of this process".

As a subject of collective perception, cinema is aimed at a mass audience. The ideological function of cinema is to demonstrate patterns of behavior. Foucault viewed cinema through the concept of a dispositive. The cinematic disposition is a fluid template, yet its essence describes cinema as an institution, despite its differences. Dispositive is not an idealistic category, but a functional concept and as a concept, it is a political tool. In his text on Foucault, Gilles Deleuze (1992) characterized the dispositive primarily as "a tangle, a multilinear ensemble of different lines, each of which has a different nature". This mixture combines power, knowledge, and subjectivity – the core concepts of Foucault. However, this is still a general approach to cinematic dispositive. Dispositive is concrete and never solely an abstraction. It works specifically with the body and mind through specific strategies. According to Foucault, with this term he tried to distinguish, a completely heterogeneous set of discourses, institutions, laws, scientific statements, philosophical and moral positions.

For Foucault, power is not physical control over others that allows one to impose one's will, it rather the ability to embed discourse (ideas). The power to control people is rooted in dominant discourses that convey the reality of social positions. Power is understood not just as repressive power over others, but as a set of discourses, the power of beliefs of which affect the population. Thus, rulers rule not by threats of physical violence, but by implanting compelling ideas that dominate the populace (Foucault, 2006).

Materials and Methods

This study builds on the analysis of the content of the main ideological and program documents of the Republic of Kazakhstan and films that are most popular with the Kazakh audience, employing elements of discourse analysis. The discourse analysis methodology, based on the operationalization of a number of abstract constructs, consists of understanding discourse as a social practice. Discourse analysis not only provides the researcher with the theoretical basis of ideology, but also expands the understanding of the functions, structural components, and essence of current ideologies. In discourse analysis, a communicative situation or a text is examined within the framework of more global social structures – complexes of texts, discourse formation, historical context. This is what distinguishes discourse analysis from other qualitative sociological methods, such as converse and narrative analysis, or ethnomethodology. In addition, the discourse analysis takes into account the complexity and multidimensionality of the research object. One can consider ideology as a complex, multilevel education that presupposes both conscious and unconscious aspects, as well as, inclusion in social practices and structures (Bursevich, 2014; Oliynyk et al., 2020).

A distinctive feature of discourse analysis is that it views ideology not as static, but as a changing construct. The focus of attention is the process and the study of ways of producing ideology.

The analysis involved the following official documents:
 – Conception of the Formation of the state identity of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1996);
 – The Strategy of the development of Kazakhstan "Kazakhstan-2030" (1997);
 – Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050" (2012);
 – Program article "Social modernization of Kazakhstan: Twenty steps to a Society of universal labour" (2012);
 – Regional Development Program by 2020 (2014);
 – National plan "100 concrete steps" (2015);
 – Concept of strengthening and development of Kazakhstan's identity and unity (2015);
 – Patriotic Act "Mangilik El" (2016);
 – Concept of family and gender policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan by 2030 (2016);
 – Program article "The Course towards Future: Modernization of Public consciousness" (2017);
 – State program "Digital Kazakhstan" (2017);
 – Regional Development Program for 2020-2025 (2019).

Each of the listed program documents and concepts carries various value components that are in some way reflected in the domestic cinema. Particular political and ideological messages dominated at different stages of historical development; they were transmitted not only at the official level but also through art and creativity. This area has a great potential for impact on the population, since, as a rule, it is not coercive, and is performed unnoticed for the object of influence.

Results and Discussion

The period of institutional modernization is characterized by the choice of a new development path, a change in the public administration system, and the transformation of social institutions, and the beginning of the transition from a command-administrative to a market economy. The initial stage of the formation and development of the state management system fell on 1990-1993 and was marked by the country's transition to independent development, the formation of the foundations of an independent state and administrative system. The main feature of this stage was that most of the changes aimed not so much at creating a new system as at destroying the old one. In other words, there was a breakdown of the previous totalitarian system and radical reform of the system of social and political relations (Alembayev, 2008). After gaining independence, Kazakhstan faced the task of transitioning to a market, socially-oriented economy. However, in the early 90s, "politics went ahead of the economy", which contributed to the severing of economic ties and led to a negative chain reaction in the first years of sovereignty: factories shut down, tens of thousands of workers were left with no means of subsistence. Many subjects of agriculture went bankrupt due to the termination of subsidies, and consequently; state and collective farms went bankrupt. Therefore, the economic situation in Kazakhstan, as much as in other republics of the former Soviet Union, has deteriorated quite significantly (Socio-economic development, 2015).

At the first stages of Kazakhstan's existence as an independent state, it was necessary to fill the ideological vacuum that arose after the collapse of the Soviet socialist system. A certain state of anomie arose – the old order of things had already ceased to exist, and the new one had not yet been established. This uncertainty was reflected in the cinema as well. Therefore, in the film "Dream in a Dream" the character lives in several dimensions: in his work, in real life, and his dreams. The painting "A Place on a Gray Cocked Hat" shows several days in the life of a young man leading an idle lifestyle, which includes alcohol, drugs, and empty talk. His life is in a sense empty and full of uncertainty. "The Pigeon Bell-ringer" is a chain of tragic events in the life of the protagonist. "The Life of a Young Accordionist" is a story about a boy who found himself in a difficult life situation. In "Station of Love" the characters' paths diverge and only after many years, by a lucky chance, they reconnect. Films shot during this period are different because most of the events in the characters' lives occur not as a result of their actions, but by chance. The characters are somewhat lost and powerless in the face of fate. This is the time of marginal cinema, where the characters have not decided on their lives, and their actions have little effect on the outcome of events. In May 1996, the government adopted the Conception of the Formation of the state identity of the Republic of Kazakhstan, according to which "The very logic of the evolution of an ethnos predetermines the need for the emergence of the state as an instrument providing material and spiritual conditions for the existence and development of the nation" (Order of the President, 1996). Historical films, shot in the 90s, are dedicated mainly to creative personalities: poets, writers, composers ("Youth of Zhambyl", "Abai", "The Last Autumn of Shakarim"). During this period, there are practically no films about state leaders, conquerors, and political figures; the cinema tries

to bypass "sharp corners" and socio-economic problems. Largely, the films of that period addressed the questions of self-determination and self-identification of the characters; storylines about the unpredictability of life and the predominance of fate over the will of man were popular too.

The period of institutional and economic reforms was followed by a commodity boom in the 2000s with "fast money drunkenness" and increased consumer capacity (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2019). In 1997, the government adopted the Development Strategy "Kazakhstan-2030", which identified the development priorities for the next 10 years. Economic growth based on an open market economy with a high level of foreign investment and domestic savings was named as the most important priority of the Strategy. The strategy "Kazakhstan-2030" was characterized by a developmental approach (related to the development). The main goal was to transform Kazakhstan into an economically and politically highly developed state capable of reaching the level of development of the "Asian tigers" – Singapore and Malaysia. This component of the national idea was designed to unite all Kazakhstanis, regardless of their ethnicity and other socio-demographic characteristics (Address of the President, 1997). By the end of the 90s – the beginning of the 2000s, when the crisis began to decline, it was the beginning of the era of reflection. One of the popular subjects for reflection at that time was the theme of the crime that raged in the 90s (films "Farah", "Killer", "The Racketeer"). In the second half of the 2000s, historical events became the subject of reflection (the films "A Gift to Stalin", "Nomad", "Mongol", "Alashorda", "Mustafa Shokai"). Unlike historical films of the period of the nineties, dedicated to creative people (poets, writers, musicians) films of the 2000s covered the themes of politics, battles, and the formation of national identity.

The program article "Social modernization of Kazakhstan: 20 steps to a Society of universal labour" issued in 2012 proclaimed a course for a verified social policy and achieving an optimal balance between economic success and the provision of public goods. The policy of social modernization in the context of global competition was based on real productive labor. The concept of social modernization of the country meant, first of all, a specific transformation, a restructuring of the consciousness of citizens – from a dependent mood to an active life position. The phenomenon of social infantilism, which is based on the attitude "to work less, get more," was defined as unsuitable for the Kazakh society (Nazarbayev, 2012).

Entertainment films shot during that period fulfilled not only direct but also non-obvious, indirect messages that lie within the framework of state ideology. For example, the comedy "Kelinka Sabina (Daughter-in-law Sabina)" manifests the ideas of the Regional Development Program (the need to develop infrastructure in rural areas). The problem of social infantilism, which is noted as a barrier to social modernization in the 2012 program article "Social modernization of Kazakhstan: 20 steps towards the Society of Universal Labor" is actualized in the film too. The messages of that program article are also found in other domestic films: "The teacher" – topical issues of higher education, the demand for highly qualified specialists; painting "The Way Home" – a combination of traditional values and modern education, youth work abroad; "The Leader's Way" is a film about the first President of Kazakhstan, who made his way from a metallurgist to

the head of state, and carries the meritocratic ideas of the Universal Labor Society. The films of this period, are characterized by the idea that success can only be achieved by hard work and overcoming obstacles and life difficulties.

The program article "Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan's identity", published in April 2017, marked the beginning of the modernization of public consciousness. The article identified the following key areas: the cult of knowledge, the competitiveness of the individual, pragmatism, evolutionary development, the preservation of national identity, and the openness of consciousness. According to the article, it is important to educate and strengthen these qualities and values in the consciousness of the population. Spiritual and moral education should carry not only elements of conservatism in its positive manifestation, but also modernist trends in the field of the intellectual development of the younger generation.

The program of modernization public consciousness emphasizes the importance of preserving national identity. Today, when the formation of national identity happens not only within society, but also under the influence of external factors, it is important to strengthen national values in the minds of youth- the preservation of language, culture, and traditions (cultural code). The issues of preserving the cultural code are revealed in the comedy film "Off-line Vacations". The film's underlying themes are the idea of the importance of traditions, preservation of connection with historical roots, and the growth of urbanization, and the need to support the village. The issues of preserving the cultural code (national identity, knowledge of the language, patriotism) are actualized in the film "Akim", where the main character, obsessed with the idea of career growth in the city, eventually begins to think about social problems in the countryside and makes efforts to solve them.

The cultural code also includes family values. The family is a basic social institution, therefore the formation of family values is a priority of spiritual and moral education. Preservation of the foundations of a harmonious family is a guarantee of the normal and full functioning of the Kazakhstani society. The issues of family values and family understanding are raised in the films "Kelinka (Daugther-in-law) is also a human", "Brother or marriage".

During the years of independence, gender policy has undergone significant changes. Several progressive trends have emerged, such as the adoption of documents aimed at achieving gender equality, the introduction of gender quotas for party lists, concessional lending to women's entrepreneurship, and consideration of the introduction of gender-oriented budgeting (Nikolayeva, 2014). Over the past 5 years, the number of films showing images of strong, intelligent, independent, self-sufficient women has noticeably increased. In 2019, the film "Tomiris" was released. The film told the story of the queen of the Massagetae, who combined the roles of a warrior and a ruler. Before the film's release, the images of leaders and rulers appeared in domestic historical films, usually, were portrayed by the male. Entertainment movies also display rethinking of gender roles: "Off-Line Vacations" emphasizes that "doing like a girl" can be offensive to girls, and that girls can handle challenges, as well as boys, do. The comedy "Kelinka is also a human 2" demonstrates the exchange of gender roles between spouses and revealed the problems of gender socialization of the male and female sexes revealed in a comic form.

The films of that period show the interaction of traditional and modern, as well as, urban and rural lifestyles – "Off-line Vacations", "Akim"; globalization and national identity – "My love is Aisulu", a series of films "Business in Kazakh". Characters often speak English and have a foreign education. The interaction of different cultures and lifestyles is an indicator of the "openness of consciousness" is one of the basic components of the modernization of public consciousness. The openness of consciousness includes the ability to adopt someone else's experience, learn from others (Nazarbayev, 2017).

In the last decade, Kazakhstani cinema began to address acute social issues that were practically not covered before and were somewhat taboo. These include problems of corruption and pedophilia – "Black, black man", labor migration and exploitation of migrants – "Ayka", social orphanhood, the rights and safety of children – "I won't come back", bullying in schools and its consequences – "Harmony Lessons". If the 2000s in cinema can be defined as a reflection on the past, then modern cinema reflects current problems in a serious or comic form, makes the viewer want to change, and makes him think. There is a kind of reassessment of values that is taking place: material values (wealth, economic status) are replaced by the cult of knowledge, pragmatism, the idea of preserving the cultural code, and readiness for change.

Conclusions

1. Kazakhstani cinema has been changing and evolving since gaining independence. The censorship has gradually decreased, the images and transmitted values have also changed. Nevertheless, the state ideology is still reflected in the cinema and continues to influence the mass audience. This applies not only to films produced by the government order but also to the films of private studios.

2. The ideological transformations in cinema associated with the modernization processes in the country can be conditionally divided into 4 stages:
   – economic modernization (from the late 90s to 2012). That stage was a period of reflection on the past. A critical view of historical events was inherent for the cinema of that period; the cinema did not attempt to avoid sharp corners, on the contrary, it demonstrated the unsightly sides of life.
   – social modernization (from 2012 to 2016). The stage can be defined as a period of motivation. Meritocratic attitudes and motivation for work and education prevailed in the state ideology and cinema of that period.
   – modernization of public consciousness (from 2017 to the present). This period can be defined as the period of revaluation of values. In terms of ideology, a course to modernize value guidelines is proclaimed, which is in turn reflected in film production. Feature films reflect acute social problems that have to be addressed; dichotomous poles are combined: urban and rural lifestyles, globalization and national identity, tradition and modernity.

3. The analysis of public policy and value attitudes through creativity and art has a wide research potential, since the influence of these components is often unconscious for the target, yet simultaneously has a powerful social effect.

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