

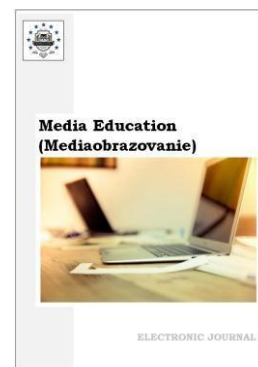
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The Model of Cultural Identity Represented in the Soviet Cinematography of the 1920s

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Abstract

The article reflects the results of comparative hermeneutical analysis of Soviet feature films of the 1920s, including the study of cultural and historical contexts in order to consider their possible influence on the author's views, reflected in the specifics of the depiction of characters and reality, in the choice of plot motifs and other structural components of the film.

Based on the results of the analysis, we describe and systematize film images, types of film characters and plot motifs that reflect the prevailing "points of view" about cultural values and traditions and characterize stereotypical models of social interaction between characters in accordance with the five types of cinematic discourse (interpersonal, artistic and aesthetic, religious and ideological, historical and cultural, mythological), which constitute the content of the structural and functional model of cultural identity developed by us.

The analysis of the representation of the model of cultural identity in the Soviet art cinema of the 1920s has shown that, having lost the specific features of the national worldview that constitute the core of cultural self-consciousness, the Soviet international identity retained the characteristic features of the Russian mentality, transformed into proletarian virtues.

Keywords: cinema, culture, identity, Soviet Union, 1920s.

1. Introduction

In the 1920s, the Soviet Union was undergoing a "cultural revolution" that gave rise to a new system of values and new models of human behavior. This period was full of contradictions. Opposing phenomena emerged and developed in the cultural sphere: a high level of ideological commitment and the "new sexual morality" (the principles of which were developed by N. Krupskaya); ideological censorship and openness of cultural boundaries; attempts to develop proletarian culture and experimentation in art; rivalry between representatives of different styles in art and the gradual unification of culture (culminating in the formation of socialist realism in the early 1930s).

In order to consolidate society, the Bolsheviks introduced ritualized state holidays, disseminated new forms of leisure activities, ideas about the family and everyday life. The socialist ideals, methods of self-consciousness and self-regulation they developed were oriented towards the creation of a proletarian international society, indivisible along national and ethnic lines. Traditional cultural values were losing their significance in maintaining the cultural identity of national societies. Russian culture was under severe attack. Its patriarchal and religious traditions were declared a remnant of the past, which was actively fought against. The role of cinema was one of the main tools in this struggle.

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Early Soviet cinema reflected and constructed the image of the present, which contained visual features of the standardized appearance of the "new man" and normative everyday life. The representations of the antinomies "old – new", "own – alien" and the interpersonal and social relations shown oriented the audience in the space of basic values of the emerging socialist culture and acted as identification markers for them.

2. Materials and methods

The article reflects the results of a comparative hermeneutical analysis of Soviet feature films of the 1920s, including the study of cultural and historical contexts in order to consider their possible influence on the author's views, reflected in the specifics of the depiction of characters and reality, in the choice of plot motifs and other structural components of the film.

The technology of hermeneutic analysis of feature films in historical and cultural contexts we used is based on the developments of A. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2013; Fedorov, 2015), A. Silverblatt (Silverblatt, 2001: 80-81), and U. Eco (Eco, 2005: 209).

We interpret the structure of cultural identity as a multidimensional phenomenon that forms a unity of discursive practices reflecting traditional and innovative for public consciousness forms and ways of relations between man and man, man and society, society and nature, constituting a system of functional blocks (which we formulate as interpersonal, social and being), ontologically related to the processes of a person's search for his or her own place in society and the formation of a sense of cultural belonging.

Based on the obtained results of hermeneutic analysis of Soviet feature films of the 1920s, we described and systematized film images, types of film characters and plot motifs that reflect the prevailing "points of view" about cultural values and traditions and, characterizing stereotypical models of social interaction of characters in accordance with the five types of cinematic discourse (interpersonal, artistic-aesthetic, religious-ideological, historical-cultural, mythological), constituting the content of the developed on the basis of the hermeneutic analysis of Soviet feature films of the 1920s.

3. Discussion

So far, the problem of cultural identity representation in the Soviet art cinema of the 1920s has not been considered in scientific research. But at the same time, it has been indirectly touched upon by authors analyzing issues related to the reflection and construction of sociocultural reality by Soviet post-revolutionary cinema. Within the framework of this direction, they conducted research on the following topics:

- A.A. Kochkina analyzes the approaches of cinematographers to the creation of the image of the revolution in Soviet silent cinema, the main character of which, as the author shows, became the rebellious masses of workers supported by the Bolshevik Party (Kochkina, 2018);

- E.V. Zhbankova and S.A. Smagina focus on the problems of reflection by the Soviet cinematography of the 1920s of the changed position of women in society, the formation of a "new morality" and the destruction of the traditional foundations of the patriarchal family (Zhbankova, 2019; Smagina, 2017; 2018);

- O.V. Gorbachev and L.N. Mazur cover the reflection of the struggle against religion and propaganda of atheism on the Soviet cinema screen in the 1920s. According to the authors, cinematographers show religion as a reactionary and hostile to socialist culture in order to convince viewers of the historical justice of the October Revolution (Mazur; Gorbachev, 2013);

- A.E. Yakimov studies the problem of representation of everyday life in the Soviet cinema of the 1920s in the context of the socially constructive function of ideology, which, in his opinion, intervenes in the cultural space of established orders and foundations (Yakimov, 2021);

- analyzing the peculiarities of the representation of everyday culture on the cinema screen of the 1920s, A.N. Soboleva and O.V. Gorbachev point to the portrayal of villagers as backward and non-self-sufficient, and urban workers as progressive and successful (Gorbachev, 2015; Soboleva, 2018);

- E.A. Margolit views the creative process of young filmmakers, who met the revolution as very young people, as a "revolt against the empire" a rebellion of "young children against their fathers" (Margolit, 2021: 160). He describes the embodiment of these sentiments in the aesthetics and montage principles of Soviet silent films, symbolizing the struggle between the "new" and the "old";

- A.V. Zyablikov conducts a historiographical analysis of the problem of the construction of social reality by means of cinematography and the formation of socio-cultural stereotypes that determined the worldview of the "new man". In his opinion, the creative process of cinematographers took place under the sign of deconstruction of existing social practices and the search for images combining utopia and real life (Zyablikov, 2022);

- A.V. Smirnov and I.L. Kazakova examine the processes of formation of political discourse figures in early Soviet cinema in the context of the struggle between old-regime and revolutionary forces. Within the framework of this discourse, as the authors believe, "images of the new life are constructed without images of its builders and, especially, without images of their leaders. In fact, the emphasis is not on the person, but on the movement of the person or the movement of the machine" (Smirnov; Kazakova, 2018: 87).

- E.A. Margolit, G.N. Ryabova and N.A. Khrenov analyze the problems of the influence of foreign experience (Ryabova, 2012), the processes of destruction of the traditional sacral core of culture (Khrenov, 2002), and the visualization of the "high" and "low" in the context of carnival laughter (Margolit, 2021) in Soviet post-revolutionary feature films of the comedy genre.

The presence of such a variety of thematic directions in the study of early Soviet cinema is due to the global restructuring of all spheres of life that took place in the 1920s and the active development of film theory and film language. New models of behavior and forms of social relations were emerging, new ideas about the family and the role of women in society were being formed, and the everyday life of urban and rural residents was changing. Cinema not only recorded these processes, but also actively created an image of the emerging Soviet society.

4. Results

Peculiarities of the historical period of feature film creation

The key events of the 1920s characterized the new political order and cultural situation in the country, until 1921 (accompanied by nationalization of industry, prodrazverstka, prohibition of private trade); mass education of children and adults to read and write (the decree "On the Elimination of Illiteracy in the RSFSR" was adopted in 1919; distribution of izb-reading rooms); and mass education of children and adults to read and write (the decree "On the Elimination of Illiteracy in the RSFSR" was adopted in 1919). introduction of universal labor conscription (according to the decree of the SNK, adopted in 1920, "bourgeois elements" (former representatives of privileged estates) were to be involved in street cleaning, garbage collection, and other types of socially useful work); legalization of abortion (1920); proclamation of the principles of social security (1920).); proclamation of the principles of social equality and abolition of estates; massive famine, which lasted from 1920 to 1923 and covered 35 provinces; creation of the All-Union Pioneer Organization named after V.I. Lenin (May 19, 1923).); I. Lenin (May 19, 1922); the formation of the USSR (December 30, 1922); the fight against gender inequality (December 30, 1922).); fight against gender inequality and child homelessness; fight against the church and religion (in 1922 Patriarch Tikhon was arrested; in 1925 the Union of Militant Godless People was created; church rituals were changed to civil rituals: red christening ("oktyabrina" or "zvezdina"), weddings and funerals); destruction of the traditional patriarchal family (the authorities proclaimed the independence of women from their husbands; in 1926 the family was legally recognized as a permanent joint family. the family was legally recognized as a permanent cohabitation of a man and a woman who did not officially register their relationship); the fight against prostitution; the implementation of a "new economic policy" that gave a little economic freedom to peasants and entrepreneurs (already in the late 1920s a complete ban on private trade was introduced at the end of the 1920s); the internal political struggle that developed between Lenin's successors and their opponents; collectivization and industrialization that began in the late 1920s.

The Bolsheviks had a radical view of the national question. They saw the Russian people as oppressors who carried out the forced Russification of small peoples. Therefore, part of their ideology was the struggle against Russian chauvinism. Lenin believed that it was necessary to give more rights to the inhabitants of the Soviet republics neighboring the RSFSR, and, released from the tsarist "prison of nations" (in 1914 in the newspaper "Social-Democrat" he published an article "On the national pride of the Great Russians"). Stalin (from 1917 to 1923 he was People's Commissar for Nationalities) saw the danger in the unity of the people around the Russian power and considered it a threatening factor for proletarian internationalism. Thus, already at the beginning of the Soviet era, provisions were formulated on the basis of which the Communist Party

pursued a policy supporting social, cultural and economic donations to the supposedly "oppressed" nationalities.

The establishment of the Soviet state was accompanied by the creation of new classes of workers and peasants, social groups of employees, the renaming of streets and cities, factories and plants, the emergence of new names, rituals, and traditions, the unfolding of a movement of mass artistic creation exposing the vices of the "old" regime and glorifying socialism. Public organizations and state bodies were engaged in the formation of a new image of the country of workers and peasants. Already in 1917, the Proletkult was founded, a mass organization aimed at developing and spreading the new communist culture. Proletkult staked on the openly class content of culture and rejected the old cultural heritage (Yudin, 2001: 17-18). In the same year, the Narkompros was established, which managed educational activities at all levels and supervised virtually all spheres of cultural life, including science, cinema, literature, and other areas. In 1920, the Agitprop was established under the Central Committee of the RCP(b) (later the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) to manage agitation and propaganda of communist ideas.

The period of the 1920s was a transitional stage. There was an ideological struggle between the "old" and the "new," and a totalitarian political regime had not yet been established. The economic, (in fact, the country had a market economy), and cultural (creative freedom controlled by ideological censorship) situation opened up great opportunities for filmmakers to experiment with film language. Directors passionate about revolutionary ideas created the Soviet school of montage, which was recognized worldwide.

The authorities attached great importance to the cinema. It was assigned one of the key roles in disseminating the ideas of social equality and justice, communicating to a wide audience the goals of building a socialist society and solving educational tasks. At the "new stage, the general task becomes the communist education of the entire mass of workers, the deep remodeling of the consciousness of millions, their ideological preparation for active participation in the construction of socialist society. ... Already in the first months of peaceful construction V.I. Lenin hastened the restoration and development of the film business" (Lebedev, 1965: 100).

Despite the production of a large number of entertaining films in the 1920s, the themes of the movies were increasingly linked to the tasks of ideological education of the Soviet audience. The myth of the October Revolution and the Civil War (*Sickle and Hammer* (1921), *Red Devils* (1923), *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *Mother* (1926), etc.) was constructed in cinema. From classic works of literature, cinematographers extracted plots of exploitation of peasants by landlords and peasant uprisings (*Magpie the Thief* (1920), *The Overcoat* (1926), *Gentlemen of Skotinina* (1927), *The Captain's Daughter* (1928), etc.).

Meanwhile, in the 1920s, the ideological line was constantly undergoing significant changes. In 1923, the practice of supplementing film screenings with lectures and commentaries on the construction of socialism began to spread throughout the country to somewhat correct ideologically outdated feature films in relation to new attitudes.

Political events and socio-cultural phenomena contributed to the emergence of the idea and the process of creating Soviet feature films of the 1920s. During these years, films were shot about the exploits of teenagers and Red Army soldiers in the Civil War (*On the Red Front* (1920), *Ataman Khmel* (1923), *The Red Devils* (1923), *the Gold Reserve* (1925), *the Forty -first* (1926), *Zvenigora* (1927), *Vanka and the Avenger* (1928), etc.), the revolution (*Stachka* (1924), *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *Mother* (1926), *October* (1927), etc.), the struggle of pioneers against the vestiges of the past (*Vanka – Young Pioneer* (1924), *Island of Young Pioneers* (1924), *Little and Big* (1928), *Tanka the Tavernkeeper* (1929), etc.), new relations in the family and the position of women in society (*Prostitute* (1926), *Parisian Cobbler* (1927), *The Third Meshchanskaya* (1927), etc.), the struggle against religion (*About Pop Pankrat*, *Aunt Domna and a revealed icon in Kolomna* (1918), *The Miracle Worker* (1922), *A Poor Man's Worth – A Fist in the Side (Defense of the Peasant)* (1924), *The Old Man Vasily Gryaznov* (1924), *The Cross and the Mauser* (1925), etc.), and others.

The influence of historical events on the process of creating Soviet feature films of the 1920s

In the post-revolutionary period, cinematographers took an active part in the enlightenment and education of a wide audience. They not only reflected many social problems on the screen but also constructed an image of the new reality. They focused on both the events of the recent historical past and the phenomena of the new Soviet life.

In the first decade of its existence, the USSR was open to Western countries. Soviet filmmakers engaged in cultural dialogue with their foreign colleagues, benefiting from the experience and discoveries of American and European film schools. Most of the comedy and adventure genre films of this period do not have ideological attitudes, but at the same time, there are many similarities with American films. For example, the films of L. Kuleshov (*The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1924)), Y. Zhelyabuzhsky (*Cigarette Saleswoman from Mosselprom* (1924)), S. Komarov (*The Kiss of Mary Pickford* (1927)), and other directors are shot with the use of quick editing, full of ridiculous situations, chases, shootouts, swindles, and seductions – the techniques of early Hollywood cinema.

After coming to power, the Bolsheviks began to eradicate the traditions of the "old" regime, actively destroying the patriarchal foundations of the family, making private family life public. Cinematography was sensitive to these painful changes. In focus were acute social themes: adultery, abortion, and emancipation of women. In the movie *Katya – Paper Rennet* (1926), a girl, being pregnant, invites a homeless man to stay overnight, who will later replace her newborn son's father. The heroine of the picture *The Girl with the Box* (1927), wanting to help a barely known man, marries him. In the film *Paris Shoemaker* (1927), Komsomol Katya betrays her lover, believing that "fiddling with diapers" is shameful. In the movie *The Third Meshchanskaya* (1927), two men cohabit with a woman. Learning of her pregnancy, they decide that there is only one way out – to do "abortion in hoarding". The hero of the movie *The Fragment of Empire* (1929), coming from the not-too-distant past to modern Moscow, is surprised by the changed women's fashion: short skirts, pantyhose, heeled shoes.

Soviet cinematography of the 1920s told the story of the cooperative activities of peasants, the struggle against private shopkeepers and traders. Collective forms of economic activity were contrasted with the private trade of nepmen and kulaks. For example, the film *Everybody's Joy* (1924) tells the story of the return of a demobilized Red Army soldier who, "with the help of peasants and a village worker, ... established cooperative trade and completely displaced the kulak" (Soviet..., 1961: 55). In the film *The Cutter from Torzhok* (1925), a shopkeeper who ruthlessly exploits poor townspeople complains to an acquaintance that all customers leave him for a cooperative shop. In the movie *Moroka (Two Forces)* (1925), Komsomol members from the village fight against private merchants, mocking them in caricatures and wall newspapers, and encouraging local residents to confront them.

In the 1920s, the propaganda of atheism and the fight against religion became more and more widespread. The cinematography actively exploited anti-religious subjects. Priests appear on the movie screen as swindlers (*The Old Man Vasily Gryaznov* (1924), stand on the side of class enemies – kulaks, helping them to rule over the peasants and deceive them (*To a poor man in good time – to a kulak in the side* (1924), *Dzhalma* (1928)). Church values are used to solve financial problems (*The Miracle Worker* (1922), and the Catholic priesthood harbors spies (*The Cross and the Mauser* (1925)). In S. Eisenstein's movie *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) in the episode with the impending execution of sailors a priest is shown looking like a hermit sorcerer. His gesture of putting the cross on the palm of his hand symbolizes the movement of the executioner, cutting off the head of those condemned to execution with a sword.

The events of the October Revolution and the Civil War were the main materials for myth-making in Soviet cinema. The authorities, seeing the need to form a "correct" understanding of revolutionary ideas among Soviet citizens, and above all, among peasants, formulated a state order for the creation of films. Filmmakers were to vilify class enemies and idealize freedom fighters. In most cases, they did not follow historical truth in doing so.

The films of the classics of Soviet avant-garde cinema: A. Dovzhenko (*Arsenal* (1928)), V. Pudovkin (*Mother* (1926), *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927)), S. Eisenstein (*Stachka* (1924), *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *October* (1927)) and other directors are devoted to the theme of the revolutionary struggle. They portrayed revolutionary events in an epic manner. The hero of their films was the people who rose up against the cruel landlords and tsarist officers who oppressed workers, peasants and sailors.

The events of the Civil War were romanticized by cinematography (*Ataman Khmel* (1923), *Red Devils* (1923), *Batya Knysh's Gang* (1924), *Red Partisans* (1924), *Savur-grave* (1926), *Bay of Death* (1926), *Forty First* (1926), etc.). The Red Army soldiers were portrayed as intelligent, disciplined, and fearless, using cunning to achieve success with ease. White Guards, saboteurs and conspirators were portrayed as arrogant and shameless, drinking and flirting, and always defeated.

Soviet silent films reflected the idea of the progressive influence of the city on the village. In many feature films of those years, there are motifs of educating villagers (*Pretty Harita* (1927), *Mari Kujer* (1928), *Life is Laughing* (1928), etc.). Young communists instill in them a love for cultural leisure, fashionable clothing, sports, teach them new forms of collective farming, help them to fight against patriarchal vestiges, etc.

The relative economic independence and private ownership of the peasant family determined the negative attitude of the Soviet authorities towards it. The struggle against the traditional peasant way of life became one of the plot motifs of Soviet films already in the 1920s. For example, the picture by S. Eisenstein *Old and New* (1929) shows how the organization of a dairy artel and collective farming transforms life in the village.

One of the directions of the Bolshevik cultural revolution was universal enlightenment. Movies for children's audiences were created with an educational purpose – to form a worldview based on the basic principles of socialist ideology. In them, the main characters – children and teenagers – are class fighters, builders of socialism.

Art films of the silent era of Soviet cinema popularized the new ideology, creating the image of a schoolboy (pioneer) – a participant in the process of socialist construction (*Island of Young Pioneers* (1924), *Vanka – Young Pioneer* (1924), *Little and Big* (1928), *Tanka the Tavernkeeper* (1929), etc.). With their courageous actions and ability to put the collective interests above their own, the characters of these films achieve recognition among the collective of peers and young pioneers. Pioneer groups help teenagers overcome the harmful influence of the family, which imposes vicious outdated views on life.

Ideology and worldview of the authors of feature films in the sociocultural context

In the 1920s, a communist ideology based on an atheistic worldview was officially established in the country. Russian was transformed into Soviet, Orthodox into Communist. Church rituals were renamed (there were, for example, red christening ("oktyabrina" or "zvezdina") weddings, funerals); churches were rebuilt into working clubs, gyms, Palaces of Culture, cinemas and other municipal buildings, in which boiled bright and happy Soviet life; martyrs appeared, who sacrificed themselves for the victory of the proletariat; the figure of Lenin was sacralized (in 1924 his mausoleum was erected). "However, the process of formalization of the new religion was not, and could not be completed, because it lacked a very important quality inherent in all religious doctrines - an appeal to a specific person, his inner world" (Mazur; Gorbachev, 2013: 41).

The Bolsheviks sought to break the link with the patriarchal past, with the traditional culture, and to consign to oblivion the meanings and ideals it had preserved. The concept of soul, one of the main concepts of Russian mentality, became an anachronism. It was believed that "from the soul one can reach faith, God" (Zalkind, 1927, p. 170), so its understanding changed fundamentally. It began to be considered a reflection of the psyche, and writers were called "engineers of human souls". The concept of sin associated with individual responsibility before God was forgotten. Now morality became public and one could harm collective interests rather than one's own soul.

The Bolsheviks not only destroyed the core of culture formed on the basis of Orthodox traditions and values, but also severed ties with the cultural and historical past. The Proletkult, for example, imposed a ban on filmmakers turning to folkloric subjects related to the sacred concept of existence. Its violation led to the withdrawal from distribution of Yu. Zhelyabuzhsky's fairy tale *Morozko* (1924). The appeal to the past was possible only to justify and justify the class struggle.

If in the pre-revolutionary years the opposition between good and evil was associated with the divine and the devil, now it was interpreted in the context of proletarian morality. The new idea of justice was well expressed by the well-known slogan: "Peace to the huts, war to the palaces!", which called for the harshest actions. One of the organizers of Soviet film production, IP Traynin, at the end of the 1920s. wrote: "We are not "Tolstovtsy", and the phrase "do not kill" is alien to us. We are not prudens and, if necessary, kill in the interests of the class and see nothing reprehensible in the fact that such topics are treated in theaters and movies. ... It is necessary that violence be justified logically and convincingly by the vital interests of the class" (Traynin, 1928: 43).

According to Soviet ideology, goods should be public and belong to the people. This was the highest ideal on which the new communist religion was based. Belief in it gave rise to "an outbreak of religious exaltation" (Khrenov, 2006: 497), accompanied by the release of destructive passionary energy. According to N.A. Khrenov, "the peculiarity of the Russian Revolution and Bolshevik ideology in general was that it saw an explosion of chiliastic consciousness, coloring this popular

tragedy with religious connotations, which was not slow to manifest itself in the cinema, determining its aura here" (Khrenov, 2013: 201).

The first post-revolutionary decade saw the transformation of the system of traditional cultural values. Not all of them were rejected. The Soviet authorities used the basic national needs for justice, contempt for hoarding and bourgeoisie to form the basis for a new cultural identity. The principles of social justice and people's power formed the basis of communist ideology. Other cultural values, however, underwent marked changes. For example, social interests begin to outweigh moral, ethical norms; the role of action and the role of contemplation and the need for spiritual, inner quests associated with the irrational way of cognition increases; a materialistic worldview based on rationalistic and mechanistic thinking is formed; "sincerity, sympathy, compassion for man" is replaced by "communist principledness, rigidity and uncompromising..." (Rassadina, 2019: 267).

The worldview of the people of the world depicted in Soviet feature films of the 1920s

In most Soviet feature films of the 1920s, the plot is based on the confrontation between two types of worldview: the "old" worldview, represented by landlords, nobles, and priests, and the "new" worldview, personified by revolutionary peasants, workers, and soldiers fighting for equality and justice.

The insolvency and illiteracy of the villagers, the technical underdevelopment of rural farms and industries, and the homelessness of children were perceived as phenomena resulting from the functioning of the old regime. The orders and norms established by the Soviet authorities were perceived as the only possible means of correcting these shortcomings.

The positive characters of Soviet feature films of the silent era were characterized by belief in the ideals of communism, atheism, a keen sense of justice, the primacy of public interests over personal interests, sacrifice for the common good, hard work, heroism, honesty, intolerance of class enemies. The main stereotype of success was the characters' actions aimed at achieving goals that corresponded to these values.

Depicting the world of feature films

After 1917, the country experienced large-scale changes in all spheres of social and cultural life. The everyday life and life of urban dwellers was visibly changing. In the feature films of the early Soviet era, "the limitedness and insularity of private life is contrasted with the horizon of the new Soviet, collective everyday life aimed at the common achievement of a "bright" future. Collectivity and belonging to a common time appears as a liberation of the individual from the stifling bourgeois everyday life and closed spaces" (Yakimov, 2021: 144-145).

On the Soviet silent screen, urban space becomes the arena of socialist construction and proletarian struggle. Episodes with idle people are less and less common, and more and more frequently depict construction workers, janitors, shopkeepers, and other professions engaged in their labor. The masses move through the city streets, violently repelling the tsarist police and army.

The first Soviet films about the Revolution and the Civil War were characterized by a high rhythm created by fast editing and slow motion. Accelerated movement on the screen conveys not only the state of the revolutionary-minded mass of people, but also the experiences of that part of society that participated in the class struggle that took place among peers, in the family, in the labor collective.

In the 1920s, views on art were changing. During this period, Soviet constructivism was actively developing in painting and architecture, which was characterized by schematism, utilitarianism, functionality. Its features were borrowed by young filmmakers (most of them were under 25 years old), who created the cinematic language of avant-garde Soviet cinema. For example, they used metaphorical and symbolic images that juxtaposed people and machines (statues, animals, etc.), static and dynamic episodes, edited shots depicting masses moving in vertical, horizontal, or opposite diagonal directions, and other techniques. On the screen, they constructed the image of a "new" man – socially determined, subject to the rhythms of large-scale shifts, fundamental changes and impending industrialization.

The class of workers and peasants oppressed by the landlords becomes one of the main film characters of the 1920s. In the festive and carnival action, he destroys the classical images of monumental Russian sculpture symbolizing patriarchal society, tsarist power, and the father. He perceives monumentality as an ossified world, "immobile and insisting on its immutability" (Margolit, 2021: 160). "The revolt against the Empire," writes E.A. Margolit, "turns out to be the revolt of young children against their fathers. The notions of 'Father' and 'Fatherland' reveal their

direct kinship with the image of imperial oppression" (Margolit, 2021: 160). In N.A. Khrenov's opinion, "the overthrown authority of the father is read in the overthrown monument to Alexander III in the movie *October...*" (Khrenov, 2006: 491).

Meanwhile, the archetype of the father, which is destroyed in the post-revolutionary period, will not be lost, but will be transferred to Stalin, who usurps power. Stalin will appear at the center of the world, his postures and gestures will be monumental. He – will embody the wise "father of nations". In the 1930–1950s monumentality will become an integral part of Soviet art.

Narrative structure and techniques in Soviet feature films of the 1920s

Place and time of action

The time period of the films: the recent past (the main events of the Revolution and the Civil War, the depiction of which often does not correspond to reality) and the present (the 1920s). The events depicted take place in the Soviet Union, in urban or rural areas.

Characteristic furnishings and everyday objects: workplaces, factory premises, streets, houses of towns and villages. The furnishings of the apartments and houses of workers and peasants are modest, ascetic, and in some cases emphasized as shabby; those of kulaks, landlords, and nepmans are rich, refined, and flamboyant.

Genre modifications: drama, (melodrama), comedy, adventure, political and propaganda movie.

Stereotypical methods of depicting reality: positive characters are idealized. They act with optimism and faith in a "bright future". Negative characters are arrogant, angry, discontented. The events of the "old time" are portrayed mainly in a tragic and satirical way.

As a rule, the characters' daily lives are presented in two main ways, representing the exploiting class and the exploited class.

Character Typology:

- *Social status, profession:* most of the positive characters belong to the working class and peasants. Negative characters in most films are former noblemen and representatives of the bourgeoisie, police and military officers of tsarist Russia, and priests.

- *Character's marital status:* more often than not, marital status is not defined, but many films show a complete family as a sign of the order and strength of socialist society. Some films depict polygamous relationships consistent with the "new morality".

- *The appearance, clothing, physique of characters, and their character traits.* The main character traits of positive characters in the films include: energy, initiative, determination, perseverance, courage, revolutionary spirit, self-confidence, optimism, bravery, selflessness, hard work. Their appearance is simple and ascetic. They wear peasant and work clothes, do morning exercises and take cold showers. Full of energy and athletically built young men are contrasted with the flabby and swaggering nepmans.

The negative characters, in most cases of non-proletarian origin, exhibit the opposite qualities: laziness, greed, avarice, idleness, exploitation. Some films emphasize the flaws in the appearance of officials (rotten teeth) and signs of their class affiliation (pince-nez, beard, vest with a chain, bowler). Kulaks are portrayed as round-faced, obese, cleanly dressed and arrogant.

There are significant differences in the depiction of peasant and urban characters and their families. Peasant families work for the kulak, live in poverty, and do hard work every day. In their house there are hungry and barefoot children, a powerless wife endures beatings from her husband. Urban families live modestly, their life and leisure time are organized (they set the table for breakfast and dinner, read newspapers, play checkers, sing to the guitar, etc.) men do exercises, take cold showers.

A woman's appearance depends on her place in society. Urban women often sacrifice family to serve public interests. On the screen they smoke (a sign of emancipation), wear shortened hairstyles with a "cold wave", elegant dresses, heeled shoes. Meanwhile, the created image of the "femme fatale" was still considered a deviation from the norm, embodied by the worker-peasant type.

The model of cultural identity represented in the Soviet cinematography of the 1920s

The pre-revolutionary model of cultural identity was losing its relevance, while ideas about a new cultural identity were just beginning to take shape. The emerging social organism had not yet taken holistic forms. It had only begun to develop something around which this wholeness could emerge – a revolutionary narrative that included a mythological basis for constructing a consistent image of the world.

The following model of cultural identity represented by Soviet cinema of the 1920s includes five types of cinematic discourse: interpersonal, artistic-aesthetic, religious-ideological, historical-cultural, and mythological.

The interpersonal type of cinematic discourse

The relationship between the characters who support revolutionary, proletarian ideas shows emotional openness and sincerity. They are characterized by an attitude of trust and reciprocity. Strategies of their communicative behavior are based on the desire to achieve complete mutual understanding. "Opening the soul" to another, the characters often do not restrain themselves in expressing feelings. For example, they can embrace or pat on the shoulder, a little known person.

Many positive characters in Soviet silent films are characterized by modesty and directness in communication. The embodiment of such traits becomes the protagonist of B. Barnet's film *House on Trubnaya* (1928) Paranya – a village girl, naive, kind and sympathetic. Her image strongly contrasts with the image of the spectacular and fashionably dressed maid Marishka. In her actions, she acts irrationally, giving herself entirely to emotions, "the call of the heart". So in one of the episodes, she runs out onto the theater stage and beats the "murderer" with a broom, and then, spreading her arms out to the sides, selflessly shouts "hurrah!".

The characters' communication displays a trait peculiar to the Russian mentality – reliance on the opinion of others. For example, negative characters sarcastically mock and joke about people they do not know in order to amuse a group of friends. Positive characters appeal to public opinion when defending their position in a dispute with "dissenters".

The artistic and aesthetic type of cinematic discourse was constructed by images of man and the environment he lives in.

The silent Soviet cinema created an image of the "new man". What should he be like? The answer to this question was sought by both Soviet ideologists and the filmmakers themselves. The image of the peasant did not correspond to the idea of a progressive builder of the socialist future. The peasantry was considered a relic of the past. This role was more suitable for a city dweller.

On the movie screen, the image of a "new man" ("new Adam" (D. Vertov believed that with the help of the "movie eye", mounting different parts of the body, creates a man more perfect than Adam)) was constructed - reorganizer of the world and "new woman" ("new Eve") – free from domestic cares and duties.

"New Man" was physically strong, brave, and determined, ready to endure any trials and sacrifice himself for the greater good. He was part of the social "We". Therefore, he was ignorant of the torments of conscience and internal contradictions in which the individual "I" plunges. His sensual world was organized by the socio-political order.

However, not all the positive characters of the films of this period fit into this canon. Through the thickness of ideological norms, attitudes, and values, characters with a living soul broke through. Such are, for example, the heroes of the paintings of F. Ermler. One of them – Vadka Zavrazhin (character of actor Fyodor Nikitin) from the film *Katya – Paper Rennet* (1926) embodies the image of a pathetic and humble man, reminiscent, according to N.M. Zorkaya (Zorkaya, 2014), of Prince Leo Myshkin – the hero of the novel by F.M. Dostoevsky, *The Idiot*. He faithfully and nobly cares for Katya and her newborn son. In another film by F. Ermler, *Paris Shoemaker* (1927), Fedor Nikitin plays a deaf-mute, weak-minded shoemaker named Kirik Rudenko, defending the honor of the deceived heroine. The appearance of these characters speaks to the strength of the traditions of Russian culture on which communist ideology rested.

Meanwhile, rejecting the picture of the patriarchal world and its ideas about the soul, filmmakers began to create a psychology based on a mechanistic worldview. For example, S. Eisenstein, who was influenced by the ideas of V.M. Bekhterev and I.P. Pavlov in the field of reflexology, poetizes machines (battleship Potemkin, tractor, separator, etc.). The movement of the masses in his films takes on a mechanical appearance.

Soviet cinematographers of the 1920s were not interested in the aesthetic properties of the subjects they filmed, but in their texture. The attraction to the beautiful was considered a sign of the "old" bourgeois culture. For the proletarian class, the main thing was simplicity and practicality. The inner world of the "new man" should be shaped by the external environment, materialistic stimuli. Therefore, the life of urban dwellers on the movie screen was characterized by utilitarianism and functionality.

The aesthetics of the Soviet film avant-garde was strongly influenced by the struggle between "old" and "new". On the cinema screen it was embodied in the opposing images of a lively and

dynamic new world with a world "ossified, immobile and insisting on its immutability" (Margolit, 2021: 160). For example, in the movie *Katya – Paper Rennet* (1926), the squalor of urban dwellings contrasts strongly with the monuments referring to the grandeur of the bygone era.

Religious-ideological type of cinematic discourse.

In post-revolutionary Soviet feature films, anti-religious propaganda was actively carried out. The cinematography created a negative image of the priest in order to destroy the reverent feelings towards the ministers of the church and to form a hostile attitude towards them. Representatives of the clergy were portrayed as greedy and hypocritical, seeking profit by deceit and meanness, ingratiating themselves with those in power and manipulating parishioners.

The revolutionary ascetics in the 1920s had not yet acquired a sacred image, and communist ideology had not yet been transformed into a religious worldview. Meanwhile, the Christian roots characteristic of Russian cultural consciousness were reflected in the Soviet cinema of that time. Thus, according to E.Y. Margolit's observations, "the mortally wounded Vakulenchuk in *Battleship Potemkin* hangs on the ropes, spreading his arms like a crucified man. The composition of the shot where the sailors lift the dead man to the deck is built as a removal from the cross, and the figures of women near Vakulenchuk's body on the breakwater refer to the compositions of the *Pieta*" (Margolit, 2021: 164).

It is obvious that S. Eisenstein did not use New Testament subjects with the aim of preserving ties with traditional culture. He was interested in them for completely different reasons. In his worldview, the communist ideology appears as a new religion, bringing salvation to people, and the characters who sacrifice themselves, become new martyrs. Eisenstein gives traditional religious ceremonies the features of falsity. For example, the procession and prayer service for rain in his film *The Old and the New* (1929) is shown as an archaic pagan ritual.

Historical and cultural type of cinematic discourse

In the 1920s, ethnographic documentary cinematography constructed an image of a multinational country actively developing under the new conditions of socialist construction. One of the most large-scale in terms of coverage of the territories where filming was carried out was the picture by D. Vertov *The Sixth Part of the World* (1926). It depicts not only the revolutionary struggle of the working class, but also its everyday life: harvesting flax in the northern regions, growing sheep in the Caucasian republics, harvesting wheat in the southern region, loading ships in ports and much more.

Early Soviet art cinema, unlike documentary cinema, was not oriented toward creating an image of socialist, international culture. Its main subjects were devoted to the themes of civil war and revolution, changes in moral norms, social and everyday life.

Depicting the events of the Civil War and the Revolution, cinematographers emphasized in every possible way the gulf between the officers of the tsarist army, landlords and soldiers, workers and peasants. In many films (*Sickle and Hammer* (1921), *Red Devils* (1923), *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *Mother* (1926), etc.) White Guards and landlords drink, flirt, behave carelessly and arrogantly towards their subordinates, exploit and brutally suppress the proletarian class, which turns into a revolutionary mass - the protagonist of Soviet silent cinema.

The people sought to restore social justice not only in the revolutionary struggle, but also in labor, production activities. In some films, in the organization of collective farms, the main role is played by women. For example, in the picture of S. Eisenstein *Old and New* (1929) Marfa Lapkina solves the problems of establishing in the village dairy artel, helps to get a tractor for its needs.

The change in the social role of women in the 1920s was one of the most significant signs of cultural transformation, which had a dual character. The Soviet cinema of that time created two fundamentally different female images. In the urban space, it depicted a young Komsomol member or a beautiful city dweller wearing elegant clothes, fashionable hairstyles, heeled shoes, and busy organizing her own life - studying at an institute, working at a factory or plant. The village space showed a woman struggling against the patriarchal patterns of the past, defending her own independence and socialist ideals. She was characterized by masculine features reflecting her firm character and inner strength.

The introduction of a new "sexual morality", according to which the love of Soviet citizens knows no jealousy and marital fidelity is a manifestation of bourgeoisie, was disastrous for family life in the post-revolutionary period. The Soviet movie screen of the 1920s showed a dramatic and tragic story of the destruction of the family. For example, in the films *Your friend* (1927), *The Parisian Cobbler* (1927), *The Third Meshchanskaya* (1927), and *Ukhaby* (1928), families

disintegrate under the pressure of the norms of the "new morality," which proclaimed freedom of sexual relations and married life.

Notable changes took place in the everyday life of the urban population. The Bolshevik program of "densification" envisaged the settlement of the proletariat in apartments and houses which in the recent past had belonged to private owners. Now strangers, or city dwellers who had previously belonged to different estates, were settled in them. In this way, private life began to transform into public life. The new everyday life and the new everyday life are portrayed from different angles in B. Barnet's *The House on Trubnaya* (1928) and A. Rohm's *The Third Meshchanskaya* (1927). Both directors create an image of collective urban space. But while in Barnet's film it coexists in unity and harmony with the domestic space, in A. Rohm's, they are opposed and in conflict. The protagonists of *The Third Meshchanskaya* - Lyudmila's husband and lover, who are totally immersed in the disconnected space of a large socialist construction site, lose sensitivity to her inner world, which has shrunk to the confines of one small room.

A mythological type of cinematic discourse

Physicalism, which underlies the communist worldview, determines the essence of mythologization carried out by cinema. The sacral notions of mother earth and the forces of nature, which had recently existed, are rejected. The reality depicted on the movie screen loses its metaphysical dimension. Symbolized and symbolizing phenomena are now present in the mundane world. For example, the films of D. Vertov and S. Eisenstein juxtapose mechanisms, machines and animals, people. There is their desire to fetishize technology, embodying the myth of the world generated by technical progress. "By revealing the souls of machines," writes D. Vertov, "by making the worker fall in love with the machine, by making the peasant fall in love with the tractor, by making the machinist fall in love with the locomotive, we bring creative joy to every mechanical labor, we make people kin to machines, we bring up new people" (Vertov, 1966: 47).

5. Conclusion

In the post-revolutionary period, the Soviet Union actively fought against traditional culture. The new authorities rejected not only "noble" but also folk culture – Russian folklore (ditties, songs, dances, etc.). Now ideology became the basis on which new concepts were developed, forming the basic elements of collective experience. The concepts of holiday, labor, everyday life, death, family and others lost their sacredness and were filled with new content reflecting socialist values. Ritual processions and demonstrations became a state holiday, creating the illusion of approaching a "bright future". Labor embodied the collective force aimed at building a "new" world. Life was organized, simplicity and asceticism reigned. Death was supplanted by the utopian worldview of the Bolsheviks creating a society of vigorous and healthy people. The family was undergoing a great deal of destruction. Its main purpose was now to serve class interests, the home was transformed into a collective dormitory with unfamiliar neighbors, the mother was no longer its guardian, and the upbringing of children was handled by the state. All these changes led to the transformation of relations between man and man (interpersonal functional block), man and society (social functional block), society and nature (being functional block).

The interpersonal relations of positive characters in Soviet feature films of the 1920s maintain the traditional Russian cultural attitude of trust and reciprocity, a commitment to close and relaxed, emotional and open communication. For example, they are expressive and impulsive in their addresses and statements, unrestrained in showing friendly feelings. However, this openness of interpersonal relations is an external form of manifestation of closeness between the characters. Its inner form remains inaccessible to Soviet post-revolutionary cinema, which did not create "silent scenes" that capture the poetics of silence and express the deep connection between the characters.

In the 1920s, the Soviet cinema screen reflected and constructed new forms of relations between man and society. Cinema played one of the key roles in crystallizing the image of a "new man" who possessed the characteristics of Russian cultural identity: selflessness, aspiration for collectivism, and service to society. These traits were endowed to the hero of the films of D. Vertov, L. Kuleshov, V. Pudovkin, S. Eisenstein, and other directors. He occupied a central place in the social class structure of society, which had clear boundaries dividing it into "their own" (workers, peasants, etc.) and "strangers" (bourgeoisie, bourgeoisie, kulaks, priests, etc.).

The materialistic worldview and belief in technological progress that prevailed at the dawn of the Soviet era caused changes in the relationship between society and nature. The films of this

period developed the idea of the significant advantages of technology, which increased the possibilities of collective economic activity. The tractor, automobile or separator demonstrated on the screen were animated, exuding the vital energy of the "new" life. People and machines on the screen turned into one big mechanism building socialism.

The panoramic world of construction and urbanization created an image that embodied the aspiration to elevate man above nature, which was an indicator of changes in the national cultural consciousness. The vertical metaphysical dimension and horizontal spatial balance inherent in the Russian worldview were losing their positions. Deprived of the metaphysical basis, the desire for a higher meaning and higher truth was transformed into a belief in the construction of a just society in which universal happiness would be achieved.

The analysis of the representation of the model of cultural identity in the Soviet art cinema of the 1920s has shown that, having lost the specific features of the national worldview that constitute the core of cultural self-consciousness, the Soviet international identity retained the characteristic features of the Russian mentality, transformed into proletarian virtues.

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