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## Bishop Adam Lepa (1939–2022) in the Faith-based Media Literacy Education Approach

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### Abstract

Bishop Adam Lepa (1939–2022) is a precursor of religious media education in Poland. His scientific works are part of the trend known around the world as faith-based media literacy education. In the years 2024–2027, we are implementing a research grant regarding the scientific achievements of Bishop Adam Lepa. Documentation work on his achievements in the field of media pedagogy is ongoing, hence this article can be described as a research communique. At this stage of research, four problem areas of his scientific achievements were identified: religious media pedagogy, image and word in audiovisual culture, media propaganda and manipulation, presence and image of the Catholic Church in the media in Poland. He proposed an original theory of axiologically oriented environmental media pedagogy. The subject of the analysis in the article will be his media education program. We will indicate its main goals, means and methods, primarily based on his pioneering textbook, *Pedagogy of Mass Media* from 2000. We will also consider how this media education program has a religious character. Bishop Adam Lepa was more of a practitioner in the field of media education than a theorist. His research goes beyond empirical studies, encompassing significant media concepts. Despite the shifts in technology and society, these concepts continue to hold their validity.

**Keywords:** faith-based media literacy education, media education in Poland, religious pedagogy of media, semiotic analysis, theory of media attitudes.

### 1. Introduction

Faith-based media literacy education is a unique approach to teaching media literacy that operates within a religious framework, particularly Christianity in the United States (Jaquinto, Keeler, 2012). It involves the use of assumptions, motivations, goals, and pedagogy that are rooted in faith. This form of education addresses the complex landscape of today's media, helping students understand how digital media is produced and how it propels dominant discourses. It aims to equip students with the technical knowledge and critical skills necessary for informed engagement with media, thereby addressing a significant social justice issue. Faith-based media literacy education often involves structured teacher training in media literacy. For example, some programs focus on Catholic social teachings and promote the application of critical media literacy in the classroom to facilitate understanding of social justice matters (Tenorio de Azevedo, 2019). Faith-based media literacy education is a distinctive method that merges principles of faith with using the media. Its goal is to equip students with the ability to critically comprehend and navigate the media environment. Furthermore, it acts as an instrument for tackling social justice concerns via media education.

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Bishop Adam Lepa (1939–2022) was a precursor of faith-based media literacy education in Poland. Born in Łódź, he was ordained to the priesthood on 18 March 1962. He served as the auxiliary bishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Łódź, from 4 December 1987 until his retirement on 27 May 2014. He passed away on 27 April 2022.

I am honored to lead a scientific grant about his achievements. We received support as part of the 12th National Heritage competition from the National Program for the Development of the Humanities – project number NPRH/DN/SP/0189/2023/12. Thanks to this, we will be able to systematize and critically analyze his achievements in media pedagogy.

That is why I invited researchers from the Institute of Media Education and Journalism of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, directly and indirectly related to Bp. Adam Lepa and inspired by his educational and media works: dr hab. Dominika Żukowska-Gardzińska, Assoc. Prof., Fr. dr hab. Rafał Leśniczak, Assoc. Prof., Fr. dr Waldemar Bartocha, Fr. dr Jarosław A. Sobkowiak. Bishop Adam Lepa left behind several monographs (Lepa, 1999; Lepa, 2000a; Lepa, 2000b; Lepa, 2006), as well as dozens of scientific articles and hundreds of journalistic essays. We want to organize this scattered body of work, especially since he wrote most of his works by hand. He is the author of many original terms and concepts, such as the galenosphere – the environment of silence in the media, the iconosphere – the environment of image. However, above all, he is the creator of the theory of the logosphere (Lepa, 2017a; Lepa, 2017b; Lepa, 2017c).

As a result, he developed an original Polish concept of faith-based media literacy education. He was interested in media axiology and ethics, as well as the problems of manipulation and propaganda in journalistic information. He completed specialist studies in pedagogy in the years 1966–1974 at the Institute of Pastoral Theology of the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Lublin. After his doctorate, in 1975 he began giving – one of the first in Poland – lectures on mass media pedagogy at the Major Seminary in Łódź. He was also an effective organizer of Catholic press, radio, and television institutions. After the turning point marked by the Solidarity social movement from the 80s, he served as the head of the Commission for Social Communication Instruments of the Polish Episcopate Conference (Klauza, 2023).

After completing the scientific query and digitizing the available resources, we would like to propose and publish three studies in open access. So a monograph with articles – mainly studies – by *Bishop Adam Lepa (1939–2022) – a precursor of religious media pedagogy in Poland*. However, we want greater promotion of the Pedagogist's achievements in the Polish educational environment. Hence the idea to prepare *the Dictionary of Media Education according to Bishop Adam Lepa*, as well as lesson plans for secondary school classes in media education with methodological development. The project is scheduled for 36 months, from May 2024 to April 2027.

## 2. Materials and methods

The preliminary query indicates over 400 scientific, popular science and journalistic publications by Bishop Adam Lepa in the field of media pedagogy. The analysis of Bishop Adam Lepa's achievements indicates four main problem areas: Christian and Catholic media pedagogy, image/word in audiovisual culture, propaganda – media manipulation, presence and image of the Catholic Church in the media in Poland. Thanks to further research, archiving work and digitization, the first online bibliography of Bishop Adam Lepa will be made available. There will also be detailed analyzes and studies of his achievements, prepared by a team of several authors.

Asking questions about faith-based media literacy education by Bishop Adam Lepa, we will look for answers in his textbook *Pedagogy of mass media*, second edition from 2000. This is research material (Lepa, 2000b). His other studies on media pedagogy were also used, including: articles published in *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne* (Lepa, 2007). The study used a method of analysis and criticism of literature (also known as a critical analysis), a research method used in scientific works and research by other scientists (Cisek, 2010). The aim is to determine the main assumptions of Bishop Adam Lepa's media pedagogy. At this stage of research and studies, I asked the following two research questions: 1) How does Bishop Adam Lepa formulate the media pedagogy program, defining its goals, means and methods? 2) How does Bishop Adam Lepa's media pedagogy have a religious dimension?

## 3. Discussion

Contemporary educational and media research refers to the concept of religiosity in various ways. For example: analysis of the origins and social consequences of irrational religious

orientations in Chinese Generation Z. The qualitative study identified three main dimensions of irrational religious orientations in Generation Z: religious spiritual dependence, religious instrumental tendency, and religious uniqueness identity. These are shaped by factors such as the overwhelming influx of information via digital media, societal pressures and psychological dilemmas, conflicts in values and identity crises, as well as feelings of social isolation and the need for group belonging (Wang et al., 2024). Another qualitative study focused on contemporary digital nomads emphasizing the importance of cultural and religious heritage and the need to share it on social media. By experiencing different cultural heritages and sharing these experiences through digital platforms, digital nomads contribute to the reinterpretation and reproduction of cultural heritage (Yildirim, Kaya, 2024). Another instance is a research focusing on the misrepresentation of Islam in media, which includes the reverence for sacred sites and the Quran. The study suggests the creation of a global supervisory entity with expertise in media and education. This body's role would be to monitor all content disseminated through media outlets and educational syllabi, urging them to incorporate content that fosters mutual acceptance and peaceful interfaith coexistence, while ensuring the absence of any content that incites religious animosity (Khater, 2024).

Another exemplary analysis concerned the educational function of the media in counteracting anti-Semitic attitudes. The thesis is formulated that religious education has a corrective and broadening function with respect to perceptions of everyday experiences (Dihle, 2024). Another study examined the impact of smartphones on the religious attitudes of Christian and Muslim youth. On the one hand, smartphones are portrayed as portals to a globalizing world in which youth might succumb to negative influences (with a particular anxiety surrounding pornography) based on their perceived inchoate moral development and insufficiently strong religious foundation. On the other hand, these teachers and administrators recognize the potential that smartphones have to be used for deepening spiritual engagement, connection, and proselytization (Larson, 2024). It can therefore be said that despite the progressive secularization of society and the media, religious issues are still an important theoretical perspective for media education.

The Christian and Catholic perspective also plays an important role in contemporary media studies and the practice of media education. Primarily, these involve studies in the realm of social communication theology, such as the content analysis of Church's media documents. The research findings highlight the importance of communication for public theology and explore the significance of the right to information and public opinion. They also examine the role of media in education, the education of communicators and audiences, the significance of media for the church, and the participation of Catholics in media (Sánchez-Camacho, 2024).

Contemporary research in this area also focuses on the theology of beauty and – more broadly – the value of beauty in media culture. Studies have indicated that the majority of such content is found in subjects like Visual Culture, Visual Arts, Language, and Informatics. This content is also present in the curricula for Catholic religious education. Besides the media's imposed beauty standards impacting children's self-esteem, they frequently become targets of peer aggression, particularly in the digital realm (Labaš et al., 2024). The Catholic Church aims to have a presence in the media with its teachings, and also seeks to equip its followers and users with the skills to use social communication tools mindfully. The Pope advocates for the use of new media to advance religious education, spread news, and strengthen the Church's mission (Kennedy, 2023). Media education has emerged as a crucial component in the training of modern Catholic priests. Prospective presbyters ought to be adept at communicating with today's society and spreading the gospel via the Internet, particularly on social media platforms. It would be beneficial if they also comprehend the overall workings of the media industry and are capable of establishing connections with journalists (Kasowski et al., 2022).

Religious faith is also not in contradiction with the modern development of science. Also socioscientific issues in movies can be used as tools for stimulating evidence-based reasoning and ethical thinking about societal issues and encouraging the reflection on values, including faith values promoted through the use or misuse of science and technology (Yap, 2019). Bishop Adam Lepa's publications significantly fit into these contemporary trends in religious media education. Despite the changes in media technologies, they still remain an important inspiration due to the axiology to which they refer: the dignity of man as a recipient and user of media, media ethics, the call to creativity in the media.

#### 4. Results

Bishop Adam Lepa's media pedagogy program. Analysis of the textbook *Pedagogy of mass media*.

Bishop Adam Lepa formulated a program of media pedagogy primarily in chapter IV of his monograph entitled *Basics of mass media education* (Lepa, 2000b: 90-106). Interesting comments on media education can also be found in his second most famous monograph *The function of the logosphere in media education*, especially in chapter I: *Media education as a postulate of modern society*, in § 3. *Media education as a subject of pedagogical interests* (Lepa, 2006: 47-53). Careful reading and analysis of these texts allows us to determine the definition of media pedagogy according to Bishop Adam Lepa, and, above all, its main goals, means used and proposed methods.

For Bishop Adam Lepa, media pedagogy is a scientific discipline dealing with media education, and this is how he defines it. He criticizes the use of the term “media education”. “In Western countries, preparation for using the media is generally called 'education' and the words *éducation* (French) or *education* (English) are used. These words also mean education, not just upbringing. (...) In Poland, the phrase ‘media education’ has recently been used to describe preparation for receiving media. (...) However, the term ‘media education’ is not fully precise, because it can mean any education that uses media as teaching or educational means, as well as education that is a function of specific media – e.g. television education” (Lepa, 2006: 47-48).

The context of these comments was the educational reform implemented at that time (1999) with the concept of educational paths, i.e. cross-curricular problem blocks, includes: ecological, health-promoting, philosophical and regional education, and above all, reading and media education. However, this solution was later abandoned and the subject-based teaching was fully restored (2008). Bishop Adam Lepa, noticing this unique combination of reading and the media, also pointed to another important problem. The new path is more conducive to the development of knowledge about the media than to the education of recipients using the media. It is more object-oriented than subject-oriented. “‘Media education’ cannot be identified with ‘media upbringing’”. It is primarily media education, or rather a lecture on media (or media studies), rather than influencing the personality of a young person or shaping his attitudes. Therefore, regardless of the implementation of reading and media education at school, the postulate of media upbringing remains valid and increasingly urgent” (Lepa, 2006: 48). This fragment reflects much of the ongoing dispute in media pedagogy between supporters of the education of media competences, both technical and humanistic-social, and researchers who admit that without referring to the concept of person and values, it is difficult to build a media pedagogy program (Rzyska, 2018). Bishop Adam Lepa advocates an axiological and personalistic understanding of media pedagogy. First of all, I am more in favor of praxis than theory. Media practice, not just a “lecture in media studies”.

Consequently, it indicates the goals of media pedagogy formulated in this way. “The basic problem in upbringing is the person. In the activity of educators, it is the main subject and goal, and the result of this activity is a mature human personality. The well-known regularity, emphasized by representatives of educational sciences, is then realized: a person is born a person in order to become a personality” (Lepa, 2000b: 91). Bishop Adam Lepa formulates this subjective, personalistic orientation of the goals of media pedagogy by reading into the practical demands of parents and teachers. “Practicing educators speak about the goals of mass media education. They then pose this problem in the form of specific questions that refer to disturbing phenomena related to the functioning of the media. Some of them can be formulated as follows: Should parents control their child's access to mass media? What is the harm of pornography? (...) How to counteract manipulation in the media?” (Lepa, 2000b: 96).

Therefore, he sees the practical and socially useful dimension of media pedagogy, which is not just another academic subdiscipline, but a program of action responding to the educational needs in everyday relationships of children with parents and students with teachers. He formulates this practicality of media pedagogy in the form of five detailed tasks. “The analysis of these and many similar questions, as well as reflection on the educational ideal and the nature of mass media, lead to the identification of the most important goals that should guide education towards mass media. Here they are: forming attitudes: criticism, selection, resistance to propaganda and creative activity (...); [leading] to the full development of the recipient's personality and the growth of his spiritual sphere; (...) [eliminating from the media] negative phenomena and transforming them into a tool for positive influence on recipients; awakening and deepening sensitivity to the transmission of truth in the mass media and shaping an attitude of opposition to manifestations of

its distortion; providing in-depth knowledge about the mass media and the main mechanisms of their functioning” (Lepa, 2000b: 96-97).

In this structure of media pedagogy goals, we see both positive and negative, affirmative and defensive threads. Because on the one hand it talks about “creative activity” and on the other “about resistance to propaganda”; “about deepening sensitivity to conveying the truth”, but also about the attitude of “opposition to manifestations of its distortion”. It can be said that this is an apologetic model, here apology understood in a broader cultural sense. In this approach, apology can be understood as praising something, but also as defense against something opposite (Drzewiecki, 2010: 129-145). This is quite a specific feature of Bishop Adam Lepa's media pedagogy. The goals do not focus only on the problem of media threats and addictions, they are not only prevention or protection. They create a positive program for using media, pointing to the “full development of the recipient's personality”, but without forgetting what is harmful educationally.

As a consequence, we can ask about the means and methods of achieving the goals of media pedagogy understood in this way. Bishop Adam Lepa points out the need to adapt them to a specific upbringing environment, as well as to specific goals of media pedagogy. It is difficult not to mention the importance of the term “environment” in the scientific works of Bishop Adam Lepa. He advocates mesological pedagogy, focused on this very concept, although rarely used in the social sciences (Lepa, 2007).

He distinguishes between “upbringing” and “pedagogical” environments, treating the former as the existing situation, and the latter as the target, i.e. intended or ideal, situation. His theory of the mediasphere and its individual components: logosphere, galenosphere and iconosphere originates from the concept of the environment. Because the mass media themselves also have an environmental character. Next to the family, school or parish, they co-create the area of education (Lepa, 2000b: 101).

Analyzing the forms of adapting resources to the above-mentioned environments, Bishop Adam Lepa points primarily to the family, mentioning: “family dialogue, joint viewing of television, joint reading of books, control of the child's access to the media”. In turn, “the school environment has the greatest wealth of means of educating people about mass media. This is because the school has basically numerous means of mass communication (reading room, library, computer room, photography room, video studio, etc.). Moreover, the school is able to engage numerous specialists in the field of mass media. In the school environment, the most frequently used means of mass media education are: a lecture by a teacher, a discussion on a film watched together, a meeting with a media representative (film director, journalist, TV presenter)” (Lepa, 2000b: 97).

These two basic spaces of media education – one could say the private and public spheres – are complemented by a third one, public, but of a religious nature. “In the parish environment, two main trends in educational activities attract attention: the activities of pastors and various forms of catechesis (e.g. catechesis for adults, out-of-school youth, pre-wedding catechesis). The most frequently used means in this environment are: a lecture, a talk (e.g. at a meeting with parents), retreat learning, as well as: a discussion on a film watched together, a meeting with a Catholic journalist. Educational measures of a strictly pastoral nature should also be mentioned, such as: prayer, asceticism, examination of conscience, penance (due to sacramental confession, Lent)” (Lepa, 2000b: 98).

Another classification of media pedagogy measures proposed by Bishop Adam Lepa is not based on the specificity of a given audience group – the media reception environment – but on the educational goals themselves. “Specific attitudes, which are the goal of mass media education, require the use of such measures as: constant use of several sources of information or contact with professional publications (critical attitude); appropriately dosed asceticism and evening examination of conscience (selection attitude). Some goals of mass media education require the use of didactic means, e.g. ‘providing in-depth knowledge about mass media’. Then the educator uses such means as: reading, lecture, organized viewing of films or television” (Lepa, 2000b: 98).

By studying these recommendations, one can first notice the practical and dialogical nature of the pedagogical measures proposed by Bishop Adam Lepa. They respond to the natural communication needs of particular environments, and are primarily open to participants – people who create these communities – and to technologies that are intended to serve their integration and personal development. Secondly, social and religious education was combined, treating the media as an important environment for expressing and experiencing faith, integrated with personal

and social life. The parish itself was also appreciated as not only a social and religious community, but also a space for using the media (Drzewiecki, 2014).

Consequently, a question can be asked about the methods of media pedagogy as perceived by Bishop Adam Lepa. “When choosing an appropriate method, the educator takes into account the educational goals that he should achieve, the educational means he uses, and the age of his pupils. (...) Mass media education uses methods generally accepted in pedagogy and implemented in didactics and catechetics. The first of them include: methods of personal, situational and social influence, methods of managing self-education, etc. The second group of methods (used in didactics and catechetics) includes: visual methods (e.g. image analysis), practical classes (e.g. joint preparation of an exhibition of photograms) and word-based methods (e.g. talk)” (Lepa, 2000b: 99). It can be said that we are not dealing here with any particular pedagogical innovation. However, Bishop Adam Lepa points to the unique nature of the methodology related to the use of media as a means of education. He finds inspiration in the documents of the Catholic Church on the means of social communication. “It is also necessary to indicate methods specific to the mass media themselves.

One of these methods is the principle of ‘see, evaluate, act’ used in pedagogical practice. This method is recommended, among others, through the Pastoral Instruction *Aetatis novae* (AN, no. 11). Its practical supplement is the ‘mass media method’, which functions especially when ‘education through mass media’ is implemented. It consists in the fact that, for example, in film education, appropriately selected films are used (documentaries, feature films, etc.)” (Lepa, 2000b: 99; Pontifical..., 1992). It can therefore be said that the choice of teaching method and aid is determined not only by pedagogical goals and the needs of the environment, but also by the content – a specific topic undertaken as part of media education, e.g. during a school lesson. We then look for an adequate media example to raise important social and religious issues.

Analyzing the media pedagogy program of Bishop Adam Lepa, several important features can be noticed. Firstly, it contains the necessary elements when formulating such educational projects, including a description of goals, means and methods. Secondly, it is focused on upbringing, rather than just education and teaching/learning. It puts at the center the person of a person using the media, who looks for value in the media messages he receives. Thirdly, Bishop Adam Lepa's media pedagogy program emphasizes practical application over mere media theory. It addresses the specific queries of media users and extends beyond just providing knowledge about the media or suggesting media studies. Fourthly, his approach is environmental and it aims to identify resources that are suitable for the requirements of a specific media audience, such as families, schools, and parishes. Fifthly, the program is inspired by and enables the integration of social media use with religious faith, thus confirming its author's affiliation with the faith-based media literacy education trend, which will be the subject of further analyses.

The religious dimension of *Pedagogy of mass media* by Bishop Adam Lepa

The religious nature of Bishop Adam Lepa's media pedagogy does not result only from the fact that the author of its program is a priest and a church hierarchy, although it would be difficult to expect a proposal in this area other than a Christian and Catholic one. Religiosity, however, is dictated more by the consistency of the program itself, based on the axiological, personalistic and mesological assumptions of media pedagogy. In this approach, religiosity is an extension and extension of universal values in media education, but also indicates the unique social bonds of people in the environment – the community of faith. It can be said that “media education” understood in this way can assume three levels of its creation: from the competence level – both technical and socio-humanistic, through axiological – integrated with a specific system of values, e.g. Christian in cultural and national terms, to religious – related to the spiritual formation of the media user, resulting from his membership in the Church, e.g. through the practice of media asceticism or spiritual discernment of media messages (Drzewiecki, 2009; Drzewiecki, 2013; Jenkins, 2007). The last two “floors” can be – following the assumptions of Bishop Adam Lepa's program – included in the term “media education”. The last floor fits into the concept of faith-based media literacy education.

Analyzing individual fragments of the textbook *Pedagogy of Mass Media*, one can find confirmation of this thesis. Bishop Adam Lepa notes that “in the Christian system of education, aimed at the development of human personality, there are four basic features. These are: Christocentric orientation in shaping the perfect Christian; moralism, which is the implementation of the principles of Catholic ethics in educational practice; personalism, emphasizing the dignity



and value of each person as a person; humanism, taking into account important human issues in pedagogy” (Lepa, 2000b: 91). He adds elsewhere: “correct upbringing is an upbringing that serves the comprehensive development of the (Christian) personality of the student and implements the applicable educational ideal (forming a perfect Christian). In turn, wrong upbringing is upbringing that makes it impossible or at least difficult to achieve the adopted ideal” (Lepa, 2000b: 104-105).

First of all, we notice the term “formation”, which may be controversial, but in fact it corresponds to the synonyms “education” or “forming” in the classical understanding of education. It is, by definition, an indication of a certain cultural or religious ideal, according to which and to which pedagogy, i.e. educational practice, is conducted (Jaeger, 2001).

Secondly, this formative, educative, “shaping” process in the Greek sense assumes the level of universal values – hence “personalism” and “humanism”, but also ethics – “moralism”. Thirdly – what makes Christian education unique – it indicates “Christocentrism”.

Because “the ‘ideal Christian’ is a new man, living ‘in justice and holiness of truth’, perfect to the measure of Christ (‘to the extent of that perfection that is the fullness of Christ’, Eph 4:13), contributing to the growth of the Mystical Body, bearing witness to hope, providing assistance in the Christian shaping of the world, striving for the common good of their community, including: through mutual dialogue. In shaping this ideal, teachers and educators should accept what is valuable in science and human culture. A person who should become a perfect Christian today faces various realities resulting from the functioning of the media” (Lepa, 2000b: 32). In this approach, the media are a new space of faith, an environment that, on the one hand, may hinder the religious development of a person and a community, and on the other hand, constitutes a new way of improving them.

The above-described features of Bishop Adam Lepa's religious media pedagogy can be compared with the faith-based media literacy program, presented in the form of five “principles” of media education, proposed by Stephanie Iaquinto and John Keeler from the School of Communication & the Arts, interdenominational Christian Regent University in Virginia Beach.

They point to the following assumptions of religious media pedagogy: 1) the media provide images of society that have a huge impact on our concepts of reality; 2) the values promoted by the media are often false, destructive, and therefore inconsistent with the values promoted by Christianity; 3) critical inquiry and the ability to “read” the media are necessary to distinguish truth from falsehood in media representations of reality; 4) faith-based media literacy education develops Christians who are equipped to serve the society in which they live; 5) Christians can improve their spirituality by becoming media literate (Iaquinto, Keeler, 2012: 20-24).

It is difficult not to mention the Catholic precursors of religious media education in the United States, whose works are referred to by the authors of the above-mentioned “main principles”. Namely, Father Elizabeth Thoman (1943–2016), creator of the magazine *Media & Values* and the Center for Media Literacy, as well as Father John Pungente SJ (1939–2023), author of many textbooks on religious media pedagogy, one of the propagators of Christian spiritual discernment media messages (Pungente, 2008). Bishop Adam Lepa, as a Polish precursor of religious media pedagogy, significantly fits into the main assumptions of faith-media literacy education, creating a pedagogical program that is unique in the world. This is indicated by the analysis of the first “main principle”. Regarding influential “images of society”, Bishop Adam Lepa develops a study of media manipulation and propaganda, as well as creates the concept of the iconosphere posing a challenge to the postulated development of the logosphere and galenosphere.

Regarding the second “principle”, we have a significant conceptual similarity between Bishop Adam Lepa's program and the faith-based media literacy education trend, based on the axiological plane of media education understood in this way, or – as the author himself would like – media upbringing. Regarding the third feature of this trend, Bishop Adam Lepa supplements the very “critical inquiry and the ability to ‘read’ the media” with an extensive concept of developing attitudes towards the media, especially selective reception and creative activity. The fourth and fifth “principle” are also confirmed in his pedagogical works. Christians are to serve “the society in which they live” and “improve their spirituality” – these principles can be found in the concept of the Christian ideal of media education, which was the subject of the above analysis.

## 5. Conclusion

When examining Bishop Adam Lepa's concept of religious media pedagogy, it is possible to point out several of its important and original features.

Firstly, it is a complete program, containing a description of goals, means and methods. Although it is not a ready list of scenarios for school lessons or media workshops, it is coherent in concept. Meets the requirements for modern educational programs.

Secondly, the features of this concept are personalism, humanism, axiological orientation and mesological character. Consequently, Bishop Adam Lepa proposes using the term media education, instead of media education itself, which can be understood broadly and in various understandings.

Thirdly, it is a religious, Christian, "Christocentric" concept, pointing to the need to adopt an educational ideal – in accordance with the Greek, classical view – and then guide the formation of media users. It is also a certain extension of the social goals of media pedagogy, constituting a higher level of understanding, integrated with religious formation and, above all, with Christian spirituality. The original proposals of Bishop Adam Lepa significantly expand the global trend of faith-media literacy education.

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## French Films in the USSR and France Film Distribution (1945–1991)

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### Abstract

During the second half of the 1940s and into the 1950s, attendance at French films at the French box office was at its peak. The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” of the French film distribution was diverse, but in general it was based on films of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, attendance at French films began to gradually decline (largely due to competition from television and Hollywood productions). An even greater decline in cinema attendance in France began to be felt in the 1980s. This was affected not only by strong competition from Hollywood products and television, but mainly by the massive distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

In the second half of the 1940s, there were very few French films in Soviet film distribution. This was largely due to the fact that it was during this period that so-called trophy films (mainly American and German) were shown on USSR screens.

Due to the fact that by the mid-1950s the screening of so-called trophy films (mainly American and German) in the USSR was completed, in the second half of the 1950s more new European films, including French ones, began to be released in Soviet cinemas. The “thaw” that came to the USSR brought significant changes to procurement policy. For example, of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1958, exactly half were shown on USSR cinema screens.

The work of the Soviet film purchasing commission in the 1960s was quite liberal, which (especially after the start of the “Prague Spring” of 1968) could not escape the conservative wing of the “ideological front”: a number of articles were published in the Soviet press with sharp criticism of the distribution policy regarding Western film products, “promoting the bourgeois way of life.”

Among the reasons why French films were not included in Soviet film distribution are the following:

- Taboos on erotica, accentuated religious and Jewish themes;
- The fear that Soviet viewers might somehow misunderstand shocking plot twists from the point of view of official Soviet morality, which were often found even in artistically significant films;
- Exclusion from candidates for the purchase of films with an interpretation of Russian and Soviet themes (and accordingly, Russian and Soviet characters) that is unacceptable for Soviet ideology;
- The struggle of Soviet censorship with incorrectly (from its point of view) ideological accents on military topics;
- Undesirability for Soviet censorship of films “promoting the bourgeois way of life”;

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- The undesirability of images of charming criminals appearing on Soviet screens;
- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of famous actors who publicly criticized the policies of the USSR;
- Too high prices offered by copyright holders;

True, in the Soviet film distribution in the second half of the 1980s and early 1990s, French films began to increasingly appear, one way or another violating former censorship taboos. This was due to the fact that with the advent of perestroika, the work of the purchasing commission of the USSR State Cinema Committee became more liberal and in many ways began to focus on the purchase of highly artistic foreign films, and the former strict ideological and moral prohibitions ceased to apply...

**Keywords:** film studies, France, USSR, distribution, box office, cinema, film, movie, cinematography.

## 1. Introduction

The number of French films produced each year sometimes varied significantly.

From 1945 to 1950 it ranged from 28 to 79 movies. In the 1950s – from 70 to 133. In the 1960s – from 117 to 154. In the 1970s – from 127 to 326. In the 1990s – from 108 to 150 (Jeancolas, 1985: 22; Savary, 2020: 17).

At the same time, French film critic Jean-Pierre Jeancolas noted that the unusual surge in the production of French films in the late 1970s was due to the fact that (in the absence of mass distribution of VCRs) a stream of cheap erotic films poured onto the screens, of which in 1978, for example, there were removed 157 (Jeancolas, 1985: 22).

The profitability threshold for French films in theatrical distribution depends on many factors. So the French film expert J.-P. Jeancolas wrote that in the 1970s in France, a film that managed to attract approximately 170 thousand – 200 thousand spectators and above was considered commercially quite successful (Jeancolas, 1985). At the same time, of course, we were talking about the fact that 200 thousand spectators were gathered by an intimate, low-budget film, and not by a hugely expensive action film, for which, for example, even a million spectators can be considered a commercial failure.

The top ten champions of French film distribution in the entire history of French cinema are films that attracted from 10.3 million viewers to 20.5 million viewers. And in order to get into the top hundred leaders of the French film box office, the film had to overcome the threshold of 5 million viewers.

Considering that the population of the USSR was approximately five times larger than the population of France, 5 million viewers at the French box office corresponded to 25 million viewers at the Soviet box office, which is very impressive, because in the entire history of film distribution in the USSR, there were about 430 Soviet films that attracted more than 25 million viewers (out of more than seven thousand Soviet full-length feature films shown in cinemas).

As for the figure of the leader of the French film distribution, which attracted 20.5 million viewers, it is similar to one hundred million Soviet viewers or 40 million viewers in modern Russia.

However, to make the analogy more correct, let us turn to Gerard Oury's comedy *The Big Walk* (*La Grande Vadrouille*, 1966), which until 2011 retained the title of champion of French film distribution: 17.3 million viewers (which is similar to 85 million viewers in the USSR, and this figure was achieved in the Soviet film box office is surpassed only by the action movie *Pirates of the 20th Century*).

In the USSR film distribution, *The Big Walk* attracted 37.8 million viewers. Thus, if in France *The Big Walk* was watched by 35 % of the population, then in the USSR – 15 %.

Analysis of the data in Table 1 shows that, due to changes in the sociocultural and media situation, the number of French films annually attracting an audience of 1 million to 5 million viewers has generally been declining since the mid-1960s, while the number of films attracting an audience on the contrary, it increased from 0.1 million to 0.4 million viewers.

It is also clear from the table data that the number of French films that failed to attract an audience of 100 thousand viewers has been steadily increasing since the 1970s.

**Table 1.** Attendance ranges for French films from 1945 to 1991

<i>Attendance ranges for French films in France (in millions of viewers)</i>										
Year	above 10,0	above 5,0 to 10,0	above 3,0 to 5,0	above 1,0 to 3,0	0,5 – 1,0	0,2 – 0,4	0,1	0,05 – 0,09	0,02 – 0,04	from 0,01 and less
<i>The number of films released at French distribution in a given year:</i>										
1945	0	1	5	19	2	1	*	0	0	0
1946	0	5	7	38	4	*	*	0	0	0
1947	0	4	8	27	10	*	*	0	0	0
1948	0	2	10	35	7	*	*	0	0	0
1949	0	1	7	48	11	1	*	0	0	0
1950	0	1	5	53	16	3	*	0	0	0
1951	0	1	5	44	19	1	*	0	0	0
1952	1	2	12	32	23	*	*	0	0	0
1953	0	4	7	41	20	*	*	0	0	0
1954	0	3	12	42	17	*	*	0	0	0
1955	0	2	12	46	10	1	1	0	0	0
1956	0	2	13	56	8	1	*	1	0	0
1957	0	0	6	60	16	1	*	0	0	0
1958	0	1	8	41	28	0	1	0	1	0
1959	0	2	9	46	23	8	1	0	0	0
1960	0	2	9	31	35	4	1	0	0	0
1961	0	0	8	33	30	17	1	3	0	3
1962	0	1	3	35	31	11	8	1	0	0
1963	0	1	2	33	23	8	7	2	3	1
1964	0	1	6	36	25	9	8	2	0	4
1965	1	1	4	28	28	11	2	1	6	1
1966	1	0	3	20	17	15	6	3	2	4
1967	0	2	3	16	26	13	8	1	1	0
1968	0	2	1	24	16	10	5	4	4	5
1969	0	1	3	15	4	1	*	*	*	*
1970	0	0	5	18	16	19	9	2	9	8
1971	0	3	3	18	19	13	8	4	12	2
1972	0	2	4	19	17	16	4	6	6	6
1973	0	1	3	22	16	25	6	6	12	12
1974	0	2	3	17	21	23	13	3	12	2
1975	0	0	4	20	21	17	16	6	8	6
1976	0	2	0	17	27	14	14	2	9	10
1977	0	0	1	14	25	15	7	6	8	1
1978	0	1	0	17	20	14	8	1	7	1
1979	0	1	2	13	21	18	8	5	19	4
1980	0	0	4	14	21	8	14	3	10	9
1981	0	2	4	16	25	17	7	2	5	3
1982	0	1	7	18	15	17	2	6	10	9
1983	0	1	6	18	22	27	7	4	11	15
1984	0	2	2	23	24	12	12	2	11	1
1985	1	1	0	14	28	16	14	7	4	2
1986	0	2	4	10	17	16	15	4	9	0
1987	0	0	3	3	21	14	14	2	12	5
1988	0	2	2	6	12	17	7	10	11	2
1989	0	0	0	8	12	16	9	5	9	7
1990	0	1	3	7	6	9	16	5	11	10
1991	0	0	0	11	12	12	10	2	15	12

\* no data.

**Table 2** summarizes data on the number of French films that attracted more than 1.0 million viewers and less than 200 thousand viewers at the French box office (from 1945 to 1991).

**Table 2.** Ranges of attendance of French films that attracted more than 1.0 million viewers and less than 200 thousand viewers at the French box office (from 1945 to 1991)

Year	<i>Number of French films that gathered more than 1.0 million viewers at the French box office</i>	<i>Number of French films with less than 200,000 viewers at the French box office</i>
1945	25	
1946	50	
1947	39	
1948	47	
1949	56	
1950	60	
1951	50	
1952	47	
1953	52	
1954	57	
1955	60	1
1956	71	1
1957	66	0
1958	50	2
1959	57	1
1960	42	1
1961	41	7
1962	39	9
1963	36	14
1964	43	14
1965	34	10
1966	24	15
1967	21	10
1968	27	18
1969	19	*
1970	23	28
1971	24	26
1972	25	22
1973	26	36
1974	22	30
1975	24	36
1976	19	35
1977	15	22
1978	18	17
1979	16	36
1980	18	36
1981	23	17
1982	26	27
1983	25	37
1984	27	26
1985	16	27
1986	16	28
1987	6	33
1988	10	30
1989	8	30
1990	11	42
1991	11	39

\* no data.

Analysis of the data in [Table 2](#) shows that the peak number of French films (71), which attracted over 1.0 million viewers at the French box office, occurred in 1956, and the minimum (6) in 1987.

As for the number of French films that attracted less than 200 thousand spectators at the French box office, their peak values occurred in the early 1990s. If until the mid-1960s the appearance of this kind of mostly unprofitable films could be considered accidental, then later it became a pattern.

In 1984, the number of French films that attracted more than one million viewers managed to exceed twenty for the last time (in 1984 there were 27 such films).

In 1982 and 1984, for the last time in the history of French film distribution, the number of films that attracted more than one million spectators was approximately equal to the number of outsider films that lured fewer than 200 thousand spectators into cinemas. Further, the number of outsider films invariably exceeded (often several times) the number of films with millionaires...

**Table 3.** Number of French films shown in Soviet film distribution (1945–1991)

Year	<i>Number of French films (including coproductions), from the French distribution repertoire of a particular year, shown (in different years) in Soviet film distribution</i>
1945	2
1946	1
1947	1
1948	4
1949	3
1950	3
1951	2
1952	5
1953	6
1954	4
1955	6
1956	13
1957	4
1958	12
1959	6
1960	8
1961	13
1962	9
1963	13
1964	16
1965	14
1966	11
1967	14
1968	11
1969	7
1970	4
1971	5
1972	11
1973	8
1974	10
1975	14
1976	12
1977	8
1978	9
1979	13
1980	16
1981	18
1982	10



Year	<i>Number of French films (including coproductions), from the French distribution repertoire of a particular year, shown (in different years) in Soviet film distribution</i>
1983	13
1984	14
1985	9
1986	10
1987	14
1988	7
1989	3
1990	0
1991	0

Analysis of the data in [Table 3](#) shows that during the expansion of the so-called “trophy” cinema (mainly American and German films) – in the second half of the 1940s – the first half of the 1950s – the number of French films in Soviet film distribution was insignificant (in on average about 3 movies per year).

However, with the advent of the Thaw, the number of French films purchased for distribution in the USSR increased significantly, and from 1956 to 1968 the number of French films in Soviet film distribution averaged 11 per year.

Further, starting from 1969 (due to tightening censorship in purchasing policy after the Czechoslovak events of 1968), the number of French films in Soviet film distribution decreased to approximately 7 per year, and a new increase in the number of purchases of French film products in the USSR became noticeable, starting from the second half of the 1970s (in the range from 1975 to 1985, the number of French films (including co-productions) in Soviet film distribution averaged 12 per year).

Not a single French film from the French film distribution repertoire of 1990 and 1991 managed to be released in Soviet film distribution (these films were already shown in the Russian period of the 1990s).

In the last years of the existence of the USSR (1990–1991), fewer French films were purchased (and they were released in theaters already in post-Soviet times). This is partly explained by the sharp increase in Hollywood production that poured onto Soviet screens, partly by the expansion of video, and partly by crisis phenomena in Soviet film distribution as a whole.

#### *The highest-grossing French directors of the 20th century*

Based on the results of film distribution in France, the top ten highest-grossing full-length feature films were formed annually.

From 1945 to 2000, the top ten leaders in French film distribution in one year or another included films by many directors: René Clair, Marcel Carné, Jacques Tati, Julien Duvivier, Francois Truffaut, Claude Chabrol, Louis Malle, Bertrand Tavernier, Bertrand Blier, Yves Boisset and etc.

However, only the films of 32 French directors managed to get into the top ten box office leaders of the year five or more times:

1. Claude Zidi: 18 films.
2. André Hunebelle (1896–1985): 15 films.
3. Henri Verneuil (1920–2002): 13 films.
4. Jean Giraud (1924–1982): 13 films.
5. Gerard Oury (1919–2006): 11 films.
6. Yves Robert (1920–2002): 10 films.
7. Jean Delannoy (1908–2008): 9 films.
10. Christian-Jacques (1904–1994): 9 films.
11. Claude Lelouch: 9 films.
12. Georges Lautner (1926–2013): 9 films.
13. Claude Berry (1934–2009): 8 films.
14. Luc Besson: 8 films.
15. Philippe de Broca (1933–2004): 8 films.
16. Jean Boyer (1901–1965): 8 films.
17. André Cayatte (1909–1989): 8 films.
18. Claude Autant-Lara (1901–2000): 8 films.
19. André Berthomieu (1903–1960): 7 films.

20. Bernard Borderie (1924–1978): 7 films.
21. Gilles Grangier (1911–1996): 7 films.
22. Edouard Molinaro (1928–2013): 7 films.
23. Denys de La Patellière (1921–2013): 7 films.
24. Jean Dréville (1906–1997): 6 films.
25. René Clément (1913–1996): 6 films.
26. Patrice Leconte: 6 films.
27. Richard Potier (1906–1994): 6 films.
28. Jean-Marie Poiré: 6 films.
29. Claude Sautet (1924–2000): 6 films.
30. Roger Vadim (1928–2000): 5 films.
31. Francis Veber: 5 films.
32. Jacques Deray (1929–2003): 5 films.
33. Henri-Georges Clouzot (1907–1977): 5 films.
34. Jean-Paul Rappeneau: 5 films.

## 2. Materials and methods

*Object of study.* The situation with attendance of French films in the USSR and France in the period from 1945 to 1991 was chosen as the object of our research.

*Subject of study:* evolution of attendance of French films in the USSR and France in the period from 1945 to 1991.

*Project objectives:* to carry out classification, analysis of the range of reasons for differences in attendance French films in the USSR and France in the period from 1945 to 1991.

*Research methods:* comparative analysis, classification, comparison, analogy.

## 3. Discussion and results

### *Top box office leaders in France in 1945 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1945 attracted from 2.7 million to 5.1 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1945, 25 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark.

The genre spectrum of the leaders in the “golden ten” box office of 1945 was diverse, but approximately half of the films were dramas.

The top ten of the French film box office in 1945 included films by directors who were among the leaders of box office success in the 1950s: Jean Dréville (two films in the top ten of 1945), Christian-Jacques (two films in the top ten of 1945), Marcel Carné, etc. In first place was the film by Jean Dréville *The Cage of Nightingales (La Cage aux rossignols)* (5.1 million viewers).

In general, the French mass market relied on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

In the second half of the 1940s, there were very few French films in Soviet film distribution. This was largely due to the fact that it was during this period that so-called trophy films (mainly American and German) were shown on USSR screens.

Only two films from the French repertoire of 1945 were released into the USSR: *Children of Paradise (Les Enfants du paradis)* and *Carmen*.

At the same time, ironically, the famous film *Children of Paradise* by Marcel Carné (4.8 million viewers), which took second place in the French film distribution in 1945, was released on Soviet screens in... 1969. As a result, the mass Soviet audience perceived it as archaic, and the film was watched by an insignificant number of viewers for the Soviet film distribution of those years: 2.2 million.

But the melodrama *Carmen* by Christian-Jacques (4.3 million viewers) ended up in Soviet film distribution after only... ten years of its production – in 1954.

### *Top box office leaders in France in 1946 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1946 attracted from 3.6 million to 6.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1946, 50 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” of the 1946 box office was diverse.

Compared to 1945, the number of French films in theatrical release in 1946 increased sharply. At the same time, as before, films of entertainment genres dominated, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by famous directors Jean Delannoy, René Clément, Jean Cocteau, André Cayatte and others.

As a result, only one film from the French repertoire of 1946 was released into cinema distribution in the USSR: René Clément's drama *Battle on the Rails* (*La Bataille du rail*).

*Top box office leaders in France in 1947 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1947 attracted from 3.6 million to 8.6 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1947, 39 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the "golden ten" box office of 1947 was diverse.

Despite the fact that the military drama *Heavenly Battalion* (*Le Bataillon du ciel*) became the leader of the French film distribution in 1947, in general, as before, films of entertainment genres dominated, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by famous directors Henri-Georges Clouzot, Claude Autant-Lara, René Clair, André Cayatte and others.

As a result, only one film from the French film repertoire of 1947 made it onto Soviet screens (in 1955): *Antoine and Antoinette* (*Antoine et Antoinette*) by Jacques Becker.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1948 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1948 attracted from 3.2 million to 6.1 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1948, 47 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the "golden ten" of the 1948 box office was diverse, but most of all there were comedies.

The leader of the French film box office in 1948 was the film adaptation of Stendhal's *The Parma Monastery* (*La Chartreuse de Parme*) with Gérard Philipe in the leading male role.

This film hit the USSR cinema screens in 1953, and its director, Christian-Jacques, became the darling of the Soviet box office for a long time.

In general, as before, the French film box office in 1948 was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by famous directors Christian-Jacques (two films), Jean Dréville (two films), Jean Delannoy, Gilles Grangier and others.

From the top ten leaders of the French film distribution in 1948, *The Parma Monastery* (*La Chartreuse de Parme*) (in 1953) and *Clochemerle* (in 1950 under the name *Scandal in Clochemerle*) were released on the screens of USSR cinemas.

The melodrama *The Parma Monastery* attracted 6.1 million viewers in France (the equivalent of approximately 30 million Soviet viewers). This picture attracted approximately the same number of viewers in the USSR: 26.6 million.

The comedy *Clochemerle* was not so successful on Soviet screens (most likely, it could not withstand the competition with "trophy" films). In France, it attracted 5 million spectators to cinema halls (analogous to 25 million Soviet spectators), and in the USSR (in 1950) – 8.6 million spectators in the first year of demonstration.

In 1953-1956, two more films from the French film distribution repertoire of 1948 were shown on Soviet screens:

– *Ruy Blaz* (titled *Dangerous Similarities*). In France, this picture attracted an audience of 2.4 million viewers (analogous to 12 million Soviet viewers), and in the USSR it was much larger: 20.3 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

– *L'Idol*. In France, this film attracted an audience of 1.2 million viewers (unfortunately, there is no data on the Soviet film distribution of this film in 1956).

In total, 4 films from the repertoire of French films of 1948 were released in Soviet film distribution in different years.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1949 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1949 attracted from 2.6 million to 6.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1949, 56 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark.

Comedies dominated the genre spectrum of the leaders in the "golden ten" box office of 1949.

The leader of the French film box office in 1949 was Jacques Tati's comedy *Festive Day* (*Jour de fête*).

In general, as before, the French film box office in 1949 was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by famous directors Jacques Tati, Henri-Georges Clouzot, Henri Decoin and others. The films of Julien Duvivier and Jean-Paul Le Chanois came quite close to this top ten.

It is interesting to note that the top ten leaders in the French box office included two comedies with the participation of Fernandel.

Of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1949, not a single film was able to reach the screens of the USSR.

In total, only three French films from the 1949 repertoire were shown at the Soviet box office at different times: the comedy *School for Idlers* (*L'École buissonnière*) by Jean-Paul Le Chanois, the drama *Behind Bars / At the Walls of Malapaga* (*Au-delà des grilles / Le mura di Malapaga*) by René Clément and *Dawn* (*Le Point du jour*) by Louis Daquin.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1950 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1950 attracted from 2.7 million to 6.7 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1950, 60 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” of film distribution in 1950 was diverse, but in general, as before, films of entertainment genres dominated on French screens in 1950, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten leaders in French film distribution included films by famous directors André Cayatte, Jean-Paul Le Chanois, Jean Delannoy and others. The attendance of films by Marcel Carné, René Clair, and André Hunebelle was very close to this top ten.

It is interesting to note that the top ten leaders at the French box office included two comedies with the participation of Fernandel and two comedies with the participation of Bourvil.

Of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1950, not a single film was able to reach the screens of the USSR.

In total, only three French films from the 1950 repertoire were shown at the Soviet box office at different times: the drama *Prelude to Glory* (*Prélude à la gloire*), the comedy *Casimir* with Fernandel, and the most famous film by Jean Cocteau, *Orpheus* (*Orphée*) (with Jean Marais in the title role).

But if the first two films were released in Soviet film distribution in the 1950s, *Orpheus* was significantly delayed: it was released on USSR screens only in the fall of 1988...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1951 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1951 attracted from 2.6 million to 5.7 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1951, 50 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

A striking proof of the active attendance of French films in 1951 was that the completely unentertaining film by Robert Bresson – *The Diary of a Country Priest* (*Journal d'un curé de campagne*) – attracted 2.2 million viewers at the box office. And this despite the fact that none of R. Bresson's masterpieces in the 1960–1980s was able to attract more than 300 thousand spectators to cinema screens...

In the genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” of the 1951 box office, comedies predominated. And in general, as before, the French box office was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

It is interesting to note that the top ten leaders at the French box office were again included in two comedies with the participation of Fernandel.

Of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1951, not a single film managed to reach the screens of the USSR.

In total, only two French films from the 1951 repertoire were shown in Soviet distribution (in 1951–1955): *Address Unknown* (*Sans laisser d'adresse*) by Jean-Paul Le Chanois and *Shadow and Light* (*Ombre et lumière*) by Henri Calef.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1952 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1952 attracted from 3.3 million to 12.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1952, 46 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1952 was diverse, but in general, as before, the French film box office was dominated by films of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

The top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1952 included films by Julien Duvivier (*The small world of Don Camillo / Le Petit Monde de don Camillo*: 12,8 million viewers, first place in the box-office), Christian-Jacques, René Clément, René Clair and other famous French directors.

When viewed from the 21st century, it seems completely incredible that the legendary film by Christian-Jacques *Fanfan la Tulipe* (6.7 million viewers) ended up in third place at the box office in France, giving way, for example, of the long-forgotten film operetta *Imperial Violets (Violettes impériales)* (8,1 million viewers)...

It is also interesting to note that the top ten leaders at the French box office included two comedies with the participation of Fernandel and two films with the participation of Gerard Philipe.

From the films of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1952, three films appeared on Soviet screens: *Fanfan la Tulipe*, *Forbidden Games (Jeux interdits)* and *Night Beauties (Les Belles de nuit)*.

The sparkling *Fanfan la Tulipe* by Christian-Jacques was released on the screens of the USSR in 1955, and the drama *Forbidden Games* by René Clément – only more than twenty years later – in 1973.

The distribution success of *Fanfan la Tulipe* (taking into account the difference in the population of the countries) in the USSR was quite comparable to that of France.

If *Forbidden Games* had been released on Soviet screens in the 1950s, perhaps their success would also have been considerable, but in Soviet film distribution in 1973 this film was modest: 4.4 million viewers.

As for the exquisite *Night Beauties* by René Clair, they apparently frightened the Soviet censors of the 1950s with erotic motifs, although from the point of view of today (and not only) the picture captivates viewers with its tactful chastity... But, alas, this picture was released onto USSR cinema screens only in... December 1989.

Of the French films of 1952 that were not included in the “golden” ten, two more films were shown on USSR screens (in 1953–1954): the comedy *Mr. Taxi (Monsieur Taxi)* and the melodrama *There Were Five (Ils étaient cinq)*.

In total, 5 films from the repertoire of French films of 1952 were released on USSR screens in different years.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1953 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1953 attracted from 3.6 million to 7.4 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1953, 52 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1953 was diverse, but in general, as before, the French film box office was dominated by films of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by Julien Duvivier, Henri-Georges Clouzot, André Hunebelle, Jacques Tati, Henri Verneuil, Christian-Jacques and other famous French directors.

It is also interesting to note that the top ten leaders at the French box office once again included two comedies with the participation of Fernandel, who, undoubtedly, was the highest-grossing French actor of the 1950s...

The leading comedy at the French film box office in 1953 (7.4 million viewers) *Return of Don Camillo (Le Retour de Don Camillo / Il ritorno di Don Camillo)* was not purchased for Soviet screens, apparently due to the benevolent interpretation of the image of the priest.

But the legendary drama by Henri-Georges Clouzot, *The Wages of Fear* (*Le Salaire de la peur*) (6.9 million viewers), which was in second place at the box office, was released in Soviet mass distribution quite quickly: its showing in cinemas in the USSR began on January 28, 1955.

The rest of the films from the top ten leaders in French film distribution bypassed the screens of the USSR...

At the same time, five more films from the French film repertoire of 1953 were released on Soviet screens (in 1954-1958): *Thérèse Raquin*, *Julietta*, *Call of Destiny* (*L'Appel du destin*), *Midnight Lovers* (*Broken Dreams*) (*Les Amants de minuit*) and *Women's Love* (*L'Amour d'une femme*).

In total, 6 films from the repertoire of French films of 1953 were released on USSR screens in different years.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1954 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1954 attracted from 4.0 million to 7.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1954, 57 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the "golden ten" box office of 1954 was diverse. In general, as before, the French film distribution was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by Robert Verneuil, Jean-Paul Le Chanois, Jacques Becker, Claude Autant-Lara, Henri Verneuil, André Hunebelle, and other famous French directors.

It is also interesting to note that the top ten leaders at the French box office for a year in a row included two comedies with the participation of Fernandel...

Due to the fact that by the mid-1950s the screening of so-called trophy films (mainly American and German) in the USSR was completed, in the second half of the 1950s more new European films, including French ones, began to be released in Soviet cinemas.

Thus, from the top ten leaders of the French film distribution of 1954, three films were bought and shown in mass Soviet film distribution: *The Count of Monte Cristo* (*Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*) by Robert Verneuil, *Papa, Mama, the Maid and Me* (*Papa, maman, la bonne et moi*) by Jean-Paul Le Chanois and *Red and Black* (*Le Rouge et le Noir*) by Claude Autant-Lara.

True, if the films of Le Chanois and Autant-Lara were released promptly in Soviet cinemas – in 1955, then *The Count of Monte Cristo* had to wait until 1961 for showing on Soviet screens.

Taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and France, the films *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *Red and Black* were watched by approximately the same number of viewers.

In total, 4 films from the repertoire of French films of 1954 were released on USSR screens in different years. The fourth was the comedy *Mademoiselle Nitouche* with Fernandel, which was released in Soviet cinemas in 1961.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1955 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1955 attracted from 3.4 million to 5.4 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1955, 60 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre range of the leaders of the "golden ten" box office of 1955 was diverse, although in general comedies predominated. As before, the French film distribution was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by Sacha Guitry, René Clair, Jean Renoir, Jean Delannoy, Jean-Paul Le Chanois, Henri-Georges Clouzot and other famous French directors.

At the same time, for the first time in several years, not a single comedy with the participation of Fernandel entered the top ten leaders of the French box office...

The continuation of the comedy by Jean-Paul Le Chanois *Daddy, Mommy, the Maid and Me* (*Papa, maman, la bonne et moi*) – *Daddy, Mommy, My Wife and Me* (*Papa, maman, ma femme et moi*) (6th place in the French box office in 1955: 3.8 million viewers) was successfully released on USSR screens in 1959. Another film by Jean-Paul Le Chanois, *The Runaways* (*Les Evadés*) (5th place at the French box office in 1955: 3.8 million viewers) appeared on the screens of the USSR even faster: from November 21, 1955. *Men in White* (*Les Hommes en blanc*) (7th place at the

French box office in 1955: 3.7 million viewers) were released in Soviet box office a little later – from February 11, 1957.

But with other leaders of the French film distribution in 1955 it turned out differently.

One can also understand the political reasons why the 1955 French box office triumph *Napoléon* (5.4 million viewers) was not to the taste of the Soviet purchasing commission.

But the famous Great Maneuvers (*Les Grandes Manœuvres*) by René Clair (5.3 million viewers and second place in the French film box office in 1955) appeared in mass Soviet release only in 1969. And the no less famous *French Cancan* (3rd place in the French box office in 1955: 4 million viewers), in general, in... 1989!

In total, from the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1955, five films were released in Soviet distribution in different years.

Of the films that were not included in the top ten leaders of the French film distribution, the melodrama *Days of Love* (*Giorni d'amore / Jours de amour*), a joint French-Italian production with the participation of Marina Vladi and Marcello Mastroianni, was also shown on the screens of the USSR.

So, in different years, 6 films from the repertoire of French films of 1955 were released on the screens of the USSR.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1956 (among French films)*

As before, the French film box office in 1956 was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1956 attracted from 3.8 million to 6.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1956 was diverse, although in general comedies predominated.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1956, 71 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark without any problems.

Even completely devoid of entertainment, Robert Bresson's philosophical drama *Condemned to Death Escaped* (*Un condamné à mort s'est échappé*) attracted 2.8 million viewers at the French box office (a record for R. Bresson's work), while taking quite a high place – twenty-first place in attendance... By the way, when was this picture In 1963, it appeared in Soviet film distribution, then (taking into account the five-fold difference in the population of the USSR and France), it did not gain any tangible success, attracting 3.4 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

The top ten box office leaders included films by Jean Delannoy, Claude Autant-Lara, René Clément, Christian-Jacques and other famous French directors.

At the same time, after a year-long break, a comedy with the participation of Fernandel again entered the top ten leaders of the French box office... But his main rival in terms of comedies of the 1950s, Bourvil, had two films in the top ten box office of the year (*Through Paris / La Traversée de Paris*) and *The Mexican Singer / Le Chanteur de Mexico*).

The 1956 box office year was truly triumphant for the rising star of the French screen, Brigitte Bardot: two films with her participation (*And God... Created Woman / Et Dieu... créa la femme*) by Roger Vadim and *The Shrew / Cette sacrée gamine* by Michel Boisrond) entered the top ten favorites, grossing approximately 4 million each. viewers each. At the same time, Roger Vadim's film may have become the trigger for the subsequent erotic film revolution that took place on the Western screen in the 1960s and 1970s. And Brigitte Bardot became an icon of the French style of emancipation on the screen for at least ten years.

It is clear that both of these films, due to their unacceptable frivolity for the USSR, were not included in the Soviet film distribution...

It is clear that the interpretation of Russia in the plot of the leader of the French film distribution: the film adaptation of Jules Verne's novel *Michel Strogoff* (6.7 million viewers) was liked by strict Soviet censors no more than the frivolous films with Bardot, so the film distribution of the USSR also did without this film.

By the way, this was practically the only French film on a Russian theme that ever, since 1945, managed to top the top ten box office films of the year.

But the “silver medalist” of the French box office – *Notre Dame de Paris* by Jean Delannoy with Gina Lollobrigida and Anthony Quinn, although with a decent delay (in 1961), still made it to Soviet cinemas. Apparently, the authority of the spectacularly filmed novel by Victor Hugo had an effect.

In the same 1961, René Clément's melodrama *Gervaise* was released on Soviet screens (6th place in the French film box office in 1956: 4.1 million viewers).

By all Soviet standards, Christian-Jacques's progressive and democratic film *If the Boys of the World...* (*Si tous les gars du monde...*), 10th place in the French box office in 1956: 3.8 million viewers) was released in USSR cinemas much earlier – on April 8, 1957.

The documentary film *In a World of Silence* (*Le Monde du silence*) by Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Louis Malle was also shown on Soviet screens. In France, it attracted a record 4.6 million viewers for documentary cinema (which roughly corresponded to 23 million Soviet viewers). But the distribution of this film in the USSR in 1959 was much more modest: 5.4 million viewers (although this figure, of course, exceeded the average distribution figures for documentary films in the USSR).

In total, four films from the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1956 were released on Soviet screens.

The following films from the French cinema of 1956 were also released in Soviet cinemas over the years: *The New Don Juan* (*Don Juan / El amor de Don Juan / Il Grande seduttore*) by John Berry, *Condemned to Death Escaped* (*Un condamné à mort s'est échappé*) by Robert Bresson, *The Adventures of Till Espiègle* (*Les Aventures de Till l'Espiegle*) by Gerard Philip and Joris Ivens, *The Fairy Unlike others* (*Une fée pas comme les autres*) by Jean Tourane, *The Best Years* (*La meilleure part*) by Yves Allégret, *The Witch* (*La Sorcière*) by André Michel, *The Roof* (*Il Tetto / Le Toit*) by Vittorio De Sica, *Main Street* (*Calle Mayor / Grand-rue*) by Juan Antonio Bardem, *The Red Ball* (*Le ballon rouge*) by Albert Lamorisse.

At the same time, the greatest success in the USSR fell to the melodrama *The Witch* (based on the story *Olesya* by A. Kuprin) with Marina Vladi and Maurice Ronet in the leading roles.

In France, according to the results of attendance, this film took a rather modest 48th place (1.6 million viewers). But in the Soviet film distribution in 1959, *The Witch* attracted 36.5 million viewers and became a kind of cult for many years. And many Soviet girls aspired to be like the movie star Marina Vladi, who instantly turned into one of the most popular foreign actresses in the USSR.

In total, 13 films from the repertoire of French films of 1956 were released on USSR screens in different years.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1957 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1957 attracted from 3.0 million to 4.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1957, 66 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1957 was diverse, although in general comedies predominated. In general, as before, the French film distribution was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by René Clair, Jacques Becker, Yves Champy, André Hunebelle and other famous French directors.

Traditionally for the French film distribution of the 1950s, the top ten leaders of the French box office once again included a comedy with the participation of Fernandel, who, undoubtedly, was the highest-grossing French actor of the 1950s...

But the time of Louis de Funès has not yet come: the comedy with his participation – *Like a Hair in Soup* (*Comme un cheveu sur la soupe*) – although it attracted 1.8 million viewers in 1957, at the end of the year it took 35th place in the box office, quite far from the leaders...

Of the top ten leaders at the French box office, only the third-placed film by René Clair *Port de Lila* (3.9 million viewers), which was released in the USSR under the title *On the Outskirts of Paris* in 1959, made it onto Soviet screens...

As for three more films from the French box office champions of 1957 – *Folies-Bergère* by Henri Decoin (fourth place at the box office: 3.5 million viewers), *La Parisienne* by Michel Boisrond (fifth place at the box office: 3.5 million viewers) and *Casino de Paris* directed by André Hunebelle (seventh place at the box office: 3.0 million viewers), they were clearly considered too frivolous by the Soviet censors, especially since Brigitte Bardot looked clearly immodest in *La Parisienne*...

Probably, *The Portuguese Washerwomen* (*Les Lavandières du Portugal*) (eighth place at the box office: 3 million viewers) did not seem very modest to the “responsible comrades”, although the title seemed to fully fit the Soviet ideological standards of the “oppressed working class”...



But here's a paradox: the same "thaw" censors were not at all embarrassed by the profession of the main character of the famous Italian-French film by Federico Fellini *Nights of Cabiria* (*Le Notti di Cabiria / Les Nuits de Cabiria*) (17th place in the French film box office in 1957: 2.6 million viewers).

With a relatively slight delay (in 1960) *Nights of Cabiria* was released on Soviet screens, attracting almost two tens of millions of viewers (and in 1971, "at the request of the workers," this film was also re-released in the USSR).

Two more films from the French repertoire of 1957 were also released in Soviet film distribution: the comedy *Hello, Doctor* (*Bonjour Toubib*) and the melodrama *Dear Friend* (*Bel Ami*).

The film adaptation of Guy de Maupassant's novel was relatively modest in France (0.6 million viewers, which corresponded to approximately 3 million Soviet viewers), while in the USSR its audience amounted to over two tens of millions.

So, in different years, 4 films from the repertoire of French films of 1957 were released on the screens of the USSR.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1958 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1958 attracted from 2.9 million to 9.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1958, 50 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre range of the leaders of the "golden ten" of 1958 was diverse, but this time dramas predominated.

However, in general, as before, the French film distribution was dominated by films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders included films by Jean-Paul Le Chanois, Marcel Carné, Jacques Tati, Denys de La Patellière, Christian-Jacques, Claude Autant-Lara, Jean Delannoy and other famous French directors.

Traditionally for the French film distribution of the 1950s, the top ten leaders of the French box office once again included a comedy with the participation of Fernandel, who, undoubtedly, was the highest-grossing French actor of the 1950s... The top ten also included a film with the participation of Bourvil.

But it was the 1958 release that marked a triumphant return to the ranks of audience favorites for Jean Gabin: four (!!!!) films with his participation (*Les Misérables* by Jean-Paul Le Chanois, *The Powers That Be / Les Grandes Familles* by Denys de La Patellière, *In the Case of Misfortune / En cas de malheur* by Claude Autant-Lara and *Maigret Lays a Net / Maigret tend un piège* by Jean Delannoy) entered the top ten of French film distribution.

It is interesting that *Les Misérables* and *The Powers That Be* very quickly – in 1959 and 1960 – appeared on the "thaw" Soviet screen. Apparently, this was due to respect for the primary sources – the novels of Victor Hugo and Maurice Druon, whose work was interpreted very positively in the USSR.

It should be noted that the "thaw", which was at its peak, brought significant changes to the purchasing policy of Soviet film officials: of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1958, exactly half were shown on USSR cinema screens (*Les Misérables*, *The Powers That Be / Les Grandes Familles*, *My Uncle / Mon oncle*, *The law is the law / La Loi, c'est la loi*, *Without a family / Sans famille*). And not ten or twenty years later, but precisely at the turn of the 1960s.

However, given that the population of the USSR was five times larger than the population of France, it turned out that "in per capita terms" *Les Misérables* was a much greater success with the French: 9.9 million viewers corresponded to approximately 50 million Soviet viewers, whereas in reality in the USSR this film was watched by 23.1 million viewers.

Things were somewhat better with the sparkling comedy by Christian-Jacques *The Law is the Law*. In France in 1958 it was watched by 3.4 million viewers (analogous to the Soviet 17 million viewers), and in the USSR in 1960: 12.5 million viewers...

However, this is not surprising: for the French, the novel *Les Misérables* is approximately the same as for the Russians the novel *War and Peace*, which is proven by the consistent audience success in France of the film adaptations of *Les Misérables* in subsequent decades...

But André Cayatte's drama *The Double Door Mirror* (*Le Miroir à deux faces*), which took 11th place in the French film box office in 1958, was released on the Soviet screen (under the title "Phantom Happiness") nine years later – in 1967...

Tenth place in the French film box office in 1958 was taken by Henri Decoin's drama *The Cat (La Chatte)* (2.9 million viewers). And here the reasons for its rejection by the Soviet purchasing commission are completely clear: the film takes place during the Nazi occupation of France in the first half of the 1940s, but the Germans and French are, in principle, shown here as people of the same circle, respectful of each other...

Why? Yes, because, according to the Western concept of the Cold War, on the Western Front there was a war between representatives of the civilized world among themselves, and on the Eastern Front there was a war between representatives of the civilized West and barbarians...

Yes, there were exceptions to this rule. But in general, the well-known thesis was observed: "The West is the West..."

Based on this, the plots for Western films of the Cold War era were selected accordingly, that is, Nazi characters were depicted in situations of "maximum favored nation".

For example, in *The Cat* (France, 1958), an intelligent Nazi officer in occupied Paris fell in love with a charming French woman associated with the underground...

Thus, Western cinema of the Cold War era created a persistent stereotype about "good Germans" who, by the will of bad Hitler, were forced to fight not only with Russian barbarians, but also, alas, with good French, Americans and British...

Is it possible to say that the stereotypes of "another war" in Western cinema are forever a thing of the past? Alas, in my opinion, the answer can only be negative. West is West...

And in the films of the 21st century, the Western screen as a whole continues to use the same stereotypes. As for the image of Russia, even now on the Western screen it in most cases appears as a barbaric country with laws, customs and characters incomprehensible to the Western mentality...

On the other hand, the space successes of the USSR in the second half of the 1950s made such a strong impression on the French that in 1958, a comedy quite friendly towards the Soviet people called *On Foot, on Horse and in Sputnik (A pied, à cheval et en spoutnik)* by Jean Dréville was released on French screens (24th place in the French film box office in 1958 and 2.2 million viewers). However, due to the "cranberry" image of Russia and Russians, this film was not released in the Soviet Union.

From the general picture of good film adaptations and traditionally entertaining "daddy" films at the French box office in 1958, two outstanding films by Louis Malle with Jeanne Moreau in the leading female roles stood out: *Lovers (Les Amants)* (15th place and 2.6 million viewers) and *Lift to the scaffold (Ascenseur pour l'échafaud)* (30th place and 1.9 million viewers). *Lovers* never made it to Soviet mass film distribution. But the masterfully made noir style *Lift to the scaffold* arrived, but... in 1981. And the mass Soviet audience, apparently considering this black and white picture too archaic, was in no hurry to fill the cinema halls...

Claude Chabrol's debut film *Beau Serge* became a sensation of sorts. It was shot for very modest money, but in 1958 it attracted 1.1 million viewers and took a place in the middle of the box office list of French films.

Soon this film by Claude Chabrol will be classified as part of the so-called French "new wave", which will bring fresh breath to traditional genre cinema. But the banner of the "new wave," of course, will be Jean-Luc Godard's film *Breathless (À bout de souffle)*, which will be released in France on March 16, 1960...

True, the French "new wave" (including all the films of Jean-Luc Godard) practically did not make it into Soviet film distribution... One of the rare exceptions was, for example, Francois Truffaut's film *The 400 Blows (Les Quatre Cents Coups)*, which was allowed to appear on the screens of the USSR...

From the repertoire of French films of 1958, the Soviet film distribution (in 1959–1960) also included the drama *Tamango*, the comedy *Bourgeois in the Nobility (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme)*, the fairy tale *A Kite Around the World (Le Cerf-volant du bout du monde)* and (ten years late) the melodrama *Montparnasse 19* with Gerard Philipe... All these films were shown in Soviet cinemas with greater success than in France...

Particular success in the Soviet film distribution fell to the funny comedy with Louis de Funès, *If Not Caught, Not a Thief (Ni vu... ni connu...)*: in France in 1958 it was watched by 2.5 million viewers (analogous to 12 million Soviet viewers), and in the USSR in 1961 this The film was watched by nearly 28 million viewers...

So, 12 films from the repertoire of French films of 1958 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1959 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1959 attracted from 3.3 million to 8.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The 1950s were truly the golden age of French film distribution. So in 1959, 57 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1959 was diverse, although in general comedies predominated.

Despite the fact that even in the French film distribution of 1959, outstanding and largely new in language and material films appeared by the then young directors François Truffaut (*The 400 Blows*) and Claude Chabrol (*Cousins*), French screens in 1959, like Previously, they were filled with traditional films of entertainment genres, in which the favorites of the French public starred.

The top ten box office leaders of 1959 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Henri Verneuil, Claude Autant-Lara, Christian-Jacques, Roger Vadim, Gilles Grangier, Denys de La Patellière and other famous French directors.

However, two innovative films unexpectedly made their way into the top ten: the autobiographical drama *The 400 Blows (Les Quatre Cents Coups)* by a recent film critic and debut director – François Truffaut (5th place in the French box office in 1959 and 4.1 million viewers) and the exotic parable of Marcel Camus *Black Orpheus (Orfeu Negro)*, distinguished by its bright color and musical design (7th place in the French film box office in 1959 and 3.7 million viewers).

The number of viewers who watched F. Truffaut’s modest black-and-white, starless drama *The 400 Blows* is still astonishing today: not a single subsequent film by this director, including the very successful drama *The Last Metro (Le Dernier Métro)* at the box office, could gather such an audience!

Suffice it to say that the film *The 400 Blows* significantly outpaced the popular comedy with Brigitte Bardot *Would You Like to Dance with Me? (Voulez-vous danser avec moi?)* at the French box office in 1959 (11th place in the French box office in 1959 and 3.2 million viewers)...

*Black Orpheus* also became the highest-grossing work of Marcel Camus. After the Cannes triumph of 1959 (Palme d’Or), great hopes were pinned on M. Camus, but, alas, he never lived up to them...

It should be noted here that at first *Black Orpheus* was planned to be purchased for screening in Soviet cinemas. But here a Note from a department of the Central Committee of Communist Party dated December 10, 1960, “On serious shortcomings in the practice of selecting films from capitalist countries for showing on the screens of the Soviet Union”, intervened in the distribution fate of this film, where, in particular, it was noted that “as a result of insufficiently clear the organization of the work of the (purchasing) commission turned out to be recommended for the acquisition of films that were unacceptable to us. In 1959–1960. The Central Committee of Communist Party was forced to reject 9 films approved by the commission. Among them, for example, is the French-Italian film (with the participation of Brazil) *Black Orpheus*, which gives an incorrect impression of the life of blacks in Brazil. In this picture, blacks are depicted essentially from a colonialist position, as primitive “children of nature”, in the grip of blind biological instincts and religious ecstasy” (*Ideologicheskaya...*, 1998: 265).

It is clear that after such a note from the Central Committee of Communist Party, *Black Orpheus* did not appear on Soviet screens, leaving for the USSR audience only the famous melody (surprisingly similar to Russian melody “Coachman, don’t drive the horses...”), which was sung by many pop music fans in the 1960s music...

Traditionally for the 1950s, the top ten leaders at the French box office of 1959 once again included a comedy (*The Cow and the Prisoner / La Vache et le Prisonnier*): first place and 8.8 million viewers) with the participation of Fernandel, who, undoubtedly, was the highest-grossing French actor of the 1950s.

In second place was the comedy *The Green Mare (La Jument verte)* (5.3 million viewers) with the participation of Bourvil.

The 1959 box office was again successful for Jean Gabin: two films at once with his participation: *The Tramp Archimedes (Archimède le clochard)* by Gilles Grangier (6th place in the French box office and 4.1 million viewers) and *Prairie Street (Rue des Prairies)* by Denys de La Patellière (6th place at the French box office and 4.1 million viewers) 1st place in the French box office and 3.4 million viewers).

Brigitte Bardot, who became a superstar of the European screen after Roger Vadim's film *And God Created Woman (Et Dieu... créa la femme)*, continued to attract the public.

Christian-Jacques's comedy *Babette Goes to War (Babette s'en va-t-en guerre)*, where Bardot played the leading female role, took an honorable third place in the French film box office in 1959 (4.7 million viewers), and another comedy with her participation, *Do you want to dance with me? (Voulez-vous danser avec moi?)* Michel Boisrond – ended up in eleventh position.

Of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1959, three films were eventually released on Soviet screens (and quite quickly in 1960): *Babette Goes to War*, *The Four Hundred Blows* and *Prairie Street*. And this despite the very frivolous nature of *Babette Goes to War*, not to mention the “world's oldest” profession of the main character performed by Bardot!

In French film distribution, *Babette Goes to War* attracted 4.7 million viewers in 1959, which corresponded to approximately 23.5 million Soviet viewers. In the USSR in 1960, *Babette...* attracted 22.7 million viewers, that is, we can say that the interest of this comedy by Christian-Jacques in both countries was absolutely the same.

By the way, the purchase of *Babette...* caused outrage in the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. In a note from a department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, dated December 10, 1960, “On serious shortcomings in the practice of selecting films from capitalist countries for display on the screens of the Soviet Union”, it was noted that many members of the purchasing commission “expressed sharply critical remarks on the French film *Babette Goes to War*. Nevertheless, this film was presented for purchase” ([Ideologicheskaya..., 1998: 264](#)).

Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party also noted that in the USSR, “film distribution organizations still set the circulation of films from capitalist countries, guided mainly by commercial interests, losing sight of the ideological side of the matter. As a result, those American, English and French films in which the bourgeois way of life is shown in an embellished light are released in higher circulations. Circulations of such bourgeois films, imbued with ideas unacceptable to us, such as *Roman Holiday* – 1157 copies, *12 Girls and a Man* – 1304 copies, *Mr. Pitkin Behind Enemy Lines (The Square Peg)* – 1350 copies, *Babette Goes to War* – 1367 copies exceeded the circulation of a number of Soviet films and films from other countries of the socialist camp that have serious ideological and artistic significance” ([Ideologicheskaya..., 1998: 258-262](#)).

The film with Jean Gabin *Prairie Street* in 1959 attracted 3.4 million viewers at the French box office, which corresponded to approximately 17 million Soviet viewers. In the USSR in 1960, *Prairie Street* attracted 17.9 million viewers, that is, again there is a coincidence of interests of the audiences of the two countries.

But what happened with the film *The Four Hundred Blows (Les Quatre Cents Coups)* was completely different: by a kind of irony of fate, this picture by F. Truffaut attracted the same number of viewers at the box office in France and the USSR: 4.1 million, but this despite the fact that the population of the USSR was at that time five times more than in France... Apparently, the modest black and white autobiographical drama of Francois Truffaut seemed boring to Soviet viewers for the most part...

Among the films of the French film distribution in 1959, which were not included in the top ten leaders of attendance, the psychological dramas *Marie-October* by Julien Duvivier, *General Della Rovere* by Roberto Rossellini and *The Verdict (La Sentence)* by Jean Valère were widely shown in the Soviet Union in 1960-1961.

Both the French and Soviet press wrote a lot about one of the key paintings of the “new wave” – *Hiroshima, my love (Hiroshima mon amour)* by Alain Resnais. However, this complex anti-war drama was not included in the USSR film distribution. Most likely, because of the “slippery” memories of the main character for Soviet censorship about her love affair with the German occupier in the 1940s...

So, in different years, 6 films from the repertoire of French films of 1959 were released on the screens of the USSR.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1960 among French films*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1960 attracted from 3.2 million to 5.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

During the 1960s, attendance at French films generally continued to remain at fairly high levels. Thus, in 1960, 42 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark (although this was less than in previous years).

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1960 was diverse, although in general dramas predominated.

Despite the fact that in the French film distribution of 1960 there appeared outstanding and in many respects new films in language and material – *Breathless (À bout de souffle)* by Jean-Luc Godard (this innovative film soon became the banner of the “new wave”): 16th place in film distribution and 2.2 million viewers; *Moderato Cantabile* by Peter Brook: 48th place in box office and 1.0 million viewers; *Shoot the Piano Player (Tirez sur le pianiste)* by Francois Truffaut: 50th place in box office and 1.0 million viewers; *Zazie in the Metro (Zazie dans le métro)* by Louis Malle: 54th place at the box office and 0.9 million viewers; *Cuties (Les Bonnes Femmes)* by Claude Chabrol: 77th place in box office and 0.5 million viewers, French cinemas, as before, were filled with traditional films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders of 1960 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: André Hunebelle (two costume adventure films with the participation of Jean Marais), Henri-Georges Clouzot, Jean Dréville, André Cayatte, Gilles Grangier, Jean Delannoy and other famous French directors.

For the first time in many years, the top ten leaders of the French box office did not include a single comedy with the participation of Fernandel, who was undoubtedly the highest-grossing French actor of the 1950s...

In 1960, Bourvil took over the championship from Fernandel: three films with his participation – *The Hunchback (Le Bossu)*, *The Captain (Le Capitain)* and *Noël Fortune (Fortunat)* – were included in the top ten box office champions.

The 1960 box office year was very successful for Jean Marais and Jean Gabin: two films each with their participation entered the top ten of the French box office.

Brigitte Bardot was still at the peak of popularity: *The Truth (La Vérité)* by Henri-Georges Clouzot, in which she played the main female role, was in second place among the box office leaders of the year (5.7 million viewers).

Of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1960, four films were eventually released on Soviet screens (albeit some with a large time gap): *The Hunchback* and *The Captain* by André Hunebelle, *Normandie Niemen* by Jean Dréville and *Fortunat* by Alex Joffe.

At the same time, the military drama *Normandie Niemen* was a joint production with the USSR and was released in the Soviet Union with maximum efficiency – from March 9, 1960, attracting 26.9 million viewers in the first year of demonstration. According to the results of film distribution in France, this film took sixth place and attracted 3.5 million viewers (analogous to 17.5 million Soviet viewers).

*Fortunat* also appeared on USSR cinema screens relatively quickly – on January 1, 1962.

But the adventure films of André Hunebelle and *The Hunchback* and *The Captain*, to put it mildly, were delayed in their release into Soviet film distribution: the mass Soviet audience was able to see them only twenty years later, in 1979.

Due to the fact that for Soviet censors there was essentially nothing seditious in either *The Hunchback* or *The Captain*, one can only assume that the French copyright holders in 1960 forked out large sums for the sale of these films, and therefore, in order to buy them cheaper, the USSR decided to wait two decades...

However, it is worth noting that even with a twenty-year delay, *The Captain* and *The Hunchback* were in the Soviet film distribution in 1979, as they say, “with a bang”: if in France in 1960 these films were watched from 4.9 million to 5.8 million viewers (analogous to 25 million – 29 million Soviet viewers), then in the USSR in the late 1970s these films were watched by from 30 million to 45 million viewers...

Here is what A.V. Karaganov (1915–2007) (who from 1965 to 1986 was the Secretary of the Board of the USSR Union of Cinematographers) said at a meeting at the Union of Cinematographers on July 8, 1976: “Sometimes we don’t buy films in their “youth” due to the high cost. For example, they wanted to buy *West Side Story*, but they asked for 750 thousand dollars. It turned out that for one film we had to spend as much as we would have to spend on buying 10 films” (Karaganov, 1976).

But it's easy to understand why *Crossing the Rhine* (*Le Passage du Rhin*) and *Dialogue of the Carmelites* (*Le Dialogue des Carmélites*) were not included in Soviet film distribution: the first was unacceptable because of the "pro-Western" interpretation of the Second World War, and the second because of its strong religious themes.

Further, everything is within the limits of the previous censorship and purchasing stereotypes: the film *The Frenchwoman and Love* (*La Française et l'Amour*) was considered too frivolous; in the melodrama *Katia* the Russian emperor was portrayed too positively, and in *Austerlitz* – the French emperor; in the famous *Burning Sun* (*Plein soleil*) by René Clément, the main negative character played by Alain Delon was too charming, etc.

As for the films of the "new wave", in the USSR they initially caused a sharply negative reaction from the film authorities due to their violation of traditional cinematic taboos, so this wave happily "made a noise" past (mass) Soviet screens.

Of the films of the French film distribution that were not included in the top ten, four more films appeared on the screens of the USSR (in 1961-1962): the adventure *Balloon Journey* (*Le voyage en ballon*), the drama *Embankment of the Morning Dawn* (*Quai du Point-du-Jour*), the melodrama *A Bachelor's Life / Careerists* (*Les Arrivistes / Trübe Wasser*) and the documentary *Unusual America* (*L'Amérique insolite*).

So, in different years, 8 films from the repertoire of French films of 1960 were released on the screens of the USSR.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1961 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1961 attracted from 2.8 million to 4.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

During the 1960s, attendance at French films generally continued to remain at fairly high levels. Thus, in 1961, 41 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark (although this was slightly less than in previous years).

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the "golden ten" of 1961 was diverse, although in general costume adventure films predominated.

Despite the fact that even in 1961, films of the "new wave" continued to be shown in French cinemas: *A Woman is a Woman* (*Une femme est une femme*) by Jean-Luc Godard (64th place at the box office: 0.5 million viewers), *Dappers* (*Les Godelureaux*) by Claude Chabrol (86th place at the box office: 0.2 million viewers), etc., French cinemas, as before, were filled with traditional films of entertainment genres, starring the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders of 1961 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Denys de La Patellière, Bernard Borderie, Claude Autant-Lara, André Hunebelle, Jean Delannoy, Pierre Gaspard-Huit, Christian-Jacques, Roger Vadim and other famous French directors.

The 1961 release can be regarded as a triumph for Jean Marais: three costume films with his participation immediately entered the top ten box office leaders.

As in 1960, the top ten at the French box office did not include a single comedy starring Fernandel, who was undoubtedly the highest-grossing French actor of the 1950s...

But for the first time, a comedy with Louis de Funès (*La Belle Américaine*, 4th place and 4.1 million viewers) was in the top ten highest-grossing films at the French box office. The total triumphs of comedies with de Funès in the cinemas of France were still to come, but this success, of course, was not accidental, because by 1961, French audiences had already appreciated the funny manner of acting of this outstanding comedian.

It should be noted that the top ten in 1961 was dominated by colorful costume films: *The Three Musketeers* (*Les trois mousquetaires*) by Bernard Borderie (second place and 4.5 million viewers on average per episode), *The Count of Monte Cristo* (*Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*) by Claude Autant-Lara (3rd place and 4.5 million viewers), *Miracle of the Wolves* (*Le Miracle des loups*) by André Hunebelle (5th place and 3.8 million viewers), *The Princess of Cleves* (*La Princesse de Clèves*) by Jean Delannoy (7th place and 3.4 million viewers), *Le Capitaine Fracasse* by Pierre Gaspard-Huit (8th place and 3.1 million viewers).

The first place in box office receipts in French film distribution in 1961 was taken by the military adventure film *Taxi to Tobruk* (*Un taxi pour Tobrouk*) by Denys de La Patellière (4.9 million viewers), which turned out to be completely unacceptable for Soviet film distribution due to the fact that, in the course of the plot, the action which took place during the Second World War in North Africa, showed how, due to circumstances, a male friendship arose between French soldiers and a Nazi officer who was captured by them...

According to the established stable tradition, films of the “new wave” also found themselves outside of Soviet film distribution.

In 1961, the entire cinematic world was discussing the innovative film by Alain Robbe-Grillet and Alain Resnais *Last Year at Marienbad* (*L'Année dernière à Marienbad*), which received the Lion of St. Mark's Gold at the Venice Film Festival, but the Soviet “purchasing” film censors considered it too elitist and abstruse, so only selected Soviet filmmakers (mostly at so-called “closed” screenings)...

As a result, from the top ten leaders of the French film distribution, three costume adventure films hit the screens of the USSR: *The Three Musketeers* by Bernard Borderie and *Miracle of the Wolves* by André Hunebelle, as well as the comedy *La Belle Américaine* with Louis de Funès in one of the main roles.

But if *The Three Musketeers* and *La Belle Américaine* appeared on the screens of the USSR with a relatively small delay (in 1963 and 1965), then *Miracle of the Wolves* (under the title *Secrets of the Burgundian Court*) – only two decades later: in 1980 year...

At the same time, the 4.5 million viewers collected by *The Three Musketeers* in France corresponded to approximately 22.5 million viewers in the USSR, but in reality in the Soviet film distribution in 1963 there were much more of them – almost 37 million per episode.

But *La Belle Américaine*, apparently, did not make much of an impression on Soviet viewers. With 4.1 million viewers in France, one could expect that this film would attract two tens of millions of viewers at the Soviet box office. But in fact, based on the results of film distribution in the USSR in 1965, *La Belle Américaine* attracted only an audience of ten million.

But even the *Miracle of the Wolves*, which was twenty years late (3.8 million viewers in France: analogous to the Soviet 19 million viewers) in the Soviet film distribution in 1980, attracted 26.5 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

At first glance, it seems strange that in the Soviet film distribution of the 1960s there was not another film adaptation of Dumas's novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* (this time in the director's interpretation by Claude Autant-Lara), which in France, according to the results of attendance, was in third place (4.5 million viewers).

But ironically, it was in 1961 that the previous film adaptation of the same novel with Jean Marais in the title role was released into Soviet film distribution with a great delay, and the purchasing commission considered it unnecessary to show two *The Counts of Monte Cristo* in the USSR in a row...

Of the films released in France in 1961 that did not make it into the top ten, ten films (including films co-produced with Italy, Spain and Germany) of different genres were released on USSR screens (from 1962 to 1969): René Clair's comedy *All the Gold in the World* (*Tout l'or du monde*), drama *Rocco and His Brothers* (*Rocco e i suoi fratelli / Rocco et ses frères*) by Luchino Visconti, *It Was Night in Rome* (*Era notte a Roma / Les Évadés de la nuit*) by Roberto Rossellini, *Who are you, Doctor Sorge?* (*Qui êtes-vous M. Sorge?*) by Yves Ciampi, *Such a Long Absence* (*Une aussi longue absence*) by Henri Colpi, the tragicomedy *Everyone Goes Home* (*Tutti a casa / Grande pagaille*) by Luigi Comencini, the melodrama *Nude Maha* (*La Maja desnuda / La Maja nue*) by Henry Coster, the comedy *Leon Garros is Looking for a Friend* (*Vingt mille lieues sur la terre*) by M. Pagliero and *The Reluctant Agent* (*Es Muß nicht immer kaviar sein & Diesmal muß es Kaviar sein*) / *Top secret – C'est pas toujours du caviar*) by Geza von Radvany, the musical *One, two, three or Black tights* (*1-2-3-4 ou Les collants noirs*) by Terence Young.

One of these films (*Leon Garros is looking for a friend*) was a Franco-Soviet production, in the other (*It Was Night in Rome*) Sergei Bondarchuk played one of the main roles.

In France, the comedy *Leon Garros is looking for a friend* (it was shown there under the title *Twenty Thousand Leagues on Earth*), despite the participation of Tatyana Samoilova, who became popular in France after the triumph of the film *The Cranes Are Flying*, the French watched with moderate interest: 0.6 million viewers (analogous to 3 million Soviet viewers). But in the USSR, real success awaited her: in the same 1961, *Leon Garros...* attracted 20.4 million viewers to cinema halls.

And, on the contrary, Sergei Bondarchuk's participation in the war drama *It Was Night in Rome* apparently had almost no effect on the success of this film in Soviet film distribution. The figure of 3.4 million viewers in France would have been very successful, but for the USSR, whose population in 1963 was 223 million people, it was a failure...

Another film that featured a Soviet theme was the drama *Who are you, Doctor Sorge?*, which was based on the true story of the famous Soviet spy. In France, this picture at the 1961 box office

was the 25th most visited (1.7 million viewers), and in the USSR in 1964 it attracted an audience of forty million people in cinemas, and in 1985 it was even re-released.

The melodrama *Nude Maha* was an even greater success (compared to the attendance in France). In the French film distribution, this film was only 63rd (0.6 million viewers, which was analogous to 3 million viewers in the USSR). But, having appeared on Soviet screens seven years late, this picture in 1968 managed to attract almost 33 million viewers (which was comparable to the success of this film in Italy, of course, taking into account the difference in population).

So, 13 films from the repertoire of French films of 1961 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1961 (among French films)*

Due to the fact that in the 1960s the number of French films with an audience of 1 million viewers and above began to gradually fall, starting in 1961, a noticeable group of film distribution outsiders began to form, that is, films that failed to attract even 200 thousand viewers. In 1961 there were 7 of them.

Among them were often not only films that were professionally weak, but also films of a high artistic level, including experimental ones.

However, low box office figures in France were not always an obstacle to their purchase for Soviet film distribution.

For example, the film about the ballet *One, Two, Three, or Black Tights* attracted only about 60 thousand spectators in France, which did not prevent the Soviet purchasing commission from purchasing it and releasing it on USSR screens five years later. True, the result of the distribution of this film in 1966 in the USSR was also very modest (by the standards of that time): only 2.2 million viewers...

The reason for the prompt release of Roberto Rossellini's war drama *It Was Night in Rome* into Soviet distribution was obvious: Sergei Bondarchuk played one of the roles in this film. Neither in France nor in the USSR did this drama enjoy noticeable success at the box office...

It should be noted here that if in joint productions with other countries the leading roles were not played by French cinema stars, their box office results in France were often modest (which happened, for example, with the film *It Was Night in Rome*)...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1962 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1962 attracted from 2.1 million to 10.0 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1962, 39 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than in the 1950s.

The genre spectrum of the leaders in the "golden ten" box office of 1962 was diverse, although in general adventure films and comedies predominated.

Despite the fact that even in 1962, films of the "new wave" continued to be shown in French cinemas: *Jules and Jim (Jules et Jim)* by François Truffaut (24th place at the box office: 1.6 million viewers), *Cléo from Five to Seven (Cléo de 5 à 7)* by Agnès Varda (61st place at the box office: 0.6 million viewers), Jean-Luc Godard's *Living Your Life (Vivre sa vie)* (69th place at the box office: 0.5 million viewers), Claude Chabrol's *Eye of Evil (L'Œil du malin)* (87 1st place at the box office: 0.1 million viewers), etc. (according to the established stable tradition, films of the "new wave" were again excluded from Soviet film distribution), the cinema halls of France, as before, were filled with traditional films of entertainment genres in which favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders of 1962 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Yves Robert, Jean Dréville, Philippe de Broca, André Hunebelle, Roger Vadim, André Decoin, Henri Verneuil, Jean Renoir, Bernard Borderie and Alex Joffe.

The 1962 release can be regarded as a great success for Jean Marais and Jean-Paul Belmondo: two films with his participation immediately entered the top ten box office leaders.

The top ten also included films with the participation of Jean Gabin, Bourvil and Brigitte Bardot, but comedies with the participation of Fernandel and de Funès were not included in it this time.

It should be noted that among the top ten in 1962, as in 1961, colorful costume films dominated: *La Fayette* (second place and 3.7 million viewers), *Cartouche* (third place and 3.6 million viewers), *Mysteries of Paris (Les Mystères de Paris)* (fourth place and 3.6 million viewers), *The Iron Mask (Le Masque de fer)* (sixth place and 2.4 million viewers) and *Le Chevalier de Pardaillan* (ninth place and 2.1 million viewers).



The first place in box office receipts in the French film distribution in 1962 was taken by Yves Robert's film about the feud between children, *The War of the Buttons* (*La Guerre des boutons*), which was modest in budget and made without top stars, and managed to attract 10 million spectators to cinema halls (which is similar to 50 million spectators in the USSR!).

To some extent, the phenomenal success of this film in France can be attributed to the fact that it was an adaptation of a very popular novel in that country by Prize Goncourt winner Louis Emile Vincent Pergot (1882–1915). In the USSR, the works of this writer were never cult, and the film *War of the Buttons* most likely had no prospects of achieving great box office success on Soviet screens. Plus, in the opinion of Soviet censors, the film could set a bad example for Soviet schoolchildren... So this film did not make it onto Soviet screens...

As for the French costume adventure films of 1962, three of them were released in Soviet cinemas: *Cartouche*, *Mysteries of Paris* and *The Iron Mask*.

Both films with Jean Marais were released in the USSR in 1964, and they were a great success: *Mysteries of Paris* was watched by 37.4 million viewers in the first year of demonstration, and *The Iron Mask* was watched by 30.5 million viewers.

*Cartouche* with Jean-Paul Belmondo was less fortunate: it was released into mass Soviet film distribution only in 1977. However, for all that, 34.9 million viewers watched it (while in France in 1962 there were 3.6 million viewers, which was analogous to 18 million viewers in the USSR).

Of the French films released in 1962 that were not included in the top ten, six more films appeared on USSR screens (from 1962 to 1985): the comedies *How to Succeed in Love* (*Comment réussir en amour*) and *The Gentleman from Epsom* (*Le Gentleman d'Epsom / Il re delle corse*), the dramas *L'Enclos* and *L'Éclipse*, melodrama *Climats* and a film consisting of short stories of different genres: *The Devil and the Ten Commandments* (*Le Diable et les Dix Commandements*).

Julien Duvivier's film *The Devil and the Ten Commandments* brought together a whole bunch of French stars of the first magnitude (Michel Simon, Lino Ventura, Alain Delon, Charles Aznavour, Louis de Funès, Fernandel, Daniel Darrieu, etc.). In France, this picture was the 16th most visited in 1962 (1.8 million viewers). It would seem that this very professionally made movie should have enjoyed increased success among the Soviet audience, unspoiled by Western products. But this did not happen: in the USSR, this picture by Duvivier (from which, however, the most frivolous short story was cut out) was watched by 12.4 million viewers in the first year of demonstration, which (taking into account the then difference in the population of France and the USSR) can be considered a quite comparable result with French.

But the much lower-quality comedy by Michel Boisrond *How to Succeed in Love* (about two million viewers watched it in France in 1962), released in the USSR ten years late, managed to attract 17.8 million viewers.

It is interesting to note that Michelangelo Antonioni's masterpiece *L'Éclipse*, where Alain Delon played in a duet with Monica Vitti, attracted half a million viewers to cinemas in France in 1962 (analogous to 2.5 million Soviet viewers), but in the Soviet film distribution in 1966 this psychological drama was watched 6.6 million viewers. In my opinion, this happened to some extent due to the fact that in the USSR in the 1960s there was a significant segment of the intelligent audience, which was attracted by films of outstanding screen masters that were complex in content and form.

So, 9 films from the repertoire of French films of 1962 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1962 (among French films)*

In 1962, 9 films were included in the list of outsiders of the French film distribution, which attracted less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The outsiders included films of different artistic levels, including such extraordinary films as *The Eye of Evil* by Claude Chabrol and *L'Enclos*, awarded at the Moscow Film Festival, by Armand Gatti.

Of these outsider films, only the anti-Nazi *L'Enclos* was allowed into Soviet film distribution, and with amazing efficiency: mass screenings in the USSR began already in November 1962...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1963 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1963 attracted from 2.0 million to 6.4 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1963, 36 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than in the 1950s.

The genre spectrum of the leaders in the “golden ten” box office of 1963 was diverse, although in general comedies predominated.

In 1963, films from the now slowly fading “new wave” continued to be shown in French film distribution (according to the established stable tradition, films of the “new wave” were outside the Soviet film distribution), but the cinema halls of France, as before, were filled with traditional films of entertainment genres in which favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders of 1963 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Gilles Grangier (two films at once), Henri Verneuil, Georges Lautner, Yves Robert, André Hunebelle, Jean Giraud and other famous French directors.

Unlike 1961-1962, there were no films with Jean Marais and Brigitte Bardot in the top ten, but comedies with Fernandel and Louis de Funès returned to the top.

The 1963 release can be regarded as a great success for Jean Gabin and Bourvil: two films with their participation immediately entered the top ten box office leaders.

The top ten also included films featuring Alain Delon and Lino Ventura.

As we remember, in 1961-1962, the leaders of the French film distribution were many color costume films. But in 1963, costume melodramas and “cloak and sword” films were no longer among the top ten audience success favorites.

The first place in box office receipts in French film distribution in 1963 was taken by Gilles Grangier's comedy *Cooking with Butter* (*La Cuisine au beurre*) with the duet of Fernandel and Bourvil (6.4 million viewers).

In second place was the crime drama *Melody from the Cellar* (*Mélodie en sous-sol*) by Henri Verneuil (3.5 million viewers), where the main roles were played by Jean Gabin and Alain Delon.

The bronze medalist at the French box office in 1963 was Georges Lautner's crime comedy *Uncle Gangsters* (*Les Tontons flingueurs*) (3.3 million viewers) with Lino Ventura and Bernard Blier.

The only film from the first French top ten that ended up in the Soviet box office was the low-budget, devoid of A-list stars, the comedy *Bébert the Traveler* (*Bébert et l'omnibus*) by Yves Robert, which managed to attract three million French people to cinemas (the equivalent of 15 million Soviet viewers).

However, in USSR cinemas, *Bébert the Traveler* attracted only 4.1 million viewers (analogous to 0.8 million viewers in France). Apparently, Soviet viewers still expected a bright spectacle from French cinema, and not modest comedic twists and turns with the participation of actors practically unknown in the USSR...

The reasons for the non-release of most of the French films leading the box office in 1963 in Soviet cinemas are quite transparent: in *Melody from the Cellar* and in *Uncle Gangsters* the criminals were shown to be too charming; film *Where Are You From, Johnny?* (*D'où viens-tu, Johnny?*) promoted the cheeky music of Johnny Hallyday, alien to the Soviet people; and *OSS 117 went on a rampage!* (*OSS 117 se déchaîne!*) by André Hunebelle was too reminiscent of stories about the equally alien agent 007 James Bond...

Of the French films (including co-productions with Italy and other countries) that did not make it into the top ten distribution leaders, 11 films were released on Soviet screens (in 1963–1974): Christian-Jacques' detective story *Strong Evidence* (*Les Bonnes causes*), a film adaptation of Emile Zola's novel *Germinal* by Yves Allégret, dramas *The Day and the Hour* (*Le Jour et l'heure*) by René Clément, *The Recluses of Altona* (*I Sequestrati di Altona / Les Séquestrés d'Altona*) by Vittorio De Sica, *Gang of Scoundrels* (*Un branco di vigliacchi / Bande de lâches*) by Fabrizio Taglioni, *Hands over the City* (*Le Mani sulla città / Main basse sur la ville*) by Francesco Rosi, *Codine* by Henri Colpi and *Almost to the End of the World* (*Jusqu'au bout du monde*) by François Villiers, tragicomedy *The March on Rome* (*La Marcia su Roma / La Marche sur Rome*) by Dino Risi, comedy *In the Company of Max Linder* (*En compagnie de Max Linder*).

As a rule, all these films were more successful at the box office in the USSR than in France. For example, in France *Gang of Scoundrels* was watched by only about two hundred thousand viewers, and in the USSR – 15.2 million viewers in the first year of demonstration...

The collection of silent comedies *In the Company of Max Linder* attracted about one hundred thousand spectators in France, and 19.4 million in the USSR in 1965.

And although the western film *Treasure of the Silver Lake* (*Winnetou: Der Schatz im Silbersee / Le trésor du lac d'argent*), shot jointly with Germany, was released in Soviet cinemas

ten years late, it still managed to attract almost forty million viewers to cinemas in the first year of its demonstration, while in France in 1963 it was watched by only 1.7 million viewers...

But the theatrical distribution of Federico Fellini's famous film *8 ½* (*Otto e mezzo / Huit et demi*) (an Italian-French co-production) was quite paradoxical.

During the 1963 Moscow International Film Festival, the Soviet authorities tried to put pressure on the jury so that the run-of-the-mill production drama *Meet Baluev!* received the main prize. But the chairman of the jury, Grigory Chukhrai, risking a lot, opposed this, and the winner of the festival was ultimately Fellini's masterpiece *8 ½*, which, alas, was never released in the Soviet Union in the 1960s (as well as in the 1970s)...

Since then, Grigory Chukhrai has never been invited to head the jury of the Moscow International Film Festival (he was replaced in this post for many years by the much more flexible Stanislav Rostotsky), and instead of one main prize at the Moscow International Film Festival, they began to award three at once (so that one of the three awards was consistently "reserved" "behind the Soviet movie)...

As a result, *8 ½* was released in Soviet film distribution only during the "perestroika" era – in 1988...

So, 13 films from the repertoire of French films of 1963 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1963 (among French films)*

In 1963, 14 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls: the aesthetic mystical parable of Alain Robbe-Grillet *Immortal (L'Immortelle)*, several films of the "new wave" (*Les Carabiniers* by Jean-Luc Godard, *Ophélia* by Claude Chabrol, *Beautiful May (Le Joli Mai)* by Chris Marker and Pierre Lhomme), etc.

French viewers reacted very reservedly to the Italian-French film *The March on Rome (La Marcia su Roma / La Marche sur Rome)* by Dino Risi: while in Italy it attracted 4.1 million viewers to cinemas, in France only about one hundred thousand people watched it.

By the way, this picture became one of three films from the list of outsiders that was released in Soviet film distribution (in 1964).

The second film from this group was a montage version of the silent comedies *In the Company of Max Linder*, which attracted about one hundred thousand spectators in Paris (and a little more throughout France), while in the USSR film distribution in 1965 this picture was watched by almost two tens of millions of viewers ...

The third is Henri Colpi's drama *Codin*, filmed jointly with Romania...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1964 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1964 attracted from 2.9 million to 7.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1964, 43 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than in the 1950s.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the "golden ten" of the 1964 box office was diverse, although in general adventure films and comedies predominated.

In 1964, the last films of the outgoing "new wave" continued to be shown in French cinemas: *Tender Skin (La Peau douce)* by François Truffaut (0.6 million viewers), *A Married Woman (Une femme mariée)* (0.4 million viewers) and *Separate from the Gang (Bande à part)* (0.1 million viewers) by Jean-Luc Godard (according to the established stable tradition, films of the "new wave" were excluded from Soviet film distribution).

However, the cinema halls of France, as before, were filled with traditional films of entertainment genres, in which the favorites of the French public starred.

The top ten box office leaders of 1964 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Jean Giraud, Philippe de Broca, André Hunebelle, Henri Verneuil, Christian-Jacques, Bernard Borderie and Gilles Grangier.

Thanks to the start of two commercially successful franchises – about the gendarme from St. Tropez and Fantômas – the leadership among comedy films was captured (and, as it turned out later, for a long time) by Louis de Funès.

Another box office triumph in 1964 was Jean-Paul Belmondo: three films with his participation (*The Man from Rio / L'Homme de Rio*, *Seven Thousand Dollars in the Sun / Cent*

*mille dollars au soleil* and *Weekend on the South Bank / Week-end à Zuydcoote*) were among the top ten favorites of the French public.

The top ten also included films starring Jean Marais, Jean Gabin, Alain Delon, Bourvil, Fernandel, Lino Ventura, Robert Hossein, Mylène Demongeau and Michel Mercier.

But Brigitte Bardot fell out of this top ten this time...

The first place in box office receipts in French film distribution in 1964 was taken by Jean Giraud's comedy *The Gendarme of Saint-Tropez (Le Gendarme de Saint-Tropez)* (7.8 million viewers) with Louis de Funès in the title role. This movie began the triumphal march across French screens of more and more new adventures of this character. Unlike other films in this franchise, this picture was not released in the Soviet Union due to its inadmissible frivolity.

But five other films from the “golden ten” of the French film distribution of 1964 in the USSR were much more fortunate: sooner or later they came out on Soviet screens.

The latest (only in 1989) to be released in the USSR was the adventure film *The Man from Rio (L'Homme de Rio)* with Belmondo.

Relatively soon – from 1967 to 1970 – the parody *Fantômas*, the war drama *The Train*, the costume entertainment films *Black Tulip (La Tulipe noire)* and *Angélique, marquise des anges*.

The distribution success of *The Train* in the USSR was modest by Soviet standards at the turn of the 1970s: having gathered 3.5 million viewers in France (analogous to the Soviet 17.5 million), in real Soviet film distribution in 1970 it attracted only 10.8 million of spectators.

*Fantômas*, *Black Tulip* and *Angelique – Marquise of Angels* attracted an audience of three to four and a half million viewers in France (which was approximately equal to 15–22 million viewers in the USSR), but in real Soviet film distribution these films were awaited triumph: between 44 million and 48 million viewers watched them in cinemas. And this despite the fact that many sources indicate that the official data on the attendance of these films in the USSR was underestimated, since “on the ground” part of the audience collected by these French films was “unfastened” in the reporting in favor of the “necessary” Soviet films.

Of the films that were not included in the top ten film distribution leaders in France in 1964, ten films (many of them were Italian-French productions): the comedy *Forward, France! (Allez France!)*, *Seduced and Abandoned (Sedotta e abbandonata / Séduite et abandonnée)*, the melodramatic comedies *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow (Ieri, oggi, domani / Hier, aujourd'hui et demain)* and *Marriage Italian Style (Matrimonio all'italiano / Mariage à l'italienne)*, the melodrama *Married Life (La Vie conjugale)*, the musical *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (Les Parapluies de Cherbourg)*, dramas *Feast of Predators (Le Repas des fauves)*, *Bube's Bride (La Ragazza di Bube / La Ragazza)*, *A Wonderful Life (La Belle vie)*, *Red Desert (Il Deserto rosso / Le Désert rouge)*.

Almost all of these films (with the exception of the complex psychological drama *Red Desert*) enjoyed greater success in Soviet film distribution than in French.

Particular success in the USSR awaited Italian-French films directed by Vittorio De Sica, Pietro Germi and Luigi Comencini.

And here it is important to note that Italian-French films, where only Italian stars played the main roles, enjoyed moderate success in France, while in Italy they tended to break box office records.

Thus, Vittorio De Sica's film *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* with Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni was watched by 1.2 million viewers in France (the equivalent of 6 million Soviet viewers), and in Italy – 9.3 million viewers (the equivalent of 45 million Soviet spectators). In Soviet film distribution, this picture was watched by much more viewers than in France – 15.3 million viewers, but taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and Italy, this attendance figure was lower than the Italian one...

The situation with the distribution of another film by Vittorio De Sica with the participation of the same duet Loren and Mastroianni – *Marriage Italian Style* – was similar in France: 1.2 million viewers, while in Italy this picture was watched by 10.2 million viewers. And although in the Soviet film distribution of 1965/1966 *Marriage Italian Style* was watched by 41.4 million viewers, taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and Italy, this attendance figure was still lower than the Italian one...

But Pietro Germi's comedy *Seduced and Abandoned*, taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and Italy, was seen at the box office by approximately the same audience...

So, 16 films from the repertoire of French films of 1964 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

*Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1964 (among French films)*

In 1964, 14 films were included in the list of outsiders of the French film distribution, which attracted less than 200 thousand spectators in cinemas.

The fact that the film by the famous director of the “new wave”: Jean-Luc Godard *Apart from the Gang* became an outsider can be explained by its experimentalism.

But it is much more difficult to explain why an entertaining collection of short stories under the clickbait title *The Most Beautiful Frauds in the World (Les plus belles escroqueries du monde)* managed to attract only about one hundred thousand viewers...

Not a single outsider from the French film distribution of 1964 made it onto Soviet screens...

*Top box office leaders in France in 1965 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1965 attracted from 2.3 million to 11.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1965, 34 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than in the 1950s.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1965 was diverse, although in general comedies and adventure films predominated.

The film distribution of 1965 again proved that the “new wave”, about which the press sometimes wrote so enthusiastically, was a great success at film festivals and among a relatively small circle of intellectuals, and the income of French cinemas continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

In the mid-1960s, Claude Chabrol finally said goodbye to the “new wave”. After the resounding failure of his *Ophelia*, producers literally forced him to make commercial films. Thus, two Chabrol parodies of spy films were released: *The Tiger is choked with dynamite (Le Tigre se parfume à la dynamite)* and *Marie-Chantal against Dr. Kha (Marie-Chantal contre le docteur Kha)*, which managed to attract from 1 million to 1.2 million viewers to the screens, which was a very good indicator that returned Chabrol trusts the producers...

By the way, due to the ebb of the “new wave”, there was a fashion for black and white cinema, which French (and not only) directors were fond of after the bright outbreak of Jean-Luc Godard’s film *Breathless* at the box office in 1960. There were more and more color films, and literally within two years color began to completely dominate: both in French and in European cinema in general (although in the USSR the mass release of black and white films was delayed until the 1970s)...

The top ten box office leaders of 1965 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Gerard Oury, Jean Giraud, André Hunebelle (two of his films were included in the “golden ten” hits), Denys de La Patellière, Robert Enrico, Philippe de Broca, Bernard Borderie and Claude Autant-Lara.

This company was unexpectedly joined by the recent “new waver” Louis Malle, who directed the bright entertaining film *Viva Maria!* (6th place at the French box office in 1965 and 3.4 million viewers) with the sparkling duet of Brigitte Bardot and Jeanne Moreau.

And again, thanks to the successful continuation of the franchises about the gendarme from St. Tropez and Fantômas, as well as the phenomenal success of Gerard Oury’s comedy *Le Corniaud* (first place at the box office and 11.8 million viewers!) the most commercially successful actor turned out to be Louis de Funès (three films with his participation took the first three places in the box office charts).

The top ten included two films with the participation of Bourvil, two films each with the participation of Mylène Demongeau and Michel Mercier, as well as films starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jean Marais, Jean Gabin, Lino Ventura, Brigitte Bardot, Jeanne Moreau and Marie-Josée Nat.

The first place in box office receipts at the French film box office in 1965 was taken by Gérard Oury’s comedy *Le Corniaud* with the inimitable duet of Louis de Funès and Bourvil. Three years later, it was also released in Soviet cinemas, where it attracted nearly 31 million viewers. A simple calculation shows that the French liked *Le Corniaud* more: its 11.8 million viewers in France corresponded to approximately 60 million viewers in the USSR.

The comedy *The Gendarme in New York (Le Gendarme à New York)* was also received with less enthusiasm in the USSR: in France its audience was 5.5 million viewers (analogous to

27.5 million viewers in the USSR), but in fact this film was watched at the Soviet box office in 1972 – 17.3 million viewers.

But the undisputed favorite of the Soviet public was the film *Fantômas Raged* (*Fantômas se déchaine*): in France it was watched by 4.2 million viewers (analogous to 21 million viewers in the USSR), but in reality in the Soviet box office in 1968 this film was watched by (at least) 44.7 million spectators.

Yes, and *Charming Angelique* (*Merveilleuse Angélique*), which attracted 2.4 million viewers in France (analogous to 12 million viewers in the USSR), although it appeared on Soviet screens very late (in 1985 under the title *Angelique in Anger*), still managed to attract almost 23 million viewers to the screens.

But the melodrama *Heavenly Thunder* (*Le Tonnerre de Dieu*) appeared on the screens of the USSR already in December 1966 and – in terms of the difference in the population of France and the USSR – attracted approximately the same audience: 4.1 million viewers in France and 22.9 million viewers in the USSR.

Thus, out of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1965, five films were released on USSR screens (from 1966 to 1985), which, taking into account Soviet ideological requirements, was a very high indicator of the work of the purchasing commission...

Of the films released in France in 1965, which were not included in the “golden” commercial top ten, 9 films were released on Soviet screens in different years, mostly joint productions with Germany and Italy.

Three westerns (*La révolte des indiens apaches / Winnetou I / Old Shatterhand; Last of the Renegades / Winnetou – 2. Teil / Le Trésor des montagnes bleues* and *Frontier Hellcat / Unter Geiern / Là dove scende il sole*) were watched in France by between six hundred thousand and a million viewers, which was several times less than the audience that these same films had in Germany (from 5.7 million to 10.5 million viewers). The attendance figures for these westerns in the USSR cinemas (from 27.6 million to 55.7 million viewers) were much higher than the French ones, and much closer (taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and Germany) to the attendance figures in West Germany...

The films *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (*Onkel Toms Hütte / La Capanna dello zio Tom / La Case de l'oncle Tom*), *The Sky Above* (*Le Ciel sur la tête / Il Cielo sulla testa*), *Feasts of Love* (*Les Fêtes galantes*), *The Unworthy Old Lady* (*La Vieille Dame indigne*) and *They Followed the Soldiers* (*Le soldatesse / Des filles pour l'armée*) were much more successful than in France.

As for the melodrama *The Third Youth* (*La Nuit des adieux*) (USSR-France), its box office success in the USSR was, of course, not comparable to the triumph of *Fantômas* and *Angelique*, but 17.2 million viewers in the first year of demonstration allowed it to enter the one thousand highest-grossing Soviet films...

Thus, in general, it can be noted that the work of the Soviet procurement commission in the mid-1960s was quite liberal, which (especially after the start of the “Prague Spring” of 1968) could not escape the conservative wing of the “ideological front.”

Thus, in June 1968, the magazine *Ogonyok* published an article by N. Tolchenova under the eloquent title “Keyhole Films and Film Criticism” (Tolchenova, 1968: 22-24), which stated that “in recent times very often on the Soviet screen there are films that are very far from the spiritual, moral, moral interests of our society. Pictures about robbers, rapists, prostitutes. Pictures that are devoid of a social basis or are covered with the appearance of sociality, which is what bourgeois, bourgeois cinema generally knows how to do and loves to do” (Tolchenova, 1968: 22).

Next, N. Tolchenova moved on to a negative assessment of the musical *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* by Jacques Demy, reproaching him for the fact that the main character “is not a working person, but a little bourgeoisie, a petty bourgeois... The question is, what’s in this banal, far-fetched, extremely sweetened history could attract the sympathy of our film critics? However, the militantly bourgeois, petty-bourgeois... essence of *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* was completely left aside when the critic N. Zorkaya analyzed this film, whose article was published in the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal.

Then N. Tolchenova spoke no less harshly not only about the films about *Fantômas* and *Angelique*, but also about the magazine *Soviet Screen*, which “advertised them on its pages”: “films like *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, *Fantômas*, *Angelique*, and most importantly, with such irresponsible praise, such support from film criticism, it was possible to... convince viewers of the

legitimacy of the appearance on the screen of sentimental, far-fetched, “heartbreaking” “dramas” (Tolchenova, 1968).

But, according to N. Tolchenova, “while looking for progressive creative foundations in a work of art, the critic is obliged to support in it everything that contributes to a healthy viewer’s perception of life, affirms true humanity and humanity, high morality” (Tolchenova, 1968).

Based on the above-mentioned criteria, in N. Tolchenova’s article both films with the participation of Sophia Loren and the tragicomedy with the participation of Stefania Sandrelli – *I Knew Her Well (Io la conoscevo bene / Ich habe sie gut gekannt / Je la connaissais bien...)*, also “due to an oversight” of the purchasing commission that ended up in Soviet film distribution... (Tolchenova: 22-24).

Since 1968, there have been more and more similar articles directed against the appearance of Western entertainment films in Soviet film distribution. And behind them, of course, there were the corresponding resolutions and memos of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, therefore – especially after August 1968 – the situation with the purchase of “bourgeois film products” began to change sharply towards its minimization and more careful ideological selection...

So, 14 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1965 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1965 (among French films)*

In 1965, 10 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

And the most famous outsider of 1965 was the film *Paris Through the Eyes of... (Paris vu par)*, consisting of short stories, directed by Claude Chabrol, Jean-Luc Godard, Eric Rohmer, Jean Rouch and other talented masters. This picture managed to attract only about thirty thousand spectators to cinema screens in France...

From the list of outsiders of the French film distribution in 1965, not a single film made it to the screens of the USSR this time.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1966 (among French films)*

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences of the 1966 film distribution attracted from 1.9 million to 17.3 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1966, 24 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1966 was diverse.

The 1966 box office season again showed that films by the older generation of French directors (whose films were popular in the 1940s and 1950s) were increasingly becoming top ten box office hits.

For example, third place in the French box office unexpectedly went to the melodrama of recent debutant Claude Lelouch *A Man and a Woman (Un homme et une femme)*. (4.3 million viewers).

And in first place with a stunning figure for France – 17.3 million viewers was the comedy by Gerard Oury *The Big Walk (La Grande Vadrouille)*, whose first directorial work was released at the turn of the 1960s... And this happened the next year after the box office triumph of the previous one Comedy by Gerard Oury – *Le Corniaud* (first place at the box office in 1965 and 11.8 million viewers). The rental record for *The Great Walk* managed to hold out not only until the end of the 20th century, but also until 2008. And even now *The Great Walk* is in honorable third place among French films in the entire history of cinema.

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

The top ten box office leaders of 1966 included films by prominent representatives of genre cinema: Gerard Oury, Jean Giraud, Rene Clément, Roger Vadim, Bernard Borderie, Denys de La Patellière, Jean-Pierre Melville and other famous directors.

And again, thanks to the phenomenal success of Gerard Oury's comedy *The Big Walk* and Jean Giraud's comedy *The Grand Restaurant* (fourth place at the box office and 3.9 million viewers), the most commercially successful actor was Louis de Funès.

So, the first place in box office receipts at the French film box office in 1966 was again taken by Gerard Oury’s comedy with the inimitable duet of Louis de Funès and Bourvil: *The Great Walk*.

In 1971, it was also released in Soviet cinemas, where it attracted almost 38 million viewers. A simple calculation shows that the French liked *The Great Walk* more: its 17.3 million viewers in France corresponded to approximately 86 million viewers in the USSR.

The comedy *The Grand Restaurant* was received with great enthusiasm in the USSR: in France its audience was 3.9 million viewers (analogous to 19.5 million viewers in the USSR), but in fact this film was released in the Soviet Union in 1974 (under the title *Restaurant of Mr. Septim*) was watched by 26.3 million viewers.

A similar result was shown by the distribution of Claude Lelouch's melodrama *A Man and a Woman* (it appeared on USSR screens in January 1968): 4.3 million viewers in France (analogous to 21.5 million viewers in the USSR) and 27.9 million of real Soviet spectators.

But the undisputed favorite of the Soviet public was the film *Angelique and the King* (*Angélique et le Roy*): in France it was watched by 2.2 million viewers (analogous to 11 million viewers in the USSR), but in reality this film was watched at the Soviet box office in 1968 by (at least) 44.7 million viewers.

Thus, out of the top ten leaders in French film distribution, four films were released on USSR screens, which, taking into account Soviet ideological requirements, was a high indicator of the work of the purchasing commission...

As we noted earlier, some foreign films did not make it to Soviet screens not for ideological, but for financial reasons. Perhaps it is because of this that René Clément's famous film *Is Paris Burning?* (*Paris brûle-t-il?*) (second place in the French film box office in 1966 and 4.9 million viewers), in which many French stars of the first magnitude played, was shown in the USSR only at a few special screenings in Moscow, but never made it into mass distribution.

Among the films that were not included in the top ten of the French film box office in 1966, seven more films were released on USSR screens (in 1967–1977) (three of which were Italian-French productions).

All of them had greater success in the USSR than in France. This was especially true for the films *Ladies and Gentlemen* (*Signore e signori / Ces messieurs dames*) by Pietro Germi, *A Question of Honor* (*Question d'honneur / Una Questione d'onore*) by Luigi Zampa and *I Knew Her Well* (*Io la conosco bene / Ich habe sie gut gekannt / Je la connaissais bien...*) by Antonio Pietrangeli. In France, these Italian-French films were watched by ten to two hundred thousand spectators, and in the USSR – from ten to fifteen million spectators (which, by the way, taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and Italy, was quite close to the Italian attendance figures for these films).

As for Christian-Jacques' crime drama *The Second Truth* (*La Seconde Vérité*), Denys de La Patellière's drama *Father's Voyage* (*Le Voyage du père*), Jean Giraud's comedy *Adventures in a Country House* (*Monsieur le président-directeur général*) and Serge Korber's melodrama *17th Heaven* (*Un garçon, une fille. Le Dix-septième ciel*), their audience in France did not exceed 1.2 million viewers, while in the USSR film distribution the attendance of these films ranged from 8.7 million to 27.4 million viewers...

So, 11 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1966 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1966 (among French films)*

In 1966, 15 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

From these outsiders, Serge Korber's melodrama *17th Heaven* and two Italian-French productions (Antonio Pietrangeli's masterpiece *I Knew Her Well* and Luigi Zampa's tragicomedy *A Question of Honor*) appeared on USSR screens.

It should be noted that Italian-French films were the only outsiders in the French box office. In Italy, the film *I Knew Her Well* was watched by 2.2 million viewers, and *A Question of Honor* by 3.9 million viewers.

As for *17th Heaven*, this melodrama was also watched by many more viewers in the USSR than in France. If in French film distribution Korber's film was able to gather only about one hundred thousand viewers (analogous to 0.5 million viewers in the USSR), but in real Soviet film distribution in 1970, *17th Heaven* attracted 8.7 million viewers to cinema screens...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1967 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1967 attracted from 2.4 million to 7.0 million viewers to cinemas in France.



In 1967, 21 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” box office of 1967 was diverse.

The top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1967 included not only films by directors of the older generation (André Cayatte, André Hunebelle, etc.), but films by relatively young directors (aged 30 to 36 years): Claude Lelouch, Robert Enrico, Claude Berri and Jean-Gabriel Albicocco.

At the same time, films by recent leaders of the “new wave”: Jean-Luc Godard and Claude Chabrol were in the attendance range from 0.2 million to 0.4 million viewers. Films by Robert Bresson, Alain Robbe-Grillet and Eric Rohmer had approximately the same results at the French box office in 1967.

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres starring the favorites of the French public.

In the first three places in the French film box office in 1967 were three films with the participation of Louis de Funès (Great Holiday / *Les Grandes Vacances*; Oscar and *Fantômas against Scotland Yard / Fantômas contre Scotland Yard*). Thus, once again, for the fourth year in a row, the most commercially successful actor in France was Louis de Funès.

So, the first place in box office receipts in French film distribution in 1967 was again taken by the comedy with Louis de Funès: *Great Holiday* was watched by 7 million viewers. For some reason it was not included in Soviet film distribution.

But almost the same as in France, another comedy with Louis de Funès, *Oscar*, was accepted in the USSR: in France its audience was 6.1 million viewers (analogous to 30.5 million viewers in the USSR), but actually in the Soviet box office in 1968, this movie was watched by 27.2 million viewers.

And *Fantômas against Scotland Yard* was loved more in the USSR: at the 1968 box office this film was watched by 34.3 million viewers (analogous to 6.8 million spectators in France), while at the French box office this picture was watched by 3.6 million spectators.

Soviet viewers also liked Robert Enrico's film *The Adventurers (Les Aventuriers)* more than the French: in France this picture was watched by 3.1 million spectators (analogous to 15.5 million spectators in the USSR), but in the real Soviet film distribution of 1968 they came to cinema halls 22.7 million viewers.

In the autumn of the same 1968, Claude Lelouch's film *Live to Live (Vivre pour vivre)* was also supposed to be released (6th place in the French box office in 1967 and 2.9 million viewers, which was analogous to 14.5 million viewers in the USSR). However, the leading male actor, Yves Montand, spoke out against the entry of Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia in August 1968, and the already purchased Lelouch film was sent to “the shelf”, where it lay until the fall of 1975, when it was finally released, collecting 12.7 million viewers...

Another French film – André Cayatte's drama *Professional Risks (Les Risques du métier)* (fourth place in the French box office and 3.5 million viewers – analogous to 17.5 million viewers in the USSR) was released on Soviet screens five years late and attracted an audience of 12.7 million spectators.

We also note that the next series about the adventures of the beautiful Angelica (*Indomptable Angélique*) in France in 1967 failed to get into the top ten box office leaders: 15th place and 1.9 million viewers (analogous to 9.5 million viewers in the USSR). However, when in 1985 in the USSR the films *Indomptable Angélique* and *Angélique et le Sultan* were released in a partially shortened version and combined into two episodes under the general title *The Indomitable Marquise*, this picture attracted 17.7 million viewers.

Thus, out of the top ten leaders in the French film distribution of 1967, six films were released on USSR screens, which took into account Soviet ideological requirements (for example, because of the religious theme, the drama *Suzanne Simonin, the nun of Denis Diderot (Suzanne Simonin, la Religieuse de Denis Diderot)*).

As has often happened with Italian-French films without the participation of French stars, Dino Risi's comedy *Operation Saint Januarius (Operazione San Gennaro)* was not very lucky in the French box office. There was no decoy in the form of a French star of the first magnitude in this witty film, and it managed to attract only about 200 thousand spectators in cinemas in France, while in Italy it was watched by 5.9 million spectators (analogous to 26 million spectators in the USSR). In fact, in Soviet film distribution in 1968, this comedy attracted 32.1 million viewers.

A small sensation of the Soviet film distribution was the screening (in 1973 under the title *You didn't say everything, Ferrand*) of Jean Delannoy's crime drama *The Sun of Bandits (Le Soleil des voyous)* (13th place in the French film box office in 1967 and 2.1 million viewers) starring Jean Gabin. Almost for the first time, Soviet censorship allowed a non-comedy Western film into mass release, where the main characters were robbers, shown with a fair amount of sympathy. At the Soviet box office, this film was a success, in per capita terms approximately twice the attendance figures in France.

True, other films about gangsters, bandits, robbers and spies (and there were many of them, especially all sorts of "coplans", "agents", "viscounts", etc. parasitic on the "Bondian" film), which were shown in France in 1967, traditionally passed the Soviet film distribution...

Due to the pronounced erotic theme, Luis Buñuel's famous *Beauty of the Day (Belle de jour)* (which took 11th place in the French box office) was not included in the mass Soviet film distribution of the 1960s and 1970s. However, then, with a great delay, in the last year of the existence of the USSR, this picture was finally released on Soviet screens: in 1991, censorship requirements were already much softer than before...

In total, in addition to the six films from the top ten of the French box office of 1967, nine more films were released on USSR screens in different years (including co-produced films).

Of the films that were not mentioned above, these were the musical comedy by Jacques Demy *The Girls of Rochefort (Les Demoiselles de Rochefort)*, the comedy by Jacques Tati *Playtime*, the drama by Costa-Gavras *One Extra Man (Un homme de trop)*, the drama by Luciano Salce *El Greco* and the peplum of Sergiu Nicolaescu *Dacii / Les Guerriers*.

All of them (except for the comedy by Jacques Tati) were more successful with audiences in the USSR than in France.

This was especially true for the Romanian-French peplum *Les Guerriers*. In the first year of demonstration in the USSR alone, this costume film was watched by 23.5 million viewers. This was, of course (taking into account the difference in population), less than in Romania (where, with 20 million inhabitants at the time, 13.1 viewers watched this picture), but still quite a lot...

So, 14 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1967 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1967 (among French films)*

In 1967, 10 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

This time, not a single film from the list of outsiders made it to the screens of the USSR. Some films were too elitist, while others had too much frivolity or violence.

Theoretically, Henri Colpi's film *Mona, the Nameless Star (Mona, l'étoile sans nom)* with Marina Vladi in the leading female role could have been released in Soviet film distribution. But for unknown reasons (the film was a complete fiasco at the French box office, so its purchase price could not be high) did not happen either...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1968 (among French films)*

In general, French films from the top ten audience preferences for film distribution in 1968 attracted from 2.1 million to 6.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1968, only 27 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

Comedies dominated the genre spectrum of the leaders in the "golden ten" box office of 1968.

The top ten leaders in the French film box office of 1968 were mainly comedies directed by Jean Giraud, Robert Déry, Denys de La Patellière, Alex Joffe, Michel Deville, John Berry, Yves Robert and Jean-Pierre Mocky. Plus the melodrama *Mayerling* with Catherine Deneuve and Omar Sharif and the action movie *Farewell, Friend (Adieu l'ami)* with Alain Delon and Charles Bronson.

At the same time, films by recent leaders of the "new wave" Claude Chabrol and Francois Truffaut found themselves in the attendance range from 0.6 million to 1.3 million viewers.

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Bourvil, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jean Marais, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Michel Mercier, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve, Mireille Darc and other famous actors.

In the first three places in the French film box office in 1968 were three films with the participation of Louis de Funès (*The Gendarme Gets Married / Le Gendarme se marie, Little*

*Bather / Le Petit Baigneur* and *The Tattooed / Le Tatoué*). Thus, once again (for the fifth year in a row) Louis de Funès became the most commercially successful actor in France.

So, the first place in box office receipts in French film distribution in 1968 was taken by the comedy *The Gendarme Gets Married* with Louis de Funès; it was watched by 6.8 million viewers (analogous to 34 million viewers in the USSR). This comedy was released in Soviet film distribution only ten years later, but still managed to attract 41.8 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

Another comedy starring Louis de Funès, *Little Bather*, was well received in the USSR: in France it became second at the box office with an audience of 5.5 million viewers. At the Soviet box office in 1971, this film was watched by 21.7 million viewers.

The third comedy with Louis de Funès, where he played together with Jean Gabin – *Tattooed* – did not make it to the screens of the USSR, although it attracted 3.2 million viewers in France.

Of the dozen leaders in French film distribution, two more films were shown in cinemas in the Soviet Union: the costume melodrama *Mayerling* with Catherine Deneuve and the comedy *The Big Laundry / La Grande lessive!* with Bourvil.

In France, *Mayerling* was watched by 2.5 million viewers (analogous to approximately 12 million viewers in the USSR), and in actual Soviet film distribution in 1971 – 20.6 million viewers.

But *The Big Laundry* in France was released at the box office in approximately the same way as in the USSR: the results of the French film distribution were 2.1 million viewers (analogous to 10 million Soviet viewers). In real Soviet box office in 1971, this comedy was watched by 9.3 million viewers.

Thus, out of the top ten leaders in the French film distribution of 1968, four films were released on USSR screens, which, taking into account Soviet ideological requirements (for example, because of the erotic theme, Michel Deville's exquisite film *Benjamin, or Memoirs of a Virgin (Benjamin ou les mémoires d'un puceau)*, which took the top spot in the French film distribution, was rejected 1968 6th place) was a high indicator of the work of the procurement commission...

Having parted with the comedy-parody *Fantômas*, which attracted from 3.6 million to 4.5 million viewers in France, André Hunebelle returned to his favorite adventures in the film *Under the Sign of Monte Cristo (Sous le signe de Monte-Cristo)*, but this time with a very average by the standards of the 1960s, the result was 0.6 million viewers and 41st place in the French box office in 1968...

We also note that the final episode about the adventures of the beautiful Angelica (*Angelique and the Sultan*) in France in 1968 failed to get into the top ten box office leaders: 15th place and 1.8 million viewers (analogous to 9 million viewers in the USSR). However, when in 1985 in the USSR the films *The Indomitable Angelica* and *Angelica and the Sultan* were released in a partially shortened version and combined into two episodes under the general title *The Indomitable Marquise*, this picture attracted 17.7 million viewers.

Judging by the massive advertising, Roger Vadim's fantasy action film *Barbarella* with the sexy Jane Fonda in the title role was also supposed to break into the top ten leaders of the French film box office. But for unknown reasons this did not happen: according to the results of distribution in France, this picture ended up only in 30th place (0.9 million viewers).

But the famous writer Romain Gary managed, relying (unlike *Barbarella*) on a rather modest budget, to film the very daring erotic melodrama *Birds Die in Peru (Les oiseaux vont mourir au Pérou)* at that time, so that it managed to attract the same number of viewers to the screens as the film Roger Vadim. Apparently, Romain Gary's film, against the backdrop of the traditional genre spectrum of French films released in 1968, became one of the first signs of an increased degree of sexual frankness in French cinema, which by the mid-1970s would become almost mainstream in France...

From the films of the French film distribution in 1968, in addition to four films from the "golden ten" and the final series about Angelica, 7 more films were released in the USSR (in 1969–1972): the comedy *Oh, already this grandfather! (Ce sacré grand-père)* by Jean Poitrenaud and several co-production films: *The Comedians*, *The Owl Appears in the Daytime (Il Giorno della civetta / La Mafia fait la loi)*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Money Order (Le Mandat)* and *Phèdre*. Almost all of them were held in Soviet cinemas with much greater success than in France...

So, 11 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1968 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

*Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1968 (among French films)*

In 1968, 18 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

For example, the list of outsiders logically includes the elitist works of Alain Robbe-Grillet, Orson Welles, and others, which are complex in film language. Neither the author's skill nor participation of stars of the first magnitude...

The mass French audience was also not interested in Jean Rollin's horror film *Violence of the Vampire (Le Viol du vampire)*, rich in eroticism and bloody scenes. However, over time, the films of J. Rollin, which many accused of bad taste and unprofessionalism, became a kind of "cult" for a certain category of viewers...

Traditionally, audiences were not interested in an Italian-French film without the participation of French A-list stars. This time, the outsider was Damiano Damiani's detective story *The Owl Appears in the Daytime (Il Giorno della civetta / La Mafia fait la loi)*, which attracted only about one hundred thousand viewers in France, while in Italy it became one of the box office champions (4.3 million viewers, that is, an analogue of 18 million viewers in the USSR).

*The Owl Appears in the Daytime* became one of four films from the list of outsiders of the French film distribution acquired for showing in the USSR. In 1969/1970, *The Owl...* was watched by 20.8 million viewers.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1969 among French films*

In 1969, only 19 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted from 1.6 million to 5.5 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten French film box office films in 1969 was quite diverse. Of course, there was comedy again. This time – *The Brain (Le Cerveau)* by Gerard Oury, *Frozen (Hibernatus)* and *My Uncle Benjamin (Mon oncle Benjamin)* by Edouard Molinaro, *Erotissimo* by Gérard Pirès and *The Devil by the tail (Le Diable par la queue)* by Philippe de Broca. Along with this, the top ten included the crime dramas *The Sicilian Clan (Le Clan des Siciliens)* by Henri Verneuil, *The Swimming Pool (La Piscine)* by Jacques Deray and *Roads to Kathmandu (Les Chemins de Katmandou)* by André Cayatte.

Moreover, in 1969, on the wave of growing interest in political cinema in European cinema, Costa-Gavras' far from entertaining political drama *Z* took third place in the French box office (it was watched by 3.9 million viewers, which is the same as 19 million viewers in USSR).

At the same time, films by recent leaders of the "new wave" Claude Chabrol and Francois Truffaut found themselves in the attendance range from 0.7 million to 1.2 million viewers.

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Bourvil, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Romy Schneider, Annie Girardot, Michel Mercier and other famous actors.

At the same time, for the first time, two films with the participation of Alain Delon (*The Sicilian Clan* and *The Swimming Pool*) and Yves Montand (*Z* and *The Devil by the tail*) entered the top ten box office leaders at once.

In contrast to the previous five years, the commercial success of Louis de Funès has decreased somewhat. A funny and inventive comedy with his participation called *Frozen* was only in fourth place (3.4 million viewers: analogous to 17 million viewers in the USSR).

This comedy was released in the Soviet Union in 1971, attracted 27.6 million viewers, and... turned out to be one of two films from the "golden" ten of French film distribution in 1969, purchased in the USSR. And this is against the backdrop of the fact that from the first ten of the French film distribution of previous years, 4-5 films ended up in Soviet distribution (albeit with delays)...

The second French film from among the box office champions of France in 1969 that hit Soviet screens was *The Swimming Pool* by Jacques Deray with Alain Delon, Romy Schneider and Maurice Ronet (6th place and 2.3 million viewers). But the release of this crime drama on Soviet screens was delayed until... September 1991. In the 1970s, *The Swimming Pool* was unable to get onto the screens of the USSR due to the too much charm of the criminal character played by Alain Delon...

The reasons why the remaining films from the top ten French box office were rejected are quite transparent:

- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Yves Montand, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Montand played the main roles in the films *Z* and *The Devil by the tail*);
- Taboo on erotic themes (this concerned the films *Erotissimo* and *My Uncle Benjamin*);
- The undesirability of the appearance of images of charming criminals on Soviet screens (*The Sicilian Clan* and *The Brain*).

In first place in the French film box office in 1969 was Gerard Ury's comedy *The Brain* with Bourvil and Belmondo, although it attracted 5.5 million viewers, but failed to break the box office records of Ury's previous comedies – *Le Corniaud* and *The Big Walk*.

The films of Claude Lelouch did not make it into the top ten this time: *The Man I Like* (*Un homme qui me plaît*) was in 13th place (1.4 million viewers), and *Life, Love, Death* (*La Vie, l'amour, la mort*) was in 15th (1.3 million viewers), but still found themselves in the top viewing preferences of the French.

Jean-Pierre Melville's drama *Army of Shadows* (*L'Armée des ombres*) (1.4 million viewers) came even closer to the top ten.

In addition to two films from the top ten of the French film distribution in 1969, five more films hit the screens of the USSR in different years (but mainly in 1970-1972): the comedy *Big Love* (*Le Grand Amour*) by Pierre Etex, the melodrama *Lady Hamilton's Love* (*Les Amours de Lady Hamilton / Le Calde notti di Lady Hamilton*) by Christian-Jacques and *Royal Hunting* (*La Chasse royale*) by Francois Letierrier, the drama *A Time to Live* (*Le Temps de vivre*) by Bernard Paul and the Italian-French comedy *Serafino* by Pietro Germi. Almost all of them were held in the USSR with greater success than in France.

So, in different years, 7 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1969 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1969 (among French films)*

On the outsiders of the French film distribution, which attracted less than 200 thousand spectators in cinemas in 1969, I, unfortunately, was not able to find complete data.

From the list of outsiders of the French film distribution in 1969, three films made it to Soviet screens: *Royal Hunting*, *A Time to Live* (both of these films did well in the Soviet film distribution at the turn of the 1970s, but in the end, during the year the demonstrations failed to overcome the barrier of 10 million of spectators) and *Serafino*.

At the same time, with the Italian-French comedy *Serafino* by Pietro Germi, the typical story for joint productions that did not star French stars of the first magnitude happened in the French film distribution: in France, the film went generally unnoticed. But in Italy, where the pop singer Adriano Celentano, who played the main role, was already at the peak of popularity, *Serafino* was a triumph: 10.5 million viewers, which approximately corresponded to 47 million viewers in the USSR...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1970 among French films*

In 1970, only 23 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted from 2.1 million to 4.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1970 was quite diverse: comedies, crime dramas, thrillers, detective stories, fairy tales, melodrama.

The directors of the top ten French box office films of 1970 were professionals of genre cinema: Jean Giraud, Rene Clément, Jacques Deray, Jean-Pierre Melville, José Giovanni, Michel Audiard and others.

At the same time, original films by Claude Chabrol, François Truffaut and Eric Rohmer were in the attendance range from 0.6 million to 1.6 million viewers.

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Bourvil, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Romy Schneider, Annie Girardot, Marlene Jobert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

At the same time, for the second year in a row, two films with the participation of Alain Delon (*Borsalino* and *The Red Circle / Le Cercle rouge*) entered the top ten leaders of the French film box office.

In 1970, the last films were released on French screens, where the main roles were played by the famous comedians Fernandel (1903-1971) and Bourvil (1917-1970).

One of the last comedies with Fernandel failed to enter even the top twenty box office leaders in 1970, while two films with Bourvil's participation (*The Atlantic Wall* and *The Red Circle*) took second and fourth places at the box office, collecting from 4.3 million to 4.8 million viewers. Bourvil died from a serious illness in the fall of 1970. Fernandel survived him by only a few months: he passed away in February 1971...

Due to the death of these two talented actors, the only super popular comedian in France in the 1970s was Louis de Funès...

First place in the French film box office in 1970 was taken by the comedy *Gendarme on a Walk (Le Gendarme en balade)* with Louis de Funès (4.9 million viewers). For some reason it didn't make it into Soviet distribution. Perhaps for financial reasons...

Close to the top ten was another comedy with the participation of Louis de Funès: *One Man Band (L'Homme orchestre)*. At the French box office it was eleventh (2.1 million viewers, analogous to 10 million spectators in the USSR), but in the Soviet film box office in 1973 it was much more successful: 32.7 million viewers in the first year of demonstration...

Claude Lelouch returned to the top ten: *The Rogue (Le Voyou)* with Jean-Louis Trintignant was in 8th place (2.4 million viewers).

In the French film distribution of 1970, the expansion of "films for very adults" continued, which did not yet make it into the top twenty leaders, but were already confidently occupying places from 27th to 52nd with attendance from 0.3 million to 0.9 million viewers...

In the second half of the 1960s, out of the top ten leaders in French film distribution, 4-5 films were often purchased in the USSR. But with the leaders of the French film distribution in 1970, it happened differently: not a single one of the ten highest-grossing French films reached Soviet cinemas (although, of course, some of them were shown in Moscow as part of the film festival and weeks of French cinema).

The reasons why this French "champion ten" of 1970 was completely rejected by Soviet censorship were most likely the following:

- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Yves Montand, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Montand played the main role in the film *The Red Circle*. And moreover, he played the main role in the drama Costa with amazing psychological depth Gavras's *Confession / L'Aveu*, which sharply indicts the era of Stalinism. *Confession* took 12th place in the French film box office in 1970, this picture was watched by 2.1 million viewers);

- The undesirability of the appearance of images of charming criminals on Soviet screens (*Borsalino*, *The Red Circle*, *The Rogue*);

- Too high prices offered by French copyright holders (perhaps this applied to *Gendarme on a Walk*, *Passenger of the Rain / Le Passager de la pluie*, *Donkey Skin / Peau d'âne* and some other films from the "golden ten").

Of course, we must add to this the tightening of Soviet policy in the field of purchasing Western film products, which occurred after August 1968...

And yet, from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1970, four films managed to reach Soviet screens (though one of them was Italian-French, and also produced jointly with the USSR).

The colorful musical comedy with Louis de Funès *One Man Band (L'Homme orchestre)* (11th place in the French box office and 2.1 million viewers) was shown in Soviet cinemas (in 1973) with enormous success: 32.7 million viewers in the first year demonstrations.

The crime drama with Jean Gabin *La Horse* (13th place in the French box office and 2.1 million viewers) was released in the USSR (in 1972) much faster (18.8 million viewers in the first year of demonstration), but also significantly better than in France.

Unfortunately, there is no exact data on the distribution in the USSR (in 1977) of Michel Drache's drama *Eliza, or Real Life (Élise ou la Vraie Vie)*.

But with the melodrama *Sunflowers (I girasoli)* a story quite typical for France happened. Neither the star names of Marcello Mastroianni and Sophia Loren, nor the authority of the

recognized classic of Italian cinema Vittorio De Sica attracted the French public to cinemas. The film *Sunflowers* was watched by only about one hundred thousand viewers in France.

But in the USSR in 1971, this picture was seen by approximately the same number of viewers as shortly before *Angelica and the King*: 41.6 million viewers. And this was (taking into account the difference in population) quite comparable to the success of *Sunflowers* in Italy (7.3 million viewers).

So, in different years, 4 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1970 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

*Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1970 (among French films)*

In 1970, 28 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

Surprisingly, the melodrama *Sunflowers*, shot very professionally by the classic of neorealism Vittorio de Sica, triumphantly screened in Italian (7.3 million viewers: the equivalent of approximately thirty-five million viewers in the USSR) and Soviet (41.6 million in the first year of demonstration) screens, in France managed to gather only about one hundred thousand viewers. And this despite the fact that the main roles in this film were played by famous actors Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni.

Other outsiders of the French film distribution in 1970 were Alain Robbe-Grillet's aesthetic fantasy *Paradise and After (L'Eden et après)*, Jean-Luc Godard's politicized and chaotically inarticulate *The Wind from the East (Le Vent d'est)* and two films, apparently hopelessly behind the times, by directors of the older generation Yves Allégret (*Invasion*) and Denis de La Patellera (*Sabra*) and others.

This company includes three more "films for adults", apparently intended for an audience too marginal for the turn of the 1970s...

*Top box office leaders in France in 1971 (among French films)*

In 1971, only 24 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted from 2.5 million to 7.5 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre range of the top ten French film box office leaders in 1971 was quite diverse: comedies, dramas, adventure films...

The top ten grossing directors were genre film professionals: Gerard Oury, Henri Verneuil, Jean-Paul Rappeneau, Jean Giraud and others.

At the same time, two generally completely unentertaining psychological dramas managed to enter the list of leaders of the French film box office in 1971: *Dying of Love (Mourir d'aimer)* by André Cayatte (second place in attendance and 5.9 million viewers) and *Breathing in the Heart (Le Souffle au cœur)* by Louis Malle (tenth place and 2.6 million viewers).

The recent cinematographer Claude Zidi suddenly burst into the company of box-office directors with the comedy *The Recruits Go Crazy (Les Bidasses en folie)* (first place at the box office of the year and 7.5 million viewers) with the participation of the popular group *Charlot*. This movie began the triumphant, decade-long success of a series of films featuring this group...

At the same time, the original films of Claude Chabrol and François Truffaut were in the attendance range from 0.3 million to 0.7 million viewers.

The French film distribution in 1971 was for the first time without films with the participation of Fernandel (1903–1971) and Bourvil (1917–1970)...

With the departure of these two outstanding actors, Louis de Funès became in the 1970s, in fact, the only super popular comedian in France...

In the French film box office in 1971, the top ten included two comedies with Louis de Funès: *Delusions of Grandeur (La Folie des grandeurs)* (third place and 5.6 million viewers) and *Jo* (tenth place and 2.5 million viewers).

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres starring the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Romy Schneider, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

The top ten leaders of the French film box office included not only two films with the participation of Louis de Funès, but also two spectacular films with the participation of Jean-Paul Belmondo (*The Burglars / Le Casse* and *Spouses of the Second Year / Les Mariés de l'An Deux*).

The film by the “old guard” director Christian-Jacques was also close to the top ten: the success of *Oil Producers (Les Pétroleuses)* was largely brought about by the duet of Brigitte Bardot and Claudia Cardinale...

A curious story happened with the famous French-Italian film *The Conformist* by Bernardo Bertolucci. In Italy, this outstanding psychological drama was a super success: 8.6 million viewers (analogous to approximately 40 million viewers in the USSR). However, in France this picture was watched by 0.6 million viewers, and in the USSR (where the film was released in 1976 in a heavily shortened form and devoid of color) – the same number as in Italy: 8.6 million viewers.

In the French film distribution in 1971, the expansion of “films for adults” continued, which did not yet make it into the top twenty leaders, since they received no more 0.7 million viewers.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1971, only one film made it into Soviet cinema distribution – *Spouses of the Second Year / Les Mariés de l'An Deux* (seventh place in terms of attendance and 2.8 million viewers, which was analogous to approximately 14 million viewers in the USSR). In Soviet film distribution in 1975, this film was called *Remarriage* and attracted 21.3 million viewers.

The reasons why most of the films of this “champion ten” were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Yves Montand, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Montand played the main role in the film *Delusions of Grandeur*).

- The undesirability of the appearance of images of charming criminals on Soviet screens (*Burglars, Red Sun*);

- Fear that Soviet viewers might somehow misunderstand the “slippery” plots of the dramas *Dying of Love (Mourir d'aimer)* and *Breathing in the Heart (Le Souffle au cœur)* from the point of view of official Soviet morality...

- Too high prices offered by French studios (perhaps this applied to the comedy *The Recruits Go Crazy* and some other films from the “golden ten”).

Of the films released in France in 1971, which were not included in the “golden ten”, four films were released on USSR screens in different years in 1973-1976: *Killers in the Name of Order (Les Assassins de l'ordre)* by Marcel Carné, *The House under the Trees (La Maison sous les arbres)* by René Clément, *The Conformist* by Bernardo Bertolucci and *Sacco and Vanzetti* by Giuliano Montaldo.

It should be noted that in 1971, political cinema in Italy and France, as in the previous two years, was at the peak of its popularity. That is why the Italian-French political drama *Sacco and Vanzetti*, devoid of any hint of entertainment, attracted 1.2 million viewers in France and 5.0 million viewers in Italy.

It is clear that such a striking example, as it was then customary to write, of progressive, anti-bourgeois cinema, like *Sacco and Vanzetti*, was bought by the Soviet purchasing commission precisely for ideological reasons. But this film was a failure at the USSR film distribution: taking into account the difference in the population of the Soviet Union, Italy and France, the drama *Sacco and Vanzetti* was watched by a much smaller number of Soviet viewers (only 3.1 million). After all, audiences in the USSR primarily expected bright and colorful entertainment from French and Italian cinema...

As for the films *Killers in the Name of Order*, *The House under the Trees* and *The Conformist*, they were watched by a much larger number of viewers in the USSR than in France.

So, in different years, 5 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1971 were released on USSR screens.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1971 (among French films)*

In 1971, 26 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

This time the list of outsiders consisted of elite works of “auteur cinema”, erotic films and entertainment producers who did not live up to the expectations...

It is curious that the director of the film *The Man Who Came at Night (L'homme qui vient de la nuit)*, Jean-Claude Dagues, was so upset by the resounding failure of his film at the French box office in 1971 (it attracted only about 30 thousand spectators) that he decided to become a bank robber, but together with his accomplices was caught by the police. As a result, he was given eight years in prison.



Thus, Jean-Claude Dague became the world's first film director – a bank robber.

Jean-Claude Dague (born in 1937) made his film debut as an actor, then as a director he made four films that were not commercially successful...

But it should be noted that in prison Jean-Claude Dague did not sit idle, but wrote a sensational autobiographical book *The Named One (Le Dénommé)*, which he personally filmed in 1990...

Returning to the list of outsider films in Soviet film distribution in 1971, we note that this time not one of them made it into mass Soviet film distribution...

*Top box office leaders in France in 1972 (among French films)*

In 1972, only 25 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted from 2.0 million to 5.7 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten French film box office leaders in 1972 consisted primarily of comedies...

The directors of the “golden ten” of 1972 were professionals of genre cinema: Claude Zidi, Jean Giraud, Claude Lelouch, Yves Robert, Georges Lautner and others.

At the same time, two absolutely unentertaining psychological dramas managed to enter the list of leaders of the French film box office in 1972: *Last Tango in Paris (Le Dernier Tango à Paris / Ultimo Tango a Parigi)* by Bernardo Bertolucci (second place in attendance and 5.2 million viewers) and *Cesar and Rosalie* by Claude Sautet (seventh place and 2.6 million viewers).

The French film distribution in 1972 showed that the box office triumph of films with the participation of the popular group *Charlot* continued: the comedy *Crazy in the Stadium (Les Fous du stade)* by Claude Zidi confidently came out on top in terms of attendance with a result of 5.7 million viewers, and the comedy *Charlot in Spain (Les Charlots font l'Espagne)* by Jeanne Giraud was the “bronze medalist” with a result of 4.2 million viewers.

The films of Claude Lelouch (*Adventure is an Adventure / L'aventure c'est l'aventure*), Yves Robert (*The Tall Blonde in a Black Shoe / Le Grand Blond avec une chaussure noire*) and Claude Chabrol (*Docteur Popaul*) returned to the top ten box office leaders in 1972.

At the same time, original films by Jean-Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut and Eric Rohmer were in the attendance range from 0.2 million to 0.9 million viewers.

For the first time since 1963, the list of leaders in French film distribution in 1972 did not include a single film featuring the “king of laughter” Louis de Funès. Perhaps due to the fact that Jean Giraud chose to temporarily interrupt his “gendarme” film series and could not resist the temptation to make a comedy with de Funès’s main rivals in the comedy department – the *Charlot* group...

In addition to the comedians *Charlot*, the comedic star of Pierre Richard shone brightly on the French cinema horizon in 1972, playing the main role in Yves Robert’s witty parody *The Tall Blonde in a Black Shoe*.

The top ten leaders of the French film box office included two films with the participation of Mireille Darc (*The Tall Blonde in a Black Shoe* and *Once Upon a Time There Was a Policeman*).

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres starring the favorites of the French public: Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Romy Schneider, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

The most scandalous premiere of the French film distribution in 1972 was, undoubtedly, the film by Bernardo Bertolucci *Last Tango in Paris*.

This was a rather rare case when a Franco-Italian film by an Italian director, also of a dramatic genre, had such an impressive audience success in France.

In Italy, this outstanding psychological drama was watched by a fantastic number of viewers for this country: 15.6 million (analogous to 70 million viewers in the USSR). But in France, this picture (which took second place at the 1972 box office) was watched by 5.2 million viewers (analogous to 26 million viewers in the USSR).

There were many reasons for this success: the skill of direction by Bertolucci and Hollywood star Marlon Brando, the shockingness of a number of scenes, a media advertising campaign that emphasized the scandalous details of filming and the plot...

It is clear that this film could not be released in the USSR, but the Soviet press wrote a lot about it, vigorously discussing its artistic merits and the frankness of key scenes...

Perhaps it was *Last Tango in Paris* that became the first film intended only for adult audiences to rise so high in the attendance rating at the French box office...

As in 1971, at the French box office in 1972 the expansion of erotic films continued, the professional level of which was, to put it mildly, low, or completely absent. These films did not even make it into the top twenty leaders and received no more than 1.3 million viewers.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1972, five films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

True, if the films *The Tall Blonde in a Black Shoe* and *Once Upon a Time There Was a Policeman* appeared in Soviet film distribution quite quickly – in 1974, then two comedies with the participation of the group *Charlot* had to wait until the summer of 1989 for release in Soviet cinemas, and melodrama *Cesar and Rosalie* (with Montand, “undesirable” in the USSR in the 1970s and in the first half of the 1980s) – until February 1991...

Moreover, if in France the comedy *The Tall Blonde in a Black Shoe* was watched by 3.5 million viewers (analogous to 17 million viewers in the USSR), then the results of the Soviet film distribution of this film were more impressive: 25.2 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

Georges Lautner's film *Once Upon a Time There Was a Policeman (Il était une fois un flic...)* was watched by 2 million viewers in France (analogous to approximately 10 million viewers in the USSR), and in the USSR this film was watched by 26.1 million viewers during the first year of its demonstration.

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1972 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Too high prices offered by French copyright holders;
- The undesirability of images of charming criminals appearing on Soviet screens;
- Fear that Soviet viewers might somehow misunderstand stories that are “slippery” from the point of view of official Soviet morality...

Of the films released in France in 1972 that were not included in the top ten, six films were released on USSR screens: the comedy *The Old Maid (La Vieille fille)*, the melodrama *Dear Louise (Chère Louise)*, the adventure co-production *Call of the Wild (L'Appel de la forêt / Ruf der Wildnis / Il Richiamo della foresta)*, two “progressive political films”: *Assassination (L'Attentat)* and *Beau Masque*, and also, very belatedly (in 1987), Luis Buñuel's satirical parable *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie (Le Charme discret de la bourgeoisie)*.

Of these, the adventure film *Call of the Wild* had the greatest success in the USSR. In France, its audience amounted to about one hundred thousand spectators. In the USSR (1974/1975 season) – 22.1 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

The political drama about the life of the working class *Beau Masque* in France was attended by about forty thousand spectators. In the USSR, thanks to the magic words on cinema posters “New French film *Beau Masque*”, its audience amounted to 6.3 million viewers...

So, 11 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1972 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1972 (among French films)*

In 1972, 22 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders of 1972 mainly consisted of elite works of “auteur cinema”, several erotic films...

Two films from this list were included in Soviet film distribution.

The adventure film *Call of the Wild* attracted about one hundred thousand viewers in France, and in the USSR in 1974 – 22.1 million viewers.

A drama on a very important working topic for the USSR called *Beautiful Mask (Beau Masque)* directed by Bernard Paul in France managed to attract only 40 thousand spectators to cinema screens, but the Soviet public, not spoiled by French films, reacted to this film much warmer (although according to Soviet distribution by the standards of the 1970s, its attendance was rather weak): in 1974, *Beau Masque* attracted 6.3 million spectators in the USSR.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1973 (among French films)*

In 1973, only 26 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted from 2.0 million to 7.3 million viewers to cinemas in France. Her genre spectrum consisted mainly of comedies...

The top ten grossing directors were genre film professionals: Gerard Oury, Claude Zidi, Edouard Molinaro, Philippe de Broca, Georges Lautner, Philippe Labro and others.

At the same time, the films of François Truffaut and Claude Chabrol were in the attendance range of 0.8 million viewers.

At the same time, the leaders of the French film distribution in 1973 managed to include the completely unentertaining psychological drama by José Giovanni *Two men in the City (Deux hommes dans la ville)* (eighth place in terms of attendance and 2.5 million viewers) and Marco Ferreri's shocking satire *The Big Grub (La Grande Bouffe / La grande abbuffata)* (sixth place and 2.8 million viewers).

In 1973, director Gerard Oury and the king of laughter Louis de Funès made a very successful (after a one-year break) return to the top ten audience favorites: their comedy *The Adventures of Rabbi Jacob* topped the French box office with an impressive result: 7.3 million viewers.

Moreover, *The Adventures of Rabbi Jacob* managed to push aside another comedy with the participation of the group *Charlot (Big Bazaar / Le Grand Bazar)* by Claude Zidi took third place at the box office, collecting 3.9 million viewers).

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres starring the favorites of the French public: Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Romy Schneider, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

The top ten leaders of the French film box office (for the umpteenth time!) included two films with the participation of Jean-Paul Belmondo (*The Magnificent / Le Magnifique* and *The Heir / L'Héritier*).

And the superstar of the second half of the 1950s – 1960s, Brigitte Bardot, who did not want to grow old on the screen, played her last film role in 1973... By the way, one of the last films with her participation was *Don Juan 73* by Roger Vadim – was only the thirtieth most visited at the French box office...

The most scandalous premiere of the French film distribution in 1973 was, undoubtedly, Marco Ferreri's film *The Big Grub (La Grande Bouffe / La grande abbuffata)*.

This (like *Last Tango in Paris*) was a rather rare case when a French-Italian film by an Italian director, moreover, not the highest-grossing genre of social satire, had such an impressive audience success.

In France, this shocking picture (which took sixth place at the 1973 box office) was watched by 2.8 million viewers (analogous to 14 million viewers in the USSR).

As in Italy, political cinema was very popular in France in the first half of the 1970s.

Since *The Serpent and Silent* were recognized as anti-Soviet in the USSR, and the director of *State of Siege (État de siège)* Costa-Gavras was on the "black list" after the slanderous *Confessions*, among the films with political themes, *No Smoke Without Fire (Il n'y a pas de fumée sans feu)* by André Cayatte and *Nothing Happened (R.A.S.)* by Yves Boisset came to the Soviet screen.

At the French box office, these films attracted 2 million and 1.3 million viewers. In Soviet film distribution, A. Cayatte's film, released under the title *Blackmail*, suffered significant cuts, but still attracted a good audience of 14.2 million viewers. But the film by I. Boisset in the USSR did not really interest the mass audience: 3.5 million viewers watched it in the first year of its demonstration.

Of course, in the French box office in 1973, the expansion of erotic films continued, the professional level of which was rather low or completely absent. These films did not even make it into the top twenty leaders and gained no more than 1.1 million viewers.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1973, three films made it into Soviet cinema distribution, and very promptly – in 1975.

The comedy *The Bore (L'Emmerdeur)* by Edouard Molinaro was watched in France by 3.3 million viewers (fourth place according to the 1973 box office results). Approximately the same number (in per capita terms) watched this film in the USSR: 17.5 million viewers.

The parody film with Jean-Paul Belmondo *The Magnificent* was more successful in the USSR. In France, it was fifth with an attendance of 2.9 million viewers (analogous to 14 million viewers in the USSR), but in reality this film was watched by 24.6 million viewers in Soviet cinemas during the first year of demonstration.

Approximately the same number of viewers in the USSR watched José Giovanni's psychological drama *Two men in the City*, which protested against the death penalty. This film with the excellent duet of Jean Gabin and Alain Delon was watched by 2.5 million viewers in France (eighth place in the top ten).

The reasons why the remaining films of the French "champion ten" of film distribution in 1973 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Too high prices offered by French studios (perhaps this concerned the comedy *Big Bazaar* and the crime drama *The Heir*);
- Accentuated Jewish theme (*The Adventures of Rabbi Jakob*);
- traditional exclusion from candidates for the purchase of films with shocking plots (*Big Grub*).

Of the remaining films of the French film distribution in 1973, five were released on Soviet screens (in 1974–1977): politically charged dramas *No Smoke Without Fire* by André Cayatte, *Nothing Happened* by Yves Boisset, *About Murder on the Front Page (Sbatti il mostro in prima pagina / Viol en première page)* by Marco Bellocchio, the comedy *Pretty Business (La belle affaire)* by Jacques Besnard and *Hello, Artist (Salut l'artiste)* by Yves Robert.

Almost all of them (especially *Pretty Business*) had much greater attendance in the USSR than in France.

So, in different years, 8 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1973 were shown on USSR screens.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1973 (among French films)*

In 1973, 36 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders mainly consisted of elite works of "auteur cinema" and several erotic films...

Only one film from this list was included in Soviet film distribution – the political drama *About Murder on the Front Page (Sbatti il mostro in prima pagina / Viol en première page)*, which was released in USSR cinemas in 1977 and attracted 7.5 million viewers. In France, when released in 1973, this picture attracted only a hundred thousand audience to cinemas...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1974 (among French films)*

In 1974, only 22 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 2.2 million to 8.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1974 consisted mainly of comedies, but the sensation was that for the first time in the history of French film box office, an entertaining erotic film not only entered the top ten box office leaders of the year, but also came out on top with an impressive result: 8.9 million of spectators. It was reminiscent in style of the color covers of the then French entertainment glossy magazines *Emmanuelle* by Juste Jacquin...

At the same time, Bertrand Blier's film *Waltzers (Les Valseuses)* (second place and 5.7 million viewers) managed to take second place among the box office hits of the French film distribution in 1974, most likely, primarily due to its shockingness.

At the same time, the films *Emmanuelle* and *Waltzers* managed to push into third place another comedy with the participation of the group *Charlot* (the film *Recruits Go to War / Les Bidasses s'en vont en guerre*) by Claude Zidi attracted 4.1 million viewers).

Another erotic film was included in the top twenty box office leaders of the year: the *Immoral Tales (Contes immoraux)* by Walerian Borowczyk (20th place and 1.1 million viewers).

Once again, a very shocking "picture for adults" came to 37th place in the French box office: *Sweet Movie* by Dusan Makaveev, which managed to attract about 600 thousand French people to cinema halls.

In 49th place at the box office is another, no less frivolous erotic film: Alain Robbe-Grillet's bizarre fantasy *Gradual Sliding to Pleasure (Glissements progressifs du plaisir)* (about three hundred thousand viewers came to see it).

Of course, against the backdrop of the flagship of frivolity that *Emmanuelle* became and its shocking “retinue” (*Immoral Tales*, *Sweet Movie* and *Gradual Sliding to Pleasure*) at the French box office in 1974, the expansion of much more primitive erotic and even pornographic films, but they turned out to be outsiders, unable to attract more than one hundred thousand viewers.

In tenth place in the French film box office in 1974, Louis Malle’s unentertaining psychological drama *Lacombe Lucien* (the film told about the events of the Nazi occupation of France) unexpectedly ended up, which attracted 1.7 million viewers to cinemas.

The rest of the films in the top ten grossing films were directed by genre film professionals: Claude Zidi (two of his comedies: *Recruits Go to War* and *The Mustard Gets on My Nose / La moutarde me monte au nez* were in the top ten), Claude Pinoteau, Jean Giraud, Yves Robert, André Hunebelle and etc.

At the same time, original films by Robert Bresson, Federico Fellini and Luis Bunuel were in the attendance range from 0.2 million to 1.1 million viewers.

In general, the massive French box office of 1974 continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Pierre Richard, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Yves Montand, Romy Schneider, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

This time there were no comedies with Louis de Funès in the top ten box office champions, but there were two comedies at once, where the main roles were played by a young comedian at that time, Pierre Richard.

The top ten leaders of the French film box office included two films not only with the participation of Pierre Richard (*The Mustard Gets on My Nose* and *The Return of the Tall Blonde*), but also two films with the participation of Gerard Depardieu (*Waltzing and Vincent, Francois, Paul and other...*).

Along with this, the line of political cinema continued in the French film distribution in 1974 (*The Chinese in Paris* by Jean Yanne, *Nada* by Claude Chabrol, etc.).

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1974, four films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

The comedy *Recruits Goes to War* by Claude Zidi was watched by 4.1 million viewers in France (third place according to the 1974 distribution results), but in the mass Soviet film distribution of 1978 the success was many times greater: 50.1 million viewers in the first year demonstrations.

Another comedy by the same Claude Zidi, *The Mustard Gets on My Nose*, was fourth in the French box office and attracted 3.7 million viewers (analogous to approximately 18 million viewers in the USSR). In Soviet film distribution, this picture (under the title *He’s Starting to Get Angry*) was watched by 26.8 million viewers in 1983.

The parody film with Pierre Richard, *The Return of the Tall Blonde (Le Retour du grand blond)*, was a significant success in the USSR. In France, it was eighth with an attendance of 2.2 million viewers (analogous to 15 million viewers in the USSR), but in reality this film was watched by 21.5 million viewers in Soviet cinemas during the first year of demonstration.

But a completely unexpected story happened with the release in the USSR of André Hunebelle’s parody costume comedy *Charlot’s Four Musketeers (Les Quatre Charlots mousquetaires)*. In France, this film attracted 2.2 million viewers (analogous to approximately 10 million viewers in the USSR), but in real Soviet film distribution this film (called *The Four Musketeers*) was watched by 56.6 million viewers in 1978. Thus, this picture was ahead in the USSR not only of comedies with Pierre Richard, but also of *Recruits...* with the same group *Charlot* in the leading roles.

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1974 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for the purchase of any erotic films and films with shocking plots (*Emmanuelle*, *Waltzers*).

- Accentuated Jewish themes and “belittling the role of the French resistance movement” (*Lacombe Lucien*);

- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Yves Montand, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Montand played one of the main roles in the film *Vincent, Francois, Paul and Others...*).

Of the films that were not included in the “golden ten” of the French film distribution of 1974, six films were released on the screens of the USSR (in 1976-1982): the continuation of *The Four Musketeers* – the comedy *Four Against the Cardinal* (*À nous quatre Cardinal!*) by André Hunebelle, the crime drama *Only the Wind Knows the Answer* (*Seul le vent connaît la réponse / Die Antwort kennt nur der Wind*) by Alfred Vohrer, dramas by Vittorio De Sica *Voyage* (*Il Viaggio / Le Voyage*) and *Piaf* by Guy Casaril, *Parade* by Jacques Tati and the legendary *Amarcord* by Federico Fellini. As expected, the spectacular films *Four Against the Cardinal* and *Only the Wind Knows the Answer* enjoyed the greatest success in Soviet film distribution.

So, in different years, 10 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1974 were released on USSR screens.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1974 (among French films)*

In 1974, 30 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders partly consisted of elite works of “auteur cinema”, but the overwhelming majority were dominated by erotic films of the “B” and “C” categories...

Three films from this list were included in Soviet film distribution.

Vittorio de Sica's melodrama *Voyage* was released in USSR cinemas in 1977 and attracted 14 million viewers. In France, this picture attracted only about one hundred thousand viewers, while in Italy – 1.8 million viewers.

The biopic *Piaf* was a complete fiasco at the French box office in 1974: the film managed to lure about 20 thousand spectators into cinemas.

Data on the distribution of Jacques Tati's film *Parade* in France, alas, are not available, but in USSR cinemas in 1977 it was seen by a very modest number of viewers for those times: 2.8 million.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1975 (among French films)*

In 1975, only 24 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 2.0 million to 3.9 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten French film distribution leaders in 1975 was quite diverse: five comedies, two detective/thrillers, two erotic films (among them another film by Just Jacquin, shot immediately after *Emmanuelle*), and drama.

It was a sensation of sorts that for the first time in the history of French film distribution, the top ten highest-grossing films included two entertaining erotic films (*The Story of O / Histoire d'O* and *Playing Games / Les Jouisseuses*), which took, respectively, third and ninth places in terms of attendance.

Another “very adult” film – *Exhibitionism* – is not so far from them: in 13th place (1.8 million viewers).

Of course, against the backdrop of *The Story of O* and *Playing Games*, the expansion of much more primitive erotic and pornographic films continued at the French box office in 1975. However, all of them ended up outside the top four dozen leaders at the French box office and failed to gain more than 0.5 million viewers.

In first place at the French box office in 1975 was Henri Verneuil's thriller/detective *Fear of the City* (*Peur sur la ville*) (3.9 million viewers) with Jean-Paul Belmondo in the title role.

Another film with Belmondo, *The Untamed* (*L'Incorrigible*) by Philippe de Broca, took seventh place in attendance (2.6 million viewers).

The 1975 release showed that the popularity of the *Charlot* group, if it fell, did not fall much: the comedy with their participation, *Hong Kong Kisses* (*Bons baisers de Hong-Kong*), was in sixth place (2.9 million viewers).

One step higher (fifth place) was another comedy with Pierre Richard and Jane Birkin – *La Course à l'échalote* by Claude Zidi. In France, it attracted 3 million viewers (analogous to 15 million viewers in the USSR), and in Soviet film distribution in 1979 its audience amounted to almost twenty-nine million viewers.

Robert Enrico's drama *The Old Gun* (*Le Vieux Fusil*) was a great success at the Soviet box office: in 1977 it was watched by 30.4 million viewers. In the French film box office in 1975, this outstanding work by R. Enrico, collecting 3.4 million viewers, was in fourth place in attendance...

The directors of the remaining films of the top ten grossers were genre cinema professionals Jean-Paul Rappeneau, Jacques Deray and others.

At the same time, films by Jean-Luc Godard, Orson Welles, Marguerite Duras, Michelangelo Antonioni, Alain Robbe-Grillet, François Truffaut and Luchino Visconti were in the 1975 French box office in the attendance range from 0.1 million to 0.9 million of spectators.

In general, the French mass market continues to rely on hits of entertainment genres starring the favorites of the French public: Pierre Richard, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

To some extent, in France in 1975 the line of political cinema continued, but these films did not have any noticeable success among viewers.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1975, only three films made it into Soviet cinema distribution: *The Old Gun* and *La Course à l'échalote*, plus, much belatedly, in 1991, the adventure comedy *Savage (Le Sauvage)*.

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1975 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for the purchase of any erotic films and pictures with shocking plots (*The Story of O* and *Playing Games*);

- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (perhaps, for example, *Fear over the City* with Belmondo fell into this category);

- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Yves Montand, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Montand played one of the main roles in the film *Savage*, which reached Soviet cinemas only when the Soviet government “forgave” the actor – in 1991).

True, ten more films from the French film distribution repertoire of 1975, which were not included in the top ten, were included in Soviet film distribution.

For example, the film *Goodbye, Policeman (Adieu poulet)* was watched by 16.3 million viewers in Soviet cinemas (in 1977); *No Problem (Pas de problème!)* (in 1976): 22.6 million viewers; *Dupont Lajoie* (in the USSR – from September 12, 1977 under the name *It Happened on a Holiday*): 12.5 million viewers; *Seven Deaths by Order (Sept Morts sur ordonnance)* (in the USSR under the title *In the Networks of the Mafia* – from May 23, 1977): 13.3 million viewers; *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (in the USSR – from April 1976): 3.1 million viewers.

Luchino Visconti’s outstanding film *Family Portrait in an Interior (Gruppo di famiglia in un interno / Violence et passion)* was watched by 0.9 million viewers in France. In the Soviet box office (in per capita terms) it was seen in 1978 by twice as many viewers: 10.7 million. But in Italy it was even more popular: it attracted 3.8 million viewers to cinema screens (i.e. in per capita terms, twice as much as in the USSR and four times more than in France).

Much better than in France, Soviet audiences watched (in 1976) another cinematic masterpiece – Michelangelo Antonioni’s drama *Profession: Reporter*. This film was seen by about three hundred thousand French and 6.7 million Soviet viewers.

But with the adventure film *Zorro*, which was a huge success in the USSR (55.3 million viewers in the first year of demonstration), a rather strange situation occurred in the French film distribution.

It would seem that a bright, colorful, dynamic film, starring Alain Delon, should have primarily conquered the French. But in the French box office this film took a relatively modest 18th place, and its attendance amounted to 1.2 million viewers (in principle, quite good, but it could have been five times more). But in Italy, *Zorro* went, as they say, with a bang: 4.9 million viewers.

In the USSR (in the 1976/1977 season), *Zorro* was simply triumphant: 55.3 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

Readers of the older generation probably remember what a notable success the film *Only the Wind Knows the Answer (Die Antwort kennt nur der Wind / Seul le vent connaît la réponse)* enjoyed in Soviet film distribution with the participation of another popular French actor, Maurice Ronet (only during its first release in the USSR, this film was watched by 20.7 million viewers). But in France, the audience greeted this picture very coolly: its audience was only about two hundred thousand spectators...

But the political dramas *It’s Raining in Santiago (Il pleut sur Santiago)* and *Where it’s thin, it breaks (Il pleut toujours où c’est mouillé)* were not a box office success either in France or in the USSR...

So, 14 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1975 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

*Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1975 (among French films)*

In 1975, 36 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders partly consisted of elite works of “auteur cinema”, but the overwhelming majority were dominated by erotic and porn films of categories “B” and “C”...

The following films were included in Soviet film distribution from this list: *It's Raining in Santiago* and *Where it's thin, it breaks*.

The first was for political reasons, as he protested against the rebellion of General Pinochet in Chile. The second is due to the pronounced theme of oppression of ordinary workers by capitalists...

Both of these films were not successful in the Soviet film distribution, as they were devoid of entertainment, and they did not star French stars...

*Top box office leaders in France in 1976 (among French films)*

In 1976, only 19 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s, but also the first half of the 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.7 million to 5.8 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in the French film box office in 1976 was quite diverse: six comedies, two detective/thrillers, and a drama.

Unlike 1974 and 1975, in 1976 not a single erotic film managed to enter the top ten.

Moreover, “films for adults” (with an audience of 0.7 to 0.9 million viewers) failed to even enter the top ten leaders at the French box office. And this, despite the fact that in *The Last Woman (La Dernière Femme)* by Marco Ferreri, Gerard Depardieu and Ornella Muti starred in the main and very shocking roles, and in the melodrama *La marge* – Sylvie Kristel (who previously played in the frivolous *Emmanuelle*, which in France was daringly ranked first in attendance in 1974).

In first place at the French box office in 1976 was Claude Zidi's comedy *A Wing or a Leg (L'Aile ou la Cuisse)*, which, after a short break, once again brought the king of laughter, Louis de Funès, to the top of the box office...

But for the first time in several years, there was not a single comedy with the participation of the group *Charlot* in the top ten box office triumphs. Comedies with Pierre Richard were also not included in the top ten, although they came quite close to it...

1976 was the last year of the life of the famous French actor Jean Gabin (1904–1976). The comedy with his participation called *Holy Year (L'Année sainte)* took 18th place at the box office (1.1 million viewers).

Second and third places in the French film box office in 1976 were taken by frivolous comedies: *Come to us, little Englishwomen!(À nous les petites Anglaises!)* by Michel Lang, *Even Elephants Can Be Unfaithful (Un éléphant, ça trompe énormément)* by Yves Robert.

As in 1975, the top ten in 1976 included two films starring Jean-Paul Belmondo: the thrillers/detectives *The Corpse of My Enemy (Le Corps de mon ennemi)* by Henri Verneuil and *The Gunner (L'Alpagueur)* by Philippe Labro.

The 1976 release was also successful for Annie Girardot, whose top ten also included two films: the drama *Docteur Françoise Gailland* and the comedy *Run So I Catch You (Cours après moi que je t'attrape)*.

After a long break, a film by François Truffaut also found itself in the top ten: his comedy *Pocket Money (L'Argent de poche)* attracted 1.8 million viewers and was in eighth place according to the results of the French box office in 1976.

At the same time, the author's films *Monsieur Klein* by Joséph Losey (in which Alain Delon perhaps played his best role in his career) and *The Tenant (Le Locataire)* by Roman Polanski managed to collect from 0.5 million to 0.7 million viewers.

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Pierre Richard, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean Gabin, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.



The line of political cinema in the French film distribution in 1976 significantly lost its position.

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1976, four films were released in Soviet cinemas, of which two with the participation of Annie Girardot and one with the participation of Jean-Paul Belmondo and Bruno Kremer.

In the French film box office, Francois Truffaut's film *Pocket Money* took eighth place and attracted a rather rare number of viewers for the work of this director – 1.8 million (analogous to approximately 9 million viewers in the USSR). However, in the USSR this picture was shown with much less impressive results: in the first year of its demonstration, only 5.7 million viewers watched it. Apparently, the adult audience in the USSR considered this film too childish, and Soviet children were not interested in it...

The drama *Docteur Françoise Gaillard* (fourth place in the French box office and 2.6 million viewers) was seen in the USSR by a similar number of viewers (taking into account the difference in the populations of the countries): 14.9 million.

The comedy *Run So I Catch You* (ninth place in the French box office and 1.7 million viewers) was watched much more willingly in the USSR: in 1978, in Soviet film distribution it (under the title *Dating through a marriage advertisement*) collected 24.9 million viewers.

But *The Gunner*, which was tenth in the list of leaders in France (with a result of 1.7 million viewers), in 1978 became a truly triumphant Soviet film distribution: 33.5 million viewers in the first year of demonstration (this film was shown in the USSR called *Private Detective*).

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1976 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for the purchase of films that are too frivolous in plot (*Come to us, little English girls!, Even elephants can be unfaithful*);
- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (perhaps, for example, the comedy *A Wing or a Leg* fell into this category);

True, the Soviet film distribution included eight more films from the French film distribution repertoire of 1976, which were not included in the top ten.

For example, the famous large-scale epic *The Twentieth Century (Novecento/1900)* by Bernardo Bertolucci, despite all its “progressiveness and democracy,” greatly frightened Soviet censors in the 1970s with its bold scenes, and as a result was released into Soviet film distribution with a great delay – from May 21, 1990. In Italian film distribution it was one of the highest-grossing films in history: 10.4 million viewers (analogous to approximately 47 million viewers in the USSR). And in France, its attendance was high (11th place in box office and 1.7 million viewers). However, in the perestroika Soviet Union, due to the then video boom, this picture was more than modest...

The drama *Monsieur Klein* also appeared on Soviet screens very late – on December 9, 1991. In France, this significant film managed to gather 0.7 million viewers. In the USSR, which found itself on the verge of collapse in December 1991, it turned out to be practically unnoticed...

The remaining four films were released into Soviet film distribution quite quickly – in 1978–1979.

The greatest success of them was the comedy *Toy (Le Jouet)* with Pierre Richard (15th place at the French box office and 1.2 million viewers): in the USSR, in the first year of its demonstration, 25.3 million viewers watched it. Years later, two remakes of this film were shot in the USA and France, but they were regarded (by both the public and the film press) as pale shadows of Francis Weber’s original...

The political drama *Brilliant Corpses (Cadaveri eccellenti / Cadavres exquis)* (21st place in the French box office and 1 million viewers) was also watched in the USSR with more enthusiasm than in France: in the first year of its demonstration it was watched by 12.4 million viewers.

Accurate data on the number of viewers in Soviet film distribution for the films *F... like Fairbanks (F... comme Fairbanks) (He Wanted to Live)*, *Vendetta in Corsican Style (Les grands moyens)* and *The Innocent (L'Innocent)*, unfortunately, are (yet?) unavailable, although they, of course, are not were box office champions in the USSR...

The greatest success in the USSR fell to the adventure film co-produced by Italy, France and Spain *White Fang (Zanna Bianca / Colmillo Blanco / Croc-blanc)*, which, despite very low attendance in France (about one hundred thousand spectators) and 4.8 million spectators in Italy, managed to attract 30,000 spectators in Soviet cinemas. 1 million viewers. The popularity of this

film in the USSR was most likely brought about by children and teenagers who adored films about animals and adventures.

So, 12 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1976 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

*Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1976 (among French films)*

In 1976, 35 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders partly consisted of elite works of "auteur cinema", but the overwhelming majority were dominated by films of categories "B" and "C"...

Two films from this list were included in Soviet film distribution.

Thanks to the popularity of Franco Nero, the film adaptation of Jack London's story *White Fang* in Italy attracted an impressive audience of 4.8 million viewers. However, in France it attracted only about one hundred thousand spectators. But in the USSR, where children and teenagers were seriously captivated by on-screen adventures, *White Fang* attracted 30.1 million viewers to cinema screens.

The crime comedy *Strong Drugs (Les grands moyens)* (in France it was a box office failure, only about one hundred thousand viewers watched it) was released in Soviet cinemas under the title *Vendetta in Corsican Style* and aroused much greater interest.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1977 (among French films)*

In 1977, only 15 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s and 1960s, but also the first half of the 1970s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.4 million to 3.2 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten French film distribution leaders in 1977 was quite diverse: comedies, detective stories, dramas.

As in 1974 and 1975, in 1977 an erotic film (*Bilitis* by David Hamilton: 10th place and 1.4 million viewers) again managed to enter the top ten.

Claude Zidi's comedy *The Beast (L'Animal)* with Jean-Paul Belmondo came out on top in the French box office in 1977.

The film with Alain Delon *Death of a Rotten (Mort d'un pourri)* was also in the top ten (sixth place and 1.8 million viewers).

But this time there were no films with Louis de Funès, the group *Charlot* and Pierre Richard in the top ten of the French film box office...

Second and third places in the French film box office in 1977 were taken by rather frivolous comedies: *The Menthol Devil (Diabolo menthe)* and *We Will All Go to Heaven (Nous irons tous au paradis)*.

The 1977 box office year turned out to be successful for director Yves Boisset, whose two dramas *Investigator Fayard*, nicknamed "The Sheriff" (*Le Juge Fayard dit "Le Sheriff"*) and *Purple Taxi (Un taxi mauve)* shared 8th and 9th places among box office hits, collecting from 1.5 million to 1.8 million spectators.

The top ten also included films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Claude Zidi, Yves Robert, Georges Lautner, etc.

Author's films by Francois Truffaut, Luis Buñuel, Alain Resnais, Valerio Dzurini, Agnès Varda managed to attract from three hundred thousand to a million viewers.

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1977, three films made it into Soviet film distribution (in 1979 and 1980).

The comedy *The Beast (L'Animal)* was a huge success in the USSR: 41.3 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

Detective/crime dramas *Death of a Rotten (Mort d'un pourri)* and *Investigator Fayard*, nicknamed "The Sheriff" were also received with enthusiasm in the USSR, although less: 25.4 million and 22.1 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1977 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for purchase of films that are too frivolous in plot (*Bilitis*, *We Will All Go to Heaven*);
- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high;
- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Simone Signoret, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Signoret played the main role in the film *The Whole Life Ahead / La Vie devant soi*).

True, the Soviet film distribution (in the second half of the 1970s – the first half of the 1980s) included five more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution in 1977 (in France they collected from 30 thousand to 1.1 million viewers), which were not included in top ten: *The Lacemaker (La Dentellière)*, *The Last Kiss (Le dernier baiser)*, *Tatar Desert (Le Désert des Tartares / Il deserto dei tartari)*, *Gloria* and *Return of the White Fang (Il Ritorno di Zanna Bianca / Le Retour de Croc blanc)*.

It is clear that of these, the adventure film *The Return of the White Fang* had the greatest success in the USSR: 23.9 million viewers in the first year of showing in cinemas.

So, in different years, 8 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1977 were released on USSR screens.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1977 (among French films)*

In 1977, 22 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders partly consisted of elite works of “auteur cinema” and others movies.

In the 1950s and 1960s, many of Christian-Jacques' films topped the French box office, attracting millions of viewers. In 1977, Christian-Jacques' musical comedy *Parisian Life (La vie parisienne)* unexpectedly became one of the outsiders: it attracted only about forty thousand spectators to cinemas. Most likely, viewers of the second half of the 1970s found this film too old-fashioned...

Of the entire list of outsiders of the French film distribution in 1977, only the adventure film *The Return of the White Fang* and the melodrama *Gloria*, directed by Claude Autant-Lara, were included in the Soviet film distribution (in the French film distribution in 1977, it managed to gather only about 50 thousand viewers).

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1978 (among French films)*

In 1978, only 18 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than the figures of the 1950s and 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.9 million to 5.4 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In the genre spectrum of dozens of leaders in the French film box office in 1978, comedies were in the lead with a huge gap from dramas and melodramas.

Like 1974, 1975 and 1977, in 1978 the top ten French film distribution leaders included rather frivolous films for “adults”, very dubious from the point of view of official Soviet morality.

Suffice it to say that the first place in the French film box office in 1978 was the comedy *Cage for Madmen (La Cage aux folles)* by Edouard Molinaro, where the LGBT theme was famously played out. By the way, this was the first film of this type to reach the top of the box office in the French box office.

The plots of the comedies *Hotel on the Beach (L'Hôtel de la plage)* by Michel Lang (fourth place at the French box office, 2.8 million viewers) and *Tanned (Les Bronzés)* by Patrice Leconte (sixth place at the French box office, 2.3 million viewers) were quite frivolous.

After a short break, comedies with Louis de Funès (*Squabbles / La Zizanie*) by Claude Zidi, third place at the box office and 2.8 million viewers) and Pierre Richard (*Escape / La Carapate*) by Gerard Oury, second place and 2.9 million viewers) returned to the top ten leaders of the French film box office. million viewers; *I'm shy, but I'm healing (Je suis timide, mais je me soigne)*, directed by the actor himself: fifth place and 2.8 million viewers).

Like Pierre Richard, Annie Girardot also had two films in the “golden ten”: *Squabbles (La Zizanie)* and *The Key in the Door (La Clé sur la porte)*.

But the films with the participation of Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon and the group *Charlot* in the “golden ten” were not commercial success this time...

As a result, the top ten leaders of the French film distribution in 1978 included films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Edouard Molinaro, Gerard Oury, Claude Zidi, Michel Lang, Claude Sautet, Yves Boisset and others.

Political cinema occupied a modest place in the French film distribution in 1978, but was represented by films of a high artistic level: *Butterfly on the Shoulder (Un papillon sur l'épaule)* by Jacques Deray, *In the Interests of the State (La Raison d'État)* by André Cayatte, *Dossier No. 51* by Michel Deville, etc.

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Pierre Richard, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Gerard Depardieu, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1978, only two films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

The melodrama by Claude Sautet *A Simple Story (Une histoire simple)* (seventh place in the French box office and 2.3 million viewers) appeared on the screens of Soviet cinemas relatively quickly – in 1981. But the comedy *Escape* by Gerard Oury (second place in the French box office and 2.9 million viewers), although it was delayed in release in the USSR (most likely for financial reasons) for a whole decade, still managed to attract over twenty million viewers.

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1978 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for procurement of films that are too frivolous (by Soviet standards) (*Cage for Madmen, Hotel on the Beach, Tanned*);
- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (most likely, this applied, for example, to the comedy *Squabble*).

True, from the films outside the French “golden ten” of film distribution in 1978, seven more films were included in Soviet film distribution (in the second half of the 1970s and early 1980s) (in France they collected from forty thousand to 0.9 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *Autumn Sonata (Höstsonaten / Herbstsonate / Sonate d'automne)*, *Love in Question (L'Amour en question)*, *In the Interests of the State (La Raison d'État)*, *Share of Fire (La Part du feu)*, *Fedora*, *Order and Security in the World (L'Ordre et la sécurité du monde)* and *A People's Romance (Romanzo popolare / Romances et confidences)*.

At the same time, with the film by Mario Monicelli *A People's Romance*, which attracted about six million spectators in Italy, a story typical of many Italian-French films made without the participation of French film stars happened in French cinemas: only forty thousand French people saw it in cinemas. But in the USSR, this film with Ornella Muti and Ugo Tognazzi was a huge success: 37.6 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

So, in different years, 9 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1978 were released on USSR screens.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1978 (among French films)*

In 1978, 17 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders partly consisted of elite works of “auteur cinema”.

But on the other hand, the same list includes the film of the recent triumph of the French film distribution by Juste Jacquin (his *Emmanuelle* in 1974 took first place in the French film distribution in terms of attendance) *The Last Romantic Lover (Le Dernier Amant romantique)*, which managed to attract only about one hundred thousand viewers.

Another box office luminary, Jean Giraud (he has a super-successful comedy film series about the adventures of a gendarme played by Louis de Funès), suffered an unexpected failure with the comedy *Horoscope*, which also attracted only about a hundred thousand French people.

The erotic melodrama *Inside the Monastery (Intérieur d'un couvent / Interno di un convento)* also unexpectedly received a similar result at the French box office in 1978. After all, it would seem that in past years, Walerian Borowczyk's films with shocking plots and abundant “nudes” were popular with the public. But not at this time...

From the entire list of outsiders, only two films made it into Soviet film distribution this time.

A strong mixture of psychological drama and thriller called *Order and Security in the World* (in France, for some reason, only about 50 thousand viewers watched it) was released on USSR screens in 1980 under the title *The Death of Madame Leman*.

But with Mario Monicelli's *A People's Romance*, a story happened in the French box office that was typical of many Italian-French films that did not star Francophone stars: its attendance was only about forty thousand spectators.

In Italy and the USSR, this film was a real box office success. *A People's Romance* was watched by 5.9 million Italians (which was approximately equal to 26 million viewers in the USSR). And in Soviet film distribution, *A People's Romance* attracted even more viewers to cinemas: 37.6 million viewers in the first year of its demonstration.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1979 (among French films)*

In 1979, only 16 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than the figures of the 1950s and 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.6 million to 6.3 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in the French film box office in 1979 was extremely diverse; contrary to the traditions of previous years, it was dominated by dramas rather than comedies.

As in 1974–1975 and 1977–1978, in 1979 a picture for “adults” entered the top ten. This time it was the film *What about tenderness? Bordel! (Et la tendresse? Bordel!)* by Patrick Shulman (third place and 3.4 million viewers). The rest of the “daring films” remained outside the top thirty box office leaders...

In first place in the French film box office in 1979 was the comedy by Jean Giraud *The Gendarme and the Aliens (Le Gendarme et les extra-terrestres)* (6.3 million viewers) with Louis de Funès in the title role. Having suffered a crushing box office failure in 1978 with the comedy *Horoscope* devoid of top stars, Jean Giraud did not take any more risks and successfully returned to his “good old” film series about the cheerful adventures of a gendarme...

After a short break, films starring Jean-Paul Belmondo and Alain Delon returned to the top ten of the French box office.

Belmondo played the main role in the action-packed film *Cop or Bandit (Flic ou Voyou)* (second place at the French box office and 4 million viewers). And Delon is in the drama *Military Doctor (Le Toubib)* (ninth place at the box office and 1.7 million viewers).

1979 was a very successful year for Yves Montand: two films (though far from entertaining) with his participation entered the top ten viewing preferences of the French (*I... like Icarus / I... comme Icare*). and *The Light of a Woman / Clair de femme*).

But this time there were no films with the participation of Pierre Richard and the group *Charlot* in the top ten distribution leaders...

As a result, the top ten leaders in French film distribution included films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Jean Giraud, Georges Lautner, Henri Verneuil, Patrice Leconte, etc.

We also note that Roman Polanski's masterfully directed film *Tess* with Nastassja Kinski in the title role was also in the top ten (fifth place at the box office and 1.9 million viewers).

And although political cinema occupied a modest place in the French film box office in 1979, it was represented, for example, by the powerful film *I... like Icarus* by Henri Verneuil.

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Gerard Depardieu, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1979, five films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

Three of them appeared on USSR cinema screens quite quickly – in 1981-1982.

The comedy *The Gendarme and the Aliens* (first place in the French box office and 6.3 million viewers – analogous to 31 million viewers in the USSR) attracted 35.3 million viewers in the Soviet film box office.

The film *Cop or Bandit* (second place in the French box office and 4 million viewers – analogous to 20 million viewers in the USSR) attracted an even larger audience in Soviet cinemas – 38.9 million.

Data on the attendance of the melodrama *Tess* in Soviet film distribution is (yet?) unavailable, as well as distribution data for the crime drama *War of the Police (La Guerre des polices)* and the comedy *Tanned on Skis (Les Bronzés font du ski)*, which appeared on Soviet screens only in 1991...

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1979 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for procurement of films that are too frivolous (by Soviet standards) (*What about tenderness? Bordel!*);
- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high;
- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of Yves Montand, who dared to sharply criticize the USSR over the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Montand played the main roles in the films *I... like Icarus* and *The Light of a Woman*). By the way, this trend continued until the era of “perestroika”...

True, the Soviet film distribution (in the early 1980s) included seven films (in France they attracted from ten thousand to 0.9 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten leaders of the French film distribution in 1979: *Headbutt (Coup de tête)*, *Speak... I'm interested! (Cause toujours... tu m'intéresses!)*, *Little Beautiful Village (Un si joli village...)*, *Dogs (Les Chiens)*, *I Will Teach You to Love Life (Je vous ferai aimer la vie)*, *Melancoly Baby* and *Charles and Lucy*. In the USSR, these films also did not become box office champions...

So, 13 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1979 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1979 (among French films)*

In 1979, 36 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema,” but mainly of films of various genres, including erotic films. For example, the second work in a row by Walerian Borowczyk was an outsider. This time – *Heroines of Evil (Les Héroïnes du mal)*...

From the entire list of box office failures, three films were included in the Soviet film distribution this time (in the first half of the 1980s): “I will teach you to love life” (*I Will Teach You to Love Life*), *Melancoly Baby*, *Charles and Lucy*. As in France and the USSR, these paintings, by and large, average in artistic quality, did not enjoy noticeable success...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1980 (among French films)*

In 1980, only 18 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than the figures of the 1950s and 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 2.3 million to 4.4 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1980, in contrast to 1979, again returned to the total dominance of comedies.

As in 1974–1975 and 1977–1979, in 1980 a film for “adults” entered the top ten. This time it was a comedy with an LGBT theme, *Cage for Madmen 2 (La Cage aux folles II)* by Edouard Molinaro (fifth place and three million viewers). The rest of the “daring films” were left behind the forty box office leaders...

Claude Pinoteau's comedy *Boom (La Boum)* (4.4 million viewers) with Sophie Marceau in the main “teenage” role took first place in the French film box office in 1980. Back then, probably, no one could have imagined that this pretty girl would have a brilliant career as one of the leading French film stars of the 1980–1990s.

The film by Claude Pinoteau, actively supported by children and teenagers, managed to push into second and third place two comedies of the box office luminary Claude Zidi, *Idiots (Les Sous-doués)* (4 million viewers) and *Inspector the Blunder (Inspecteur la Bavure)* (3.7 million viewers).

After a rather long absence, Francois Truffaut returned to the “golden ten” of audience preferences. This time with one of his best films – the drama *The Last Metro (Le Dernier Métro)* (fourth place in terms of box office results and 3.4 million viewers).

The top ten film hits at the French box office in 1980 also included the comedies *Puppet (Le Guignolo)* with Jean-Paul Belmondo (sixth place and 2.9 million viewers), *Umbrella Prick (Le Coup du parapluie)* with Pierre Richard (seventh place and 2.4 million viewers) and *The Miser (L'Avare)* with Louis de Funès (eighth place and 2.4 million viewers).

As a result, the top ten leaders in French film distribution included films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Claude Zidi, Edouard Molinaro, Georges Lautner, Gerard Oury, Jean Giraud and others.

Based on the 1980 distribution results, original films by Alain Resnais, Jean-Luc Godard, Michel Deville and some other masters were in the attendance range from 0.6 million to 1.4 million viewers.

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Pierre Richard, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Gerard Depardieu, Coluche, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

In 1980, the decline in popularity of the *Charlot* group was quite sharply marked: if in the 1970s, comedies with their participation quite often found themselves in the top ten leaders, then in 1980 the comedy *Charlot vs. Dracula* ended up only in 33rd place (having gathered an audience half a million viewers).

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1980, five films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

Four of them appeared on USSR cinema screens quite quickly – in 1981-1982.

The comedy *Inspector the Blunder* attracted an audience of 3.7 million viewers in France. In the USSR (of course, taking into account the difference in the population of the two countries), it was more popular: 25.6 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

The comedy *Puppet* had even greater success in the USSR. In France, its audience amounted to 2.9 million viewers, and in Soviet film distribution (under the title *Game of Four Hands*): 31.5 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

It was a similar story with the comedy *Umbrella Prick*: 2.4 million viewers in France and 28.4 million viewers in the USSR.

Data on attendance in the USSR for the comedy with Louis de Funès *The Miser* and the comedy *Boom* (it was released on the screens of Soviet cinemas very late – in 1991), alas, are (yet?) unavailable...

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1980 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Traditional exclusion from candidates for procurement of films that are too frivolous (by Soviet standards) (*Cage for Madmen-2*);

- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (most likely, it was for these reasons that the comedy *Boom* was bought in the USSR only in the early 1990s. However, in addition to the high cost, the purchase of *The Last Metro* could also have been hampered by the Jewish theme, which right up to the perestroika times at the USSR State Committee for Cinematography, to put it mildly, was not welcomed).

True, the Soviet film distribution (mainly in the early 1980s) included 11 more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution in 1980 (in France they collected from 0.1 to 2.2 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *Three Must Be Killed* (*Trois hommes à abattre*), *Stole Jupiter's Thigh* (*On a volé la cuisse de Jupiter*), *My American Uncle* (*Mon oncle d'Amérique*), *Heads or Tails* (*Pile ou face*), *Death Live* (*La Mort en direct*), *Vacation Week* (*Une semaine de vacances*), *Atlantic City*, *Christ Stopped at Eboli* (*Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* / *Le Christ s'est arrêté à Eboli*), *Inheritance* (*Les Héritières* / *Örökség*), *All Stars* (*Tous Vedettes*) and *Seven Days in January* (*Siete días de enero* / *Les Sept jours en janvier*).

Of course, the highest grossing of them (both in France, where it took 11th place and attracted 2.2 million viewers, and in the USSR, where this picture attracted 25.2 million viewers to cinema screens in the first year of demonstration) was detective story by Jacques Deray “Three Must Be Killed” with Alain Delon in the title role.

So, 16 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1980 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1980 (among French films)*

In 1980, 36 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema,” but mainly of films of various genres, including erotic films.

From the entire list of outsiders, this time two films made it into Soviet film distribution (in the first half of the 1980s): the musical comedy *All Stars* and the political drama *Seven Days in January*.

*Top box office leaders in France in 1981 (among French films)*

In 1981, only 22 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than the figures of the 1950s and 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 2.2 million to 7.1 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1981 was quite diverse: comedies, dramas, adventures...

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1981 not a single erotic film was included in the top ten (although in general there were still many films of this kind in the French film distribution).

The first place in the French film box office in 1981 was taken by Francis Weber's comedy *The Goat (La Chèvre)* (7.1 million viewers) with the duet of Pierre Richard and Gerard Depardieu.

This comedy managed to push into second place the film of one of the box office luminaries, Georges Lautner, *The Professional (Le Professionnel)* with Jean-Paul Belmondo (5.2 million viewers).

Jean-Jacques Annaud's adventure film *The War of Fire (La Guerre du feu)* took third place in terms of attendance (4.9 million viewers).

After a rather long absence, Claude Lelouch returned to the “golden ten” of audience preferences. This time with one of his best films – the large-scale big-budget drama *Bolero (Les Uns et les Autres)* (fourth place in box office results and 3.2 million viewers).

In the top ten again was the film with Alain Delon (this time he was also the director of the film) *For the Skin of a Policeman (Pour la peau d'un flic)* (eighth place at the box office and 2.4 million viewers).

The top ten film hits at the French box office in 1981 also included the comedies *The School Teacher (Le Maître d'école)* with Coluche (fifth place and 3.1 million viewers), *Cabbage Soup (La Soupe aux choux)* with Louis de Funès (sixth place and 3.1 million viewers) and *Come to me, I'm staying with a friend (Viens chez moi, j'habite chez une copine)* (seventh place and 2.8 million viewers).

As a result, the top ten leaders in French film distribution included mainly films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Georges Lautner, Claude Lelouch, Jean Giraud, Patrice Leconte, etc.

In general, the mass French box office in 1981 continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Pierre Richard, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Gerard Depardieu, Coluche, Romy Schneider, Yves Montand, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1981, only three films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

The comedy *The Goat (La Chèvre)* was released in the USSR under the title *Unlucky* in December 1983 and during the year of demonstration it managed to attract 31.4 million viewers (its attendance in France, taking into account the difference in the population of the two countries, was similar).

In the same 1983, *Diva* was also released in Soviet film distribution (ninth place in the French box office and 2.3 million viewers).

But *The Professional* appeared on Soviet screens almost ten years late – in December 1990... Unfortunately, data on its attendance at Soviet film distribution is not available...

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1981 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (most likely, this applied to the films *Wars for Fire*, *Cabbage Soup*, *Behind the Skin of a Policeman*, etc.).

- traditional exclusion from candidates for the purchase of films with an interpretation of Russian and Soviet themes and, accordingly, Russian and Soviet characters unacceptable for Soviet ideology (*Bolero*).

True, the Soviet film distribution included 15 more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution in 1981 (in France they attracted from ten thousand to 2.1 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *The Tricks of Scapin (Les Fourberies de Scapin)*, *Choice of*



*Weapons (Le Choix des armes), The Neighbor (La Femme d'à côté), We Must Kill Birgit Haas (Il faut tuer Birgit Haas), Naked Love (L'Amour nu), Dirty Business (Une sale affaire), Three Brothers (Tre fratelli / Trois frères), Black Robe for the Killer (Une robe noire pour un tueur), A Man's Affair (Une affaire d'hommes), The True Story of the Lady with the Camellias (La storia vera della signora dalle camelie/ La dame aux camélias), Provincial Girl (La Provinciale), Life goes on (La vie continue), Asphalt, Hornets' Nest (Le Guépiot), and Our Daughter (Notre fille).*

The greatest resonance of them was caused in the USSR by Francois Truffaut's melodrama *The Neighbor*. It was released on cinema screens in 1986 and attracted 13.1 million viewers in the first year of demonstration (in France its box office success was much more modest – 1.1 million viewers).

So, 18 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1981 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1981 (among French films)*

In 1981, 17 films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, which attracted less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema,” but mainly of films of various genres, including erotic films.

From the entire list of outsiders, four films were included in the Soviet film distribution this time: *Life Goes On, Asphalt, Hornets' Nest* and *Our Daughter*. These films also did not have any noticeable success in the USSR...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1982 (among French films)*

In 1982, only 26 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers; this was noticeably less than the figures of the 1950s, but generally comparable to the 1960s...

The leading genre of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1982 was comedy.

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 2.2 million to 5.4 million viewers to cinemas in France.

In 1982, two stars of French cinema tragically passed away: Romy Schneider (23.09.1938 – 29.05.1982) and Patrick Dever (29.01.1947 – 16.07.1982).

At the same time, the 1982 film release became the last box office triumph of the king of laughter – Louis de Funès (1914–1983), who died on January 27, 1983...

The comedy with Louis de Funès *The Gendarme and the Gendarmes* by Jean Giraud in the French film distribution in 1982 was in third place in box office receipts: 4.2 million viewers.

After the death of Louis de Funès, Pierre Richard and Coluche (1944-1986) became the main comedians of French cinema. True, Coluche's subsequent life was short: on June 19, 1986, he crashed his motorcycle into a truck and died...

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1982 not a single film for “adults” was included in the top ten (although in general there were still a lot of films of this kind in the French film distribution).

The first place in the French film box office in 1982 was taken by Gerard Oury's comedy *Ace of Aces (L'As des as)* with Jean-Paul Belmondo in the title role (5.4 million viewers).

In second place was the comedy by Jean Yanne, parodying the “peplums”: *A quarter to two before the Nativity of Christ (Deux heures moins le quart avant Jésus-Christ)* (4.6 million viewers).

Very good box-office received and new adventures of Claude Zidi's comedic characters in the film *Idiots on Vacation (Les Sous-doués en vacances)*: seventh place at the box office and 3.6 million viewers.

The sequel to the super-popular *Boom* with Sophie Marceau also showed high attendance results. *Boom 2* by Claude Pinoteau was fifth in box office results in France (it was watched by 4.1 million viewers).

The top ten box office leaders also included Bob Swaim's crime drama *The Informer (La Balance)* and another film adaptation of the novel *Les Misérables*, this time directed by Robert Hossein and starring Lino Ventura...

The “golden ten” leaders of the French film distribution of 1982 included mainly films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Gerard Oury, Jean Giraud, Claude Pinoteau, Claude Zidi, etc.

Author's films by Claude Chabrol, Joséph Losey, Jean-Luc Godard and Eric Rohmer managed to collect from 0.2 million to 0.4 million viewers...

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Louis de Funès, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Yves Montand, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Gerard Depardieu, Coluche, Annie Girardot, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1982, only two films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

*Boom-2* was released in the USSR very late (in 1991), and *Les Misérables* was released quite quickly – in December 1984...

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1982 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

– Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (most likely, this concerned the films *Ace of Aces*, *The Gendarme and the Gendarmes*, etc.).

– A ban on the purchase of new films with the participation of the “ideologically alien” Yves Montand (he played the main role in the film *Everything is Flaming, Everything is Burning / Tout feu tout flamme*), which was in force until the peak of “perestroika”.

True, eight more films from the French film distribution repertoire of 1982 were included in the Soviet film distribution (in France they collected from 0.2 to 1.5 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten.

*A Thousand Billion Dollars (Mille milliards de dollars)*, *The Return of Martin Guerre (Le Retour de Martin Guerre)*, *A Tradesman in the Nobility (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme)* and *A Season of Peace in Paris (Une saison de paix à Paris)* appeared on USSR cinema screens in 1983-1984. But *Shock (Le Choc)*, *Night of Varenna (La Nuit de Varennes)*, *Room in the City (Une chambre en ville)* and *Gift (Le Cadeau)* were released in Soviet theaters only in 1990-1991.

At the same time, the rather frivolous *Gift* by Michel Lang, most likely, if the late perestroika, which actually abolished censorship, had not happened, would never have appeared on the screens of the USSR...

So, Soviet film distribution in different years released 10 films from the French repertoire of 1982.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1982 (among French films)*

In 1982, 27 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema”, but mainly of films of various genres.

From the entire list of outsiders, only one film was included in the Soviet film distribution this time: the Franco-Yugoslav film *A Season of Peace in Paris*, which clearly (including the participation of actress Maria Schneider) referred viewers to the famous film by Bernardo Bertolucci *Last Tango in Paris* (which, as is well known, was not shown in Soviet film distribution)...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1983 (among French films)*

In 1983, only 25 French films managed to cross the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably lower than the figures of the 1950s, although better than many previous distribution seasons...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.8 million to 5.1 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in the French film box office in 1983 was diverse: comedies, crime dramas, melodrama, action, adventure.

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1983 not a single erotic film made it into the top ten (although there were still many films of this kind in the French box office).

As we have already noted, after the death of the famous French comedian Louis de Funès (1914–1983), leadership in the comedy genre passed to Coluche and Pierre Richard.

In 1983, the top ten included two comedies with the participation of Coluche: *Banzaï* by Claude Zidi and *Ciao, Clown (Tchao Pantin)* by Claude Berry (these films shared fifth-sixth place at the box office with a result of 3.8 million viewers).

Pierre Richard (in a duet with Gerard Depardieu) had only one comedy in the top ten – *Papas (Les Compères)* by Francis Weber, but it turned out to be the third most visited with a result of 4.8 million viewers.

Even higher – in second place at the box office (5 million viewers) – was Jacques Deray's action movie *Marginal* with Jean-Paul Belmondo.

Alain Delon also returned to the top ten: his *Indomitable (Le Battant)* attracted nearly two million viewers to cinemas and ended up in ninth place.

The adventure film by José Giovanni *The Rich Man (Le Ruffian)*, where Lino Ventura performed as a soloist, also made it into the top ten (seventh place and 3.4 million viewers).

But in first place in 1983 (5.1 million viewers) unexpectedly came a kind of surprise film: the crime drama by Jean Becker *A Killing Summer (L'Été meurtrier)* with Isabelle Adjani in the leading female role. Neither before nor after Jean Becker has achieved such impressive audience success.

The top ten box office French films included mainly films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Jacques Deray, Francis Weber, Claude Zidi, José Giovanni, Philippe Labro and others.

Films by Robert Bresson, Alain Resnais, Eric Rohmer, Ettore Scola and Francois Truffaut managed to gather from 0.2 million to 1.2 million viewers...

Unfortunately, the elegant parody stylization of noir detectives *Merry Sunday (Vivement dimanche!)* became the last work of the outstanding director Francois Truffaut (1932–1984): on October 21, 1984, he died after a serious illness...

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Jean-Paul Belmondo, Pierre Richard, Coluche, Gerard Depardieu, Yves Montand, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Isabelle Adjani, Annie Girardot, Mireille Darc, Marlene Jaubert, Catherine Deneuve and other famous actors.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1983, five films made it into Soviet cinema distribution.

True, if the comedies *Papas, Banzai* and the melodrama *I Married a Shadow (J'ai épousé une ombre)* appeared on USSR screens in 1984-1987, then *Marginal* and *La Crime* stayed until 1990–1987. 1991...

At the same time, the audience success of the comedies *Papas* and *Banzai* turned out to be approximately the same in France and the USSR (taking into account the difference in the populations of the countries...

The reasons why the remaining films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1983 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing censorship were most likely the following:

- Financial reasons, i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high (most likely, this applied to the films *The Killing Summer, The Rich Man, Indomitable*).

- It is incorrect, from the point of view of Soviet censorship, that ideological themes are placed on military topics (*Grandpa is participating in the resistance movement / Papy fait de la résistance*).

True, the Soviet film distribution (in 1984-1989) included eight more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution in 1983 (in France they collected from 0.2 to 1.8 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *The African (L'Africain)*, *The Price of Risk (Le Prix du danger)*, *Merry Sunday (Vivement dimanche!)*, *Edith and Marcel*, *Le Bal*, *Fanny and Alexander*, *The Little Gang (La petite bande)* and *Benvenuto*.

It is interesting to note that the films *Le Bal* by Ettore Scola, *Edith and Marcel* by Claude Lelouch and *Benvenuto* by André Delvaux (taking into account the difference in the population of the USSR and France) attracted more viewers in the French box office than in the Soviet one. Apparently, for the audience of the USSR in 1986-1987, these films seemed too complex...

Unfortunately, data on attendance at Soviet film distribution in 1984-1989 for the films *The African* by Philippe de Broca, *The Price of Risk* by Claude Boisset, *Merry Sunday* by Francois Truffaut, *The Little Gang* by Michel Deville and *Fanny and Alexander* by Ingmar Bergman are not available...

So, 13 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1983 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1983 (among French films)*

In 1983, 37 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of these outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema” (films by Carlos Saura, André Delvaux, Alain Robbe-Grillet, etc.), but mainly of films of various genres.

Of these, only André Delvaux's drama *Benvenuta* was released into Soviet film distribution, which in the USSR attracted much more viewers than in France (3.1 million), although, of course, it was not among the box office leaders...

*Top box office leaders in France in 1984 (among French films)*

In 1984, only 27 French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was noticeably less than the indicators of the 1950s, but quite comparable to the indicators of the 1970s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 2.0 million to 6.2 million viewers to cinemas in France.

Comedies clearly dominated the genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1984.

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1984 not a single erotic film made it into the top ten (although there were still quite a few films of this kind in the French box office). For example, *Emmanuelle 4* was only in 21st place with an attendance of 1.3 million viewers...

As for the film by Juste Jacquin, the director of the first *Emmanuelle*, which triumphantly screened in France in the mid-1970s, his *Gwendoline* was able to take only 30th place at the French box office in 1984 (0.9 million viewers).

A kind of sensation of the French film distribution in 1984 was the first place in box office receipts (6.2 million viewers) of Michel Blanc's directorial debut – the comedy *March in the Shadows* (*Marche à l'ombre*), which managed (for reasons that remain for me personally riddle) to get ahead of such entertaining films of box office luminaries as *Les Ripoux* by Claude Zidi with the duet of Philippe Noiret and Thierry Lhermitte (second place at the box office and 5.9 million viewers) and *The Adventurers* (*Les Morfalous*) by Henri Verneuil with Jean-Paul Belmondo in the title role (third place and 3.6 million viewers).

Another surprise at the 1984 box office was the 11th place at the box office for Wim Wenders's arthouse and generally completely unentertaining film *Paris, Texas*, which managed to attract two million viewers to cinema screens.

In 1984, the top ten highest-grossing French films included two films with the participation of Jean-Paul Belmondo. In addition to *The Adventurers*, the winners included Georges Lautner's funny comedy *Happy Easter* (*Joyeuses Pâques*), in which Belmondo played alongside rising star Sophie Marceau and famous singer/actress Marie Laforet.

Philippe Noiret also had two films in the top ten: in addition to the film *Les Ripoux* this was also the drama *Fort Saganne* (eighth place and 2.2 million viewers) by Alain Corneau, where the actor's partners were Gerard Depardieu, Catherine Deneuve and Sophie Marceau.

One of the main comedians in France, Coluche, played the main role in Gerard Oury's comedy *Revenge of the Feathered Serpent* (*La Vengeance du serpent à plumes*) (fifth place at the box office and 2.7 million viewers).

The second famous comedian, Pierre Richard, this time lost to Coluche. Yves Robert's funny comedy *Twin* (*Le Jumeau*) with his participation took 12th place at the box office (1.7 million viewers).

But the beneficiaries of the 1970s – the *Charlot* group – this time had to be content with only 45th place at the French box office. Claude Zidi lost interest in them long ago, and Jean Couturier's film *Charlots Connection* was able to attract only 0.6 million viewers...

As a result, the top ten box office French films included mainly films by recognized masters of genre cinema: Claude Zidi, Henri Verneuil, Georges Lautner, Gerard Oury, Alain Corneau and others.

Films by Alain Resnais, Jean-Luc Godard, Federico Fellini, Eric Rohmer, Bertrand Blier, Bertrand Tavernier and Andrzej Zulawski managed to gather from 0.4 million to 1.3 million viewers...

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Jean-Paul Belmondo, Coluche, Pierre Richard, Gerard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret, Sophie Marceau, Yves Montand, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Catherine Deneuve, Isabelle Adjani, Marlene Jaubert and other famous actors.

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1984, only two films made it into Soviet film distribution in 1986–1987: *Les Ripoux* (it attracted approximately the same number of viewers in the USSR and in France, in terms of the difference in the populations of the countries) and *Carmen*.

The reason why the rest of the films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1984 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing commission was most likely of a financial nature (i.e., the selling price of certain films was too high). This may have been true for the films *March in the Shadows*, *The Adventurers*, *A Happy Easter*, *Revenge of the Feathered Serpent*, and *Fort Saganne* “Fort Sagan.”

True, the Soviet film distribution of 1986-1991 included 12 more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution in 1984 (in France they attracted from 0.1 to 2 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *Paris, Texas*, *Words and music (Paroles et Musique)*, *Right Bank*, *Left Bank (Rive droite, rive gauche)*, *The Seventh Target (La 7ème cible)*, *Sunday in the Country (Un dimanche à la campagne)*, *Louisiane*, *Leopard*, *One Hundred Days in Palermo (Cento giorni a Palermo / Cent jours à Palerme)*, *And the Ship Sails On (E la nave va / Et vogue le navire...)*, *The Blood of Others (Le Sang des autres)*, *Judge and Night Thieves (Les Voleurs de la nuit)*.

Not a single one of these films was able to surpass the 15 million viewership mark in the USSR. At the same time, the films *Sunday in the Country* and *And the Ship Sails On* had much greater box office success in France than in the USSR, where their audience in 1986-1987 ranged from 0.2 million to 1.5 million viewers. Apparently, for the mass Soviet audience these pictures seemed too difficult to perceive...

So, 14 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1984 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1984 (among French films)*

In 1984, 26 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema” (films by Leo Carax, Jacques Rivette, etc.), but mainly of films of various genres.

Of these, three films were released into Soviet film distribution (in 1986).

In particular, for the first time in a quarter of a century, a film by Claude Chabrol, whose works had previously been ignored by censors due to their “dubious morality,” entered Soviet film distribution. But for the drama telling about France during the Nazi occupation – *The Blood of Others* – an exception was made. True, although this picture was released at the Soviet box office under the more box-office title *It Was in Paris*, it did not have noticeable audience success (as in France)...

Two other films also did not receive significant attention from the Soviet audience: *Judge* (in Soviet film distribution this detective was called *The Investigator*) and *Night Thieves*.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1985 (among French films)*

In 1985, only 16 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than the figures of the 1950s and 1960s...

In general, films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.7 million to 10.2 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1985 was again dominated by comedies.

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1985 not a single erotic film made it into the top ten (although there were still many films of this kind in the French box office).

The sensation of the French film box office in 1985 was the comedy *Three Men and a Baby in a Cradle (Trois hommes et un couffin)* by Coline Serreau, which had never shown itself before, which managed not only to come out on top, but also to gather 10.2 million viewers. But after the box office triumph of Gerard Oury’s comedy *The Big Walk* (17.3 million viewers) in 1966, not a single French film managed to overcome the ten million mark for almost twenty years!

But here, too, it is worth noting that the duo of the most popular French comedians of the 1960s, Louis de Funès and Bourvil, starred in *The Big Walk*, while Coline Serreau’s comedy did not feature a single superstar...

It was also a certain surprise that the eccentric film of the then little-known director Luc Besson *Subway* (third place and 2.9 million viewers) with Isabelle Adjani and Christophe Lambert and the far from the most spectacular film by Claude Miller managed to enter the top ten leaders of the French film distribution *Daring (L'Effrontée)* (fourth place and 2.9 million viewers).

I also note that at the box office in 1985, for the first time in many years, a film with Alain Delon (in this case it was the detective story *The Word of a Policeman / Parole de flic*) managed to

surpass in attendance the film with the participation of Jean-Paul Belmondo (it was the crime comedy *Hold-up*).

In the top ten highest-grossing French films at the box office in 1985, for the first time in many years, there were practically no films by the most recognized masters of genre cinema: Claude Zidi, Georges Lautner, Jacques Deray, Gerard Oury, Henri Verneuil, etc.

Georges Lautner's comedy *Cage for Madmen 3* (*La Cage aux folles 3*) became 11th according to the results of attendance. Comedy by Claude Zidi *Kings of Gag* (*Les Rois du gag*) – 13th. Thriller by Jacques Deray *You Only Die Twice* (*On ne meurt que deux fois*) – 20th.

Films by Jean-Luc Godard, Andrzej Zulawski, Agnès Varda managed to gather from 0.3 million to 1.1 million viewers...

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Alain Delon, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Coluche, Pierre Richard, Gerard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret, Sophie Marceau, Yves Montand, Lino Ventura, Catherine Deneuve, Isabelle Adjani and other famous actors.

As a result, out of the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1985, only one film made it into Soviet film distribution (and this was, in general, a unique case for many years; it was not so rare before that sooner or later up to half of the films from “golden” French ten) – *Three Men and a Baby in a Cradle*. In France, it attracted 10.2 million viewers (which is similar to 50 million viewers in the USSR), but in actual Soviet film distribution it was more modest, gathering about 23 million viewers in cinemas (1987).

The reason why the rest of the films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1985 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing commission was most likely of a financial nature (i.e., the selling price of certain films was too high). Perhaps this applied to the films *Specialists*, *Subway*, *The Word of a Policeman*, *Hold-up*, *Police*).

True, the Soviet film distribution of 1986–1990 included several films from the repertoire of the French film distribution of 1985 (in France they attracted from 50 thousand to 1.5 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *Kings of Gag*, *Wedding of the Century* (*Le Mariage du siècle*), *Hell Train* (*Train d'enfer*), *The Fourth Estate* (*Le Quatrième Pouvoir*), *Blanche and Marie*, *Tango, the Expulsion of Gardel* (*Tangos, l'exil de Gardel*), *The Defiant Louise* (*Louise... l'insoumise*) and *Favorites of the Moon* (*Les Favoris de la lune*).

Of these, Claude Zidi's comedy *Kings of Gag* was expected to enjoy the greatest success: in France it was watched by 1.5 million viewers (analogous to approximately 7 million viewers in the USSR), and in Soviet film distribution – 13.2 million viewers in the first year of demonstration.

So, in different years, 9 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1985 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1985 (among French films)*

In 1985, 27 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema” (films by Margaret Duras, Otar Ioseliani, Allen Tanner, etc.), but mainly of films of various genres.

Of these, three films made it into Soviet film distribution: *Tango, the Expulsion of Gardel*, *The Defiant Louise* and *Favorites of the Moon*.

The director of *Favorites of the Moon* was Otar Ioseliani, who emigrated from the USSR, but in the Soviet box office of the perestroika year of 1987 this no longer mattered, especially since there were no hints of politics in this film.

In France, *Favorites of the Moon* failed at the box office: only about 50 thousand viewers watched it (which was analogous to 250 thousand viewers in the USSR). But in the USSR there was much more interest in this parable: 5.3 million viewers in the first year of demonstration, which was a considerable success for an arthouse film...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1986 (among French films)*

In 1986, only 16 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark, and this was noticeably less than not only the figures of the 1950s and 1960s, but also the previous decade...

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted from 1.7 million to 7.2 million viewers to cinemas in France.

After a short break, diversity again returned to the genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1986: drama, comedy, melodrama, adventure...

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1986 not a single erotic film made it into the top ten (although there were still many films of this kind in the French box office).

In the top ten highest-grossing French films at the box office in 1986, as well as in 1985, there were no films by such recognized masters of genre cinema as Claude Zidi, Georges Lautner, Jacques Deray, Gerard Oury, Henri Verneuil and others.

At the same time, the top ten included films by such significant directors as Claude Berri (his duology *Jean de Floret* and *Manon des sources* shared first and second places in the French box office: 7.2 million and 6.6 million viewers), Jean-Jacques Annaud (his film adaptation of Umberto Eco's novel *The Name of the Rose* (*Le Nom de la rose/ Il Nome della rosa*) was in third place with 5 million viewers), Jean-Jacques Beineix (*37°2 in the morning / 37°2 le matin*: fifth place at the box office and 3.6 million viewers), Bertrand Blier (his shocking *Evening Suit / Tenue de soirée* was in sixth place with an attendance of 3.1 million viewers) and Roman Polanski (his very expensive adventure film *Pirates* was ninth at the box office with a result of 1.9 million viewers).

Author's films by Andrei Tarkovsky, Nagisa Oshima, Federico Fellini, Eric Rohmer, Leo Carax and Alain Resnais managed to gather from 0.2 million to 0.5 million viewers...

On June 19, 1986, the famous French comedian Coluche (1944-1986) died in a car accident. The last comedy with his participation, where he played the main role, *Madman at War*, was released in French cinemas in 1985...

Taking into account the fact that Louis de Funès passed away back in 1983, and the comic group *Charlot* had already lost its former popularity by the beginning of the 1980s, from 1986 to the beginning of the 1990s Pierre Richard became the main cinematic comedian in France.

In 1986, the comedy with the participation of Pierre Richard (*The Runaways / Les Fugitifs* by Francis Weber) came out in fourth place in France in terms of attendance with an impressive result of 4.5 million viewers.

It should be noted here that 1986 was truly a stellar year for Pierre Richard's partner in *The Runaways*, Gerard Depardieu: he also played leading roles in the films *Jean de Florette* and *Evening Suit*.

In 1986 (a rare case!), not a single new film starring Jean-Paul Belmondo was released in France, but *Passage* with Alain Delon attracted two million viewers and became the eighth most visited.

In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public: Pierre Richard, Gerard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret, Sophie Marceau, Yves Montand, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Catherine Deneuve, Isabelle Adjani and other famous actors.

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1986, only two films made it into Soviet film distribution in 1988-1990: *The Name of the Rose* and *The Runaways*.

At the same time, the comedy *Twins* was watched by 4.5 million viewers in France. This was the equivalent of 22 million viewers in the USSR. This film collected approximately this amount in real Soviet film distribution in 1988...

The reason why the remaining films of the French "champion ten" of film distribution in 1986 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing commission were most likely:

- financial properties (i.e. the selling price of certain films is too high). Perhaps this concerned the diology of Claude Berry, as well as *Pirates* and *Passage*).

- the unacceptability of showing "free Western morals" in Soviet cinemas in the films *37°2 in the Morning* and *Evening Suit*.

True, the Soviet film distribution of 1987-1989 included six more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution of 1986 (in France they collected from 0.2 to 0.7 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *Ginger and Fred* by Federico Fellini, *The Green Ray* (*Le Rayon vert*) by Eric Rohmer, *A Man and a Woman: 20 Years Later* (*Un homme et une femme: vingt ans déjà*) by Claude Lelouch, *Melodrama* (*Mélo*) by Alain Resnais, *The Red Zone* (*Zone Rouge*) by Robert Enrico and *Sacrifice* by Andrei Tarkovsky.

This was due to the fact that with the advent of perestroika, the work of the purchasing commission of the USSR State Cinema Committee became more liberal and in many ways began to focus on the purchase of highly artistic foreign films.

Plus, in 1990–1991, less artistically significant films were released on USSR screens: *Let's hope it's a girl* (*Speriamo che sia femmina / Pourvu que ce soit une fille*) and *Love for a hundred francs* (*Cent francs l'amour*).

So, in different years, 10 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1986 were released on USSR screens.

*Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1986 (among French films)*

In 1986, 28 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders consisted of films from a variety of genres.

Of these, two films were released in Soviet film distribution (in 1990-1991): *Let's hope it's a girl* and *Love for a hundred francs*.

They were not widely popular among the public in the USSR (as well as in France)...

*Top box office leaders in France in 1987 (among French films)*

In 1987, a unique event occurred in the French film distribution: only 6 (!!!) French films managed to overcome the level of 1 million viewers, and this was much less than not only the rental figures of the 1950s – 1970s, but also 1980 – 1985.

The reason for this, in my opinion, was not only competition from Hollywood products, but mainly the mass distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

Films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 0.8 million to 4.7 million viewers to cinemas in France. In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public...

In the genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1987, there were many comedies, but the second place unexpectedly came out to the drama *Goodbye Children* (*Au revoir les enfants*) devoid of entertainment and star actors, by Louis Malle, awarded the Golden Lion of St. Mark at the Venice Film Festival.

A smaller, but also impressive audience success fell in 1987 to another strong psychological drama: *Under the Sun of Satan* (*Sous le soleil de Satan*) by Maurice Pialat (ninth place based on box office results and 0.8 million viewers), a triumph at the Cannes Film Festival...

Unlike 1974-1975 and 1977-1980, in 1987 not a single erotic film made it into the top ten (although there were still many films of this kind in the French box office). For example, *Emmanuelle-5* by Walerian Borowczyk was 29th in terms of attendance with a result of 0.4 million viewers.

In 1987, after a short break, the comedy of one of the highest-grossing directors in France, Gerard Oury, again entered the top ten box office leaders. This time it was the comedy *Lévy et Goliath* (fourth place at the box office and 2.2 million viewers).

In fifth place was the comedy of another favorite of the French public, Claude Zidi, although his *Association of Malefactors* (*Association de malfaiteurs*) attracted noticeably fewer viewers – 1.2 million.

The melodrama of another box office favorite, Jacques Deray, *Love Disease* (*Maladie d'amour*) was in tenth place.

By the way, it was Jacques Deray who managed to make a double in the “golden ten” in 1987: his detective story *Loner* (*Le Solitaire*) with Jean-Paul Belmondo came in seventh place. True, at the same time, this film attracted an audience somewhat unusual for Belmondo's past triumphs of the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s: “only” 0.9 million viewers.

Bernardo Bertolucci's massive coproduction *The Last Emperor* took the top spot at the box office and did well on screens not only in Europe but also in the U.S.

Author's films by André Techinet, Eric Rohmer, Bertrand Tavernier attracted from 0.2 million to 0.5 million viewers to cinema halls...

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films of 1987, five films made it into Soviet film distribution in 1988-1990: *Goodbye, Children*, *Association of Malefactors*, *Loner*, *Love Disease* and *A Man in Love*.

At the same time, the film *Goodbye, Children* was apparently considered “too heavy” by the mass Soviet public, and all sympathy was given to *Le Solitaire* with Belmondo.

In France, this picture was watched by about a million viewers (which approximately corresponded to 5 million viewers in the USSR), but in the Soviet film distribution in 1989, the action movie *Le Solitaire* attracted almost 28 million loyal fans of Belmondo...



The reason why the rest of the films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1987 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing commission was most likely of a financial nature (i.e., the selling price of certain films was too high), since in the era of late perestroika they had already stopped the same strict ideological and moral prohibitions apply...

True, the Soviet film distribution in 1989–1991 included nine more films from the repertoire of the French film distribution in 1987 (in France they collected from 0.1 to 0.7 million viewers), which were not included in the top ten: *Masques* by Claude Chabrol, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (*Cronaca di una morte annunciata/ Chronique d'une mort annoncée*) by Francesco Rosi, *Tandem* by Patrice Leconte, *Rumba* by Roger Hanen, *My Friend's Friend* (*L'Ami de mon amie*) and *The Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle* (*4 aventures de Reinette et Mirabelle*) by Eric Rohmer, *Family* (*La Famiglia / La Famille*) by Ettore Scola, *Gold-Rimmed Glasses* (*Gli Occhiali d'oro / Les Lunettes d'or*) by Giuliano Montaldo, *Field of Honor* (*Champ d'honneur*) by Jean-Pierre Denis. Of course, they did not become champions of Soviet film distribution, since they were mainly works of auteur cinema...

So, 14 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1987 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1987 (among French films)*

In 1987, 33 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema” (films by Jean-Luc Godard, Eric Rohmer, Alain Tanner, etc.), but mainly of films of various genres.

Of these, only one film was released into Soviet film distribution (in 1990): *The Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle* by Eric Rohmer.

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1988 (among French films)*

In 1988, only 10 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark at the French box office. This was slightly more than in 1987, but still significantly less than the rental figures of the 1950s – 1970s.

The reason for this, in my opinion, was still the same – not only strong competition from Hollywood products, but mainly – the massive distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

Films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.3 million to 9.2 million viewers to cinemas in France. In general, the French mass market continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public...

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in the French film box office in 1988 was quite diverse: in addition to the adventure films *The Abyss Blue* (*Le Grand Bleu*) by Luc Besson and *The Bear* (*L'Ours*) by Jean-Jacques Annaud, which shared first and second places at the box office with very high attendance figures: 9.1 – 9.2 million viewers, there were comedies, dramas, detective stories and melodramas.

What was unexpected was the sudden return (after a very long break) to the top ten leaders of French film distribution of one of the patriarchs of directing, the then octogenarian Jean Delannoy (1908-2008). His drama *Bernadette* was in ninth place at the box office (1.6 million viewers).

Roman Polanski's *Frantic*, stylized as classic Hollywood detective stories and thrillers, took tenth place at the box office...

Claude Lelouch also returned to the top ten after a break. Perhaps because this time in his film *Itinerary of a spoiled child* (*Itinéraire d'un enfant gâté*) (fourth place and 3.2 million viewers) he played Jean-Paul Belmondo, who still retained the title of one of the highest-grossing actors in France in the 1980s.

Viewers also liked the duet of Isabelle Adjani and Gerard Depardieu in the drama *Camille Claudel* (fifth place at the box office and 2.7 million viewers).

Films starring young French actresses at that time, Charlotte Gainsbourg (*The Little Thief / La Petite Voleuse* by Claude Miller) and Sophie Marceau (*The Student / L'Étudiante* by Claude Pinoteau), were also successful in the French film distribution in 1988.

Sophie Marceau also played in another film from the “golden ten”: *Chouans!* by Philippe de Broca.

One of the best films by Claude Chabrol, the drama *A Woman's Affair* (*Une affaire de femmes*) with Isabelle Huppert in the title role (11th place and a million viewers), was also among the “golden ten” leaders.

Author's films by André Téchiné, Eric Rohmer, Bertrand Tavernier managed to gather from 0.2 million to 0.5 million viewers in 1988...

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1988 not a single erotic picture was included in the top ten. And in general, the flow of films of this kind has noticeably decreased. The main reason for this was, again, the video boom: the French began to prefer to watch frivolous films at home, rather than in cinemas... And the market quickly began to adapt to the changed situation: “films for adults” began to be initially filmed on video and distributed on video cassettes for rental and sales to strawberry lovers...

The reason why many films of the French “champion ten” of film distribution in 1988 were rejected by the Soviet purchasing commission were, most likely, of a financial nature (i.e., the selling price of certain films was too high), since in the era of late perestroika they had already stopped the same strict ideological and moral prohibitions apply...

As a result, four films from the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1988 (in 1990–1991) hit Soviet screens: *The Abyss Blue* by Luc Besson, *Itinerary of a spoiled child* by Claude Lelouch, *The Little Thief* by Claude Miller and *The Student* by Claude Pinoteau.

Of the films outside the “golden ten” of the French film distribution of 1988, three more films were shown on USSR screens in 1990/1991: the witty comedy *To the Left of the Lift* (*À gauche en sortant de l'ascenseur*) by Edouard Molinaro, where Pierre Richard again amused the audience (in the French film distribution of 1988 this picture was on 19th place with 0.6 million viewers), plus the dramas *My Friend the Traitor* (*Mon ami le traître*) by José Giovanni and *Constraint by body* (*Contrainte par corps*) by Serge Leroy.

So, in different years, 7 films from the repertoire of French film distribution in 1988 were released on the screens of the USSR in different years.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1988 (among French films)*

In 1988, 30 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema,” but mostly of films of various genres.

Of these, two films were released in Soviet film distribution (in 1990): the drama *My Friend is a Traitor* by José Giovanni and *Constraint by body* by Serge Leroy. Both films, as in France, did not enjoy any noticeable audience success...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1989 (among French films)*

In 1989, only 8 French films managed to overcome the barrier of 1 million viewers in French film distribution. This was significantly less than the rental figures of the 1950s and early 1980s.

The reason for this, in my opinion, was still the same – not only strong competition from Hollywood products, but mainly – the massive distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

In general, films from the top ten audience preferences attracted between one and two million viewers to cinemas in France. Mass French box office continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public...

The genre range of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1989 was quite diverse, although the most notable were comedies.

But here it should be noted that in previous decades, films that attracted 2 million spectators in French cinemas, as a rule, could not count on first place in the box office, and films whose attendance was about a million spectators even more often remained far behind the “golden ten”...

Paradoxically, for the first time in many years, the top ten did not contain films by the highest-grossing directors of the previous two decades: Gerard Oury, Claude Zidi, Georges Lautner, Henri Verneuil, Jacques Deray, Patrice Leconte, Philippe de Broca...

The comedy *Vanilla and Strawberry Ice Cream* (*Vanille Fraise*) by Gerard Oury was 13th (0.8 million viewers). Patrice Leconte's crime drama *Monsieur Hire* is 17th (0.6 million viewers). Comedy melodrama *Two* (*Deux*) by Claude Zidi – 24th (0.3 million viewers). The comedy *An Unexpected Guest* (*L'Invité surprise*) by Gerge Lautner is 28th (0.2 million viewers). The drama *Black Trees* (*Les Bois noirs*) by Jacques Deray is 30th (0.2 million viewers).

And if Claude Zidi, Gerard Oury and Patrice Leconte later for some time regained their status as the highest-grossing directors in France, then for many other directors it was the film release of 1989 that became a characteristic harbinger of the end of their careers as public favorites and a symptom of the loss of connection with the interests of the masses audience...

First place in the French film box office in 1989 was taken by the comedy melodrama *Too Beautiful for You* (*Trop belle pour toi*) (two million viewers) after a long break, director Bertrand Blier returned to the box office chart.

In second place (2 million viewers) came (a rare case for a joint Italian-French production) *Cinema Paradiso* by Giuseppe Tornatore with Philippe Noiret in the title role.

In fifth place (1.5 million viewers) was another film starring Philippe Noiret: the drama *Life and Nothing More* (*La Vie et rien d'autre*) by Bertrand Tavernier.

In third place (1.8 million viewers) was the very shocking melodrama *White Wedding* (*Noce blanche*) by Jean-Claude Brissot with the duet of Vanessa Paradis and Bruno Cremer.

Author's films *My nights are more beautiful than your days* (*Mes nuits sont plus belles que vos jours*) by Andrzej Zulawski, *Jesus from Montreal* by Denis Arcand and others were in the attendance range of 0.2 million viewers.

Unlike 1974-1975 and 1977-1980, in 1989 no erotic films were again included in the top ten, since the audience for this kind of production, starting from the second half of the 1980s, switched to home viewing of videomovies with frivolous content...

As a result, from the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1989, only one film made it into Soviet cinema distribution (in 1991): Giuseppe Tornatore's *Cinema Paradiso*.

The reason why the rest of the films of the French "champion ten" of film distribution in 1989 did not reach the Soviet film distribution was, most likely, that while some decisions on purchases were being made (and they were never very prompt), the Soviet Union collapsed, and then (since 1992) French films were released in Russian film distribution...

Of the films outside the "golden ten" of the French film distribution of 1989, only Gerard Oury's comedy *Vanilla-Strawberry Ice Cream* and Yves Boisset's drama *Radio Crow* (*Radio corbeau*) reached Soviet screens (in 1991).

So, in different years, 3 films from the French film distribution repertoire of 1988 were released on USSR screens.

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1989 (among French films)*

In 1989, 30 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of "auteur cinema" (films by Alain Resnais, Jacques Rivette, etc.), but mainly of films of various genres.

Not a single film from the list of outsiders of the French film distribution in 1989 was released in Soviet film distribution...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1990 (among French films)*

In 1990, only 11 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark at the French box office. This was significantly less than the rental figures of the 1950s and early 1980s.

The reason for this, in my opinion, was still the same – not only strong competition from Hollywood products, but mainly – the massive distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

Films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.3 million to 6.3 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The genre spectrum of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1990 was quite diverse. But in general, the massive French box office of 1990 continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public...

The top ten box office leaders of 1990 again did not include films by the highest-grossing directors of the previous two decades: Gerard Oury, Georges Lautner, Henri Verneuil, Jacques Deray, Patrice Leconte, Philippe de Broca...

But Yves Robert, Jean-Paul Rappeneau, Luc Besson, Claude Zidi, Claude Berry and Claude Lelouch returned there (and with very impressive attendance results).

At the same time, Yves Robert's duology *The Glory of My Father* (*La Gloire de mon père*) (first place at the box office and 6.3 million viewers) and *My Mother's Castle* (*Le Château de ma mère*) (third place and 4.3 million viewers) showed such impressive attendance results that have

not been seen for a long time the French movies had it. To a large extent, this success was due to the popularity in France of the novels of Marcel Pagnol, which were adapted into films by Robert.

In third place was also a film adaptation – this time of Edmond Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. The director of this film, Jean-Paul Rappeneau, relied on Gerard Depardieu and was right: the film attracted 4.7 million viewers in French cinemas.

Fourth place in the French film box office in 1990 went to Luc Besson's action film *Nikita* (3.8 million viewers), which soon became one of the cult films, causing a lot of imitations and at least two overseas remakes...

After a short break, Claude Zidi also returned to the “golden ten” of French film distribution. He did not tempt fate and made a sequel to his successful film *Corrupt (Ripoux)*: his *Corrupt vs. Corrupt (Ripoux contre ripoux)* took fifth place in the 1990 box office hit parade (2.9 million viewers).

Film by Claude Berri (the 1986 box office triumph, whose film adaptations of Marcel Pagnol's novels *Jean de Floret* and *Manon from the Source*, sharing first and second places, managed to gather an audience of 6.6 to 7.2 million viewers) *Uranus* was sixth in 1990 (2.5 million viewers).

Claude Lelouch's film *There are days... and moons (Il y a des jours... et des lunes)* became the eighth (1.5 million viewers).

Unlike 1974-1975 and 1977-1980, in 1990 not a single erotic picture entered the top ten again, since the audience for this kind of production, starting from the second half of the 1980s, switched to home viewing of videomovies with frivolous content...

As a result, not a single film from the top ten highest-grossing French films released in 1990 made it into Soviet cinema distribution. Moreover, not a single French film this year reached Soviet cinemas.

But this did not happen for censorship reasons. The reason why not a single French film of 1990 was shown in Soviet cinemas was the collapse of the USSR in 1991...

And then (since 1992) French films were released into Russian film distribution. And, looking ahead a little, I'll note that due to the collapse of Russian film distribution in the 1990s and the onslaught of pirated video, French films did not achieve any significant success in post-Soviet Russia until the end of the 20th century...

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution in 1990 (among French films)*

In 1990, 42 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of “auteur cinema” (films by Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol, Otar Ioseliani, Alexander Adabashyan, etc.), but mainly of films of various genres.

It is curious that this list also included the film of a recent favorite of the French public, Georges Lautner's *Supposedly Dangerous (Présumé dangereux)*, which managed to attract only about 60 thousand viewers to the screens of French cinemas. And this is after Lautner's films previously easily attracted audiences of millions and were often among the top ten box office leaders of a given year...

Not a single film was included in the Soviet film distribution from the list of outsiders of the French film distribution in 1990. The reason was simple: in 1991, the USSR collapsed, and then French films (mostly on video) reached Russian viewers, who, by the way, were more passionate about Hollywood products in the 1990s, so in post-Soviet times (at least at least until the onset of the 21st century), alas, there was no longer any need to talk about the real mass distribution success of French films in Russia...

#### *Top box office leaders in France in 1991 (among French films)*

In 1991, only 11 French films managed to overcome the 1 million audience mark at the French box office. This was significantly less than the rental figures of the 1950s, 1970s and early 1980s.

The reason for this, in my opinion, was still the same – not only strong competition from Hollywood products, but mainly – the massive distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

Films from the top ten of audience preferences attracted from 1.1 million to 2.2 million viewers to cinemas in France.

The dominant feature of comedy has again returned to the genre spectrum of the top ten leaders of the French film box office in 1991. In general, the massive French box office of 1991 continued to rely on hits of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public...

As in 1989–1990, the top ten did not include films by the highest-grossing directors of the previous two decades: Gerard Oury, Georges Lautner, Henri Verneuil, Jacques Deray, Patrice Leconte, Philippe de Broca...

But Alain Corneau, Claude Zidi, Claude Chabrol and Bertrand Blier returned there (and with very impressive attendance results for those times). Slightly behind them (11th place at the box office) was Luc Besson.

Once again, refuting the rule that the top ten audience favorites should only include entertainment films, Alain Corneau's drama *All the Mornings of the World* (*Tous les matins du monde*) took first place in terms of attendance at the French box office in 1991 (2.2 million viewers).

Another drama, this time *Van Gogh* by Maurice Pialat became the seventh most visited (1.3 million viewers).

But the third place of the comedy *Total!* (1.6 million viewers) Claude Zidi confirmed this rule, as did the comedies *A Wonderful Era* (*Une époque formidable...*), *Operation Stew* (*L'Opération Corned Beef*), *Delicatessen*, *My Father is a Hero* (*Mon père, ce héros*), etc. that made it into the top ten.

Gerard Depardieu once again proved that he is one of the most sought-after French actors. This time in the drama *All the Mornings of the World* (first place at the box office and 2.2 million viewers) and the comedy *My Father is a Hero* (sixth place at the box office and 1.4 million viewers).

And the film adaptation of Gustave Flaubert's famous novel *Madame Bovary* not only returned Claude Chabrol to the top ten box office leaders, but also once again revealed the extraordinary acting capabilities of Isabelle Huppert. As a result, the film *Madame Bovary* ended up in eighth place (1.3 million viewers).

In tenth place at the French box office in 1991, Bertrand Blier's provocative film *Thank You, Life* (*Merci la vie*) (1.1 million viewers) with the cheeky duet of young Charlotte Gainsbourg and Anouk Grinbert came out.

Unexpected success at the 1991 box office came from the shocking film *Delicatessen*, filled to the brim with black humor, by debutants Marc Caro and Jean-Pierre Jeunet (fifth place and 1.4 million viewers).

Attendance at the original films of Leo Carax, Nikita Mikhalkov, Krzysztof Kieślowski and some other masters fluctuated mainly in the range from 0.6 million to 0.9 million viewers.

*Urga* by Nikita Mikhalkov was the 17th most visited film at the French box office in 1991 (600 thousand spectators), which was an impressive achievement for a film shot in Russian and without any actors known to the European public... In Russia, *Urga* was released on screens already in post-Soviet times, and its audience was exactly three times less than in France: 200 thousand...

Unlike 1974–1975 and 1977–1980, in 1991 not a single erotic picture entered the top ten again, since the audience for this kind of production, starting from the second half of the 1980s, switched to home viewing of videomovies with frivolous content...

As a result, none of the French films released in 1991 were included in Soviet film distribution.

But this did not happen for censorship reasons. The reason was the collapse of the USSR in 1991.

And then (since 1992) French films were already released in Russian cinemas (like, for example, *Urga* by Nikita Mikhalkov)...

#### *Outsiders of the French film distribution of 1991 (among French films)*

In 1991, 39 French films were included in the list of film distribution outsiders, who gathered less than 200 thousand spectators in cinema halls.

The list of outsiders traditionally consisted partly of elite works of "auteur cinema", but mainly of films of various genres.

It is curious that for the second year in a row, a film by a recent favorite of the French public, Georges Lautner, also appeared on this list. This time *Triplex*, which managed to attract only about one hundred thousand spectators to the screens of French cinemas. And this is after Lautner's

films previously easily attracted audiences of millions and were often among the top ten French box office leaders of a given year...

Not a single film was included in the Soviet film distribution from the list of outsiders of the French film distribution in 1991. The reason was simple: in 1991, the USSR collapsed, and then French films (mostly on video) reached Russian viewers, who, by the way, were more passionate about Hollywood products in the 1990s, so in post-Soviet times it's realistic to talk about Unfortunately, the massive theatrical success of French films in Russia was no longer possible...

#### 4. Conclusion

During the second half of the 1940s and into the 1950s, attendance at French films at the French box office was at its peak. For example, in 1953, 52 French films managed to overcome the bar of 1 million viewers.

The genre spectrum of the leaders of the “golden ten” of the French film distribution was diverse, but in general it was based on films of entertainment genres, which starred the favorites of the French public.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, attendance at French films began to gradually decline (largely due to competition from television and Hollywood productions).

An even greater decline in cinema attendance in France began to be felt in the 1980s. This was affected not only by strong competition from Hollywood products and television, but mainly by the massive distribution of household video equipment, which riveted millions of French people to their home screens, who previously preferred to watch films in cinemas.

In the second half of the 1940s, there were very few French films in Soviet film distribution. This was largely due to the fact that it was during this period that so-called trophy films (mainly American and German) were shown on USSR screens.

Due to the fact that by the mid-1950s the screening of so-called trophy films (mainly American and German) in the USSR was completed, in the second half of the 1950s more new European films, including French ones, began to be released in Soviet cinemas. The “thaw” that came to the USSR brought significant changes to procurement policy. For example, of the top ten leaders in French film distribution in 1958, exactly half were shown on USSR cinema screens.

The work of the Soviet film purchasing commission in the 1960s was quite liberal, which (especially after the start of the “Prague Spring” of 1968) could not escape the conservative wing of the “ideological front”.

Thus, in June 1968, the magazine *Ogonyok* published an article in which, from a communist position, the Soviet film distribution policy regarding Western, including French, cinema was sharply criticized (Tolchenova, 1968: 22). Since 1968, there have been more and more similar articles directed against the appearance of Western entertainment films in Soviet film distribution. And behind them, of course, there were the corresponding resolutions and memos of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, therefore – especially after August 1968 – the situation with the purchase of “bourgeois film products” began to change sharply towards its minimization and more careful ideological selection...

Among the reasons why French films were not included in Soviet film distribution are the following:

- Taboos on erotica, accentuated religious and Jewish themes;
- The fear that Soviet viewers might somehow misunderstand shocking plot twists from the point of view of official Soviet morality, which were often found even in artistically significant films;
- Exclusion from candidates for the purchase of films with an interpretation of Russian and Soviet themes that is unacceptable for Soviet ideology and, accordingly, Russian and Soviet characters;
- The struggle of Soviet censorship with incorrectly (from its point of view) ideological accents on military topics;
- Undesirability for Soviet censorship of films “promoting the bourgeois way of life”;
- The undesirability of images of charming criminals appearing on Soviet screens;
- The unacceptability of purchasing new films with the participation of famous actors who publicly criticized the policies of the USSR;
- Too high prices offered by French copyright holders.

True, in the Soviet film distribution in the second half of the 1980s and early 1990s, French films began to increasingly appear, one way or another violating former censorship taboos. This was due to the fact that with the advent of perestroika, the work of the purchasing commission of the USSR State Cinema Committee became more liberal and in many ways began to focus on the purchase of highly artistic foreign films, and the former strict ideological and moral prohibitions ceased to apply...

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## The Use of Social Television in Interactive Health Communication with Implications for Media Literacy

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### Abstract

The integration of media literacy within interactive health communication via social television presents a transformative potential for enhancing health outcomes globally, particularly in Africa. By harnessing the capabilities of social media and interactive broadcasting, health campaigns can disseminate information more broadly, engage audiences more effectively and ultimately contribute to improved public health across the continent. In contemporary society, the significance of interactive health communication is paramount. The advent of digital technologies has revolutionised the dissemination of health information, facilitating immediate, bidirectional communication between healthcare providers and the public. This paper explores the role of social television in health communication, analysing its potential to enhance the effectiveness of health campaigns through interactive and participatory methods with implications for media literacy. Anchored in the Diffusion of Innovations Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, this study offers an in-depth examination of how social television can shape health behaviours and outcomes. The results indicate that social television's features such as real-time feedback, personalised messaging and increased audience engagement, make it an invaluable asset for future health campaigns. Nonetheless, the study also identifies critical challenges, including the risks of misinformation, privacy issues and the need to balance entertainment with educational content. The paper concludes with strategic recommendations for stakeholders on leveraging social television's potential, emphasising the importance of audience engagement, content accuracy, privacy protection and ongoing research.

**Keywords:** media literacy, interactive health communication, social television, health campaigns, audience engagement, health behaviour.

### 1. Introduction

In the contemporary media landscape, social television as a new media platform has carved out a niche as an innovative intersection between traditional broadcasting and interactive digital platforms (Siapera, 2018). Defined as a method of content delivery that combines television viewing with social media interaction, social television transforms passive consumption into an active, participatory experience (Smith, Telang, 2019). This synergy not only enriches the viewing experience but also opens new avenues for health communication strategies that leverage the power of social engagement. Moreover, development (media) communication is a field of study

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that examines how communication can be used to promote social change, particularly in developing countries (Okunna, 2015; Servaes, 2008).

Further, social TV refers to the convergence of television with social media technologies, enabling viewers to engage in real-time discussions and interactions related to televised content (Levin-Zamir, Bertschi, 2018). This phenomenon has revolutionised the way audiences consume health-related information. By fostering a participatory culture, social TV allows for immediate feedback and discourse, thereby facilitating interactive health communication. This interaction not only enhances the viewer's engagement but also allows for the dissemination of health information in a more personalised and relatable manner. Social TV emerges as a pivotal platform for interactive health communication, significantly influencing media literacy. Moreover, in an age where media consumption is at an all-time high, the role of media literacy in shaping public health outcomes cannot be overstated. Media literacy, defined as the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and create media, is a critical skill that enables individuals to navigate the complex landscape of health information.

The importance of interactive health communication cannot be overstated in contemporary society. With the proliferation of digital technologies, health information dissemination has transcended the limitations of time and space, enabling instantaneous, two-way dialogues between healthcare providers and the public (Johnson, Ambrose, 2021). This interactive paradigm shift is crucial in addressing the dynamic and complex nature of health-related issues, fostering a more informed and health-conscious society.

*Thesis statement:* social television has emerged as a pivotal new media platform, enhancing the efficacy of health communication through interactive and participatory engagement. By integrating the reach and visual impact of television with the conversational dynamics of social media, social television offers a unique blend of entertainment and education, facilitating a more nuanced and impactful health dialogue (Bennett, Glasgow, 2020). This medium's potential to influence public health outcomes is profound, marking a significant step forward in the way health messages are crafted and received.

*Aim and objectives:* The paper explores the implications of social TV's integration into health communication and its consequential role in enhancing media literacy, particularly in the context of the digital age. This review study aims to contribute to the field by synthesising current knowledge and identifying areas for future research and practice. Specific objectives of the paper are 1) to explore how social television has been integrated into health communication campaigns; 2) to explore the implications of social TV's integration into health communication and its role in enhancing media literacy; 3) to assess the effectiveness of social television in engaging audiences and promoting health behaviour change; 4) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of social television as a tool for health communication; 5) to examine the potential challenges and ethical considerations associated with the use of social television in health campaigns; and 6) to provide recommendations for optimising the use of social television in future health communication efforts.

*The Implications of Social TV's Role in Interactive Health Communication for Media Literacy: Media literacy and health outcomes:* Media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and create media in various forms (Levin-Zamir, Bertschi, 2018). In the realm of health communication, media literacy equips individuals with the skills necessary to navigate through the plethora of health information available, discerning credible sources from misleading ones. The role of social TV in this context is twofold: it serves as a medium for health education and as a tool for cultivating critical thinking and analytical skills among viewers.

*Empowerment through education: Media literacy as a tool for empowerment:* Media literacy empowers viewers to critically evaluate the health information they encounter on social TV. By developing skills to assess the credibility of sources and the quality of content, individuals can make informed decisions about their health. This critical thinking is particularly important in an era where health misinformation can spread rapidly online. Furthermore, the educational potential of social TV lies in its ability to present health information in an engaging and accessible format. Programs that integrate interactive features can empower viewers to take an active role in their health management. For instance, health literacy and eHealth literacy are crucial competencies that enable individuals to engage actively in their health, aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Levin-Zamir, Bertschi, 2018).

*Enhancing engagement through social TV:* Social TV has the potential to transform passive viewers into active participants in health communication. By integrating social media features with

televised health content, viewers are encouraged to engage in discussions, share their experiences and even contribute content. This level of engagement can lead to a deeper understanding of health issues and promote a sense of community among viewers, which is essential for sustained behavioural change (Heldman et al., 2013).

*The Role of Media in Supporting Health:* Media outlets, including social TV, play a crucial role in supporting public health by providing accurate information and offering platforms for public debate on health issues. They also hold a responsibility to report responsibly and hold decision-makers accountable, thereby contributing to a well-informed public (World Health Organization, 2022).

The integration of social TV into interactive health communication has profound implications for media literacy. It offers a dynamic way to engage viewers, promote community building and empower individuals with the skills needed to navigate the complex media environment (Heldman et al., 2013). As we continue to explore the capabilities and impact of social TV, it is vital to ensure that the benefits are maximised while the risks are mitigated.

*Risks and Benefits of Social Media Engagement:* While social TV can enhance engagement, it also presents risks. The spread of misinformation is a significant concern, as health-related content shared on social platforms may not always be vetted for accuracy. However, when used effectively, social TV can facilitate accurate health messaging and communication between health professionals and the public, potentially leading to improved health outcomes (BMC Public Health, 2022).

*Media Literacy as a Cornerstone for Health Empowerment:* Media literacy empowers individuals to critically engage with media content, discerning between beneficial health information and potentially harmful misinformation. In the context of health communication, this skill set is paramount. The ability to critically evaluate health messages and make informed decisions based on this analysis is a direct determinant of health behaviours and outcomes (Bergsma, 2018; Bergsma, Carney, 2008; Heldman et al., 2013). As such, media literacy is not just a facilitator of knowledge but a foundational component of health empowerment.

*The Role of Media Literacy in Interactive Health Communication:* Interactive health communication (IHC) leverages media platforms to facilitate two-way communication between health providers and the public. This interaction allows for personalised health messages, fostering greater engagement and adherence to health recommendations. However, the effectiveness of IHC hinges on the audience's media literacy skills. Without the ability to critically assess and engage with the content, the benefits of IHC can be lost (Levin-Zamir, Bertschi, 2018; Heldman et al., 2013; World Health Organization, 2022).

*Challenges in the Digital Health Landscape:* The digital health landscape presents unique challenges. The sheer volume of information available can overwhelm individuals, making it difficult to identify credible sources. Furthermore, the rapid dissemination of health information through social media can lead to the spread of misinformation. Media literacy education is thus essential in equipping individuals with the skills to navigate these challenges and engage effectively with IHC (Bergsma, 2018; Bergsma, Carney, 2008).

*Challenges and ethical considerations:* Despite its benefits, the use of social TV in health communication presents several challenges. The digital divide may exclude certain populations from accessing these interactive platforms, thus raising ethical concerns regarding equity and accessibility (Levin-Zamir, Bertschi, 2018). Moreover, the reliance on social TV for health information necessitates a critical examination of content quality and the potential for misinformation.

Social TV's role in interactive health communication has significant implications for media literacy. It not only serves as a dynamic platform for health education but also fosters the development of critical media literacy skills. As society gravitates towards digital and media tools for health promotion, the empowerment of individuals through enhanced media literacy becomes increasingly important. However, it is imperative to address the challenges and ethical considerations to ensure that social TV effectively supports and promotes public health.

*The Landscape of Health Communication: Historical perspective on health communication methods:* The annals of health communication are replete with a myriad of methods, each reflecting the zeitgeist of its era. Historically, health communication was an integral part of public health education and training, primarily delivered through didactic lectures and printed materials. This approach was largely unidirectional, with a focus on disseminating information from health authorities to the public (Malikhao, 2016). As societies evolved, so too did the methods of

communication, with the advent of radio and television providing new platforms for health messages to reach a wider audience (Colle, 2003).

*The role of traditional media in disseminating health information:* Traditional media, encompassing radio, television and print, have long been the stalwarts of health information dissemination. These mediums have played a pivotal role in educating the public on health matters, shaping health behaviours and influencing public opinion on health policies (Dunn, Woo, 2019). Despite the rise of digital media, traditional media continue to be regarded as credible sources of health information, particularly during global health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Najie et al., 2021).

*The shift towards interactive communication with the advent of new media:* The digital revolution has ushered in a paradigm shift towards interactive communication, characterised by the emergence of new media platforms such as social media, blogs and online forums. This shift has transformed the landscape of health communication, enabling a two-way exchange of information and allowing individuals to actively engage in their health-related decision-making processes (Stoumpos et al., 2023). The interactive nature of new media has not only democratised health information but also presented new challenges in ensuring the accuracy and reliability of health content (Kim et al., 2019).

*Social television as a new media: Definition and characteristics of social television:* Social television represents the confluence of television broadcasting and social media, creating a platform where viewers engage with televised content and each other simultaneously. This phenomenon allows for real-time interaction and sharing of television experiences across social networks, effectively turning individual viewing into a communal event (Kim et al., 2019). Social television is characterised by its ability to foster audience participation, create communities around television content and facilitate a shared viewing experience, regardless of geographical boundaries (Kim et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2021).

*Comparative analysis with traditional health communication methods:* When juxtaposed with traditional health communication methods, social television stands out for its interactive capabilities. Unlike the one-way dissemination of information typical of traditional media, social television encourages a two-way dialogue, allowing viewers to contribute to the conversation and influence the narrative (Yang et al., 2023). This interactivity enhances the personalisation and relevance of health messages, potentially increasing their impact on health behaviours (Kim et al., 2019; PMC, 2020).

*Case studies of successful social television initiatives:* One illustrative case study is the repositioning of Sun TV's channel, Sun Life, which leveraged social television to target a younger, digitally-native demographic. Through a strategic use of social media, Sun TV successfully enhanced viewership and engagement by aligning content with the consumption patterns and preferences of its target audience (Media Samosa, 2020). Another example is the advocacy work by Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), which used social television to amplify its message and foster community involvement in governance and development processes (CANARI, 2018).

*Advantages of Social Television in Health Communication: Enhanced audience engagement:* Social television has revolutionised the way audiences engage with health communication. By integrating social media tools with television programming, broadcasters can foster a more dynamic and participatory viewing experience. This enhanced engagement is evidenced by increased interactions with televised content, as viewers are encouraged to share opinions, participate in polls and become part of a larger conversation about health topics. The immediacy of social television allows for a more immersive experience, which can lead to greater retention of health information and a deeper understanding of health issues (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023).

*Real-time feedback and interactivity:* The interactivity of social television provides real-time feedback from viewers, creating a two-way communication channel between broadcasters and the audience. This immediacy allows health communicators to gauge audience reactions, answer questions and address misconceptions as they arise, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of health messages. Real-time interactivity also enables a more personalised approach to health communication, as viewers can receive tailored responses to their concerns (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; Kim et al., 2019).

*Personalisation of health messages:* Social television allows for the personalisation of health messages, making them more relevant to individual viewers. By utilising data analytics and viewer

feedback, health communicators can customise content to address specific demographics, cultural backgrounds and personal health concerns. This level of personalisation ensures that health messages resonate more deeply with viewers, potentially leading to positive changes in health behaviours (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; Kim et al., 2021).

*Broader reach and accessibility:* The accessibility of social television extends the reach of health communication to a broader audience. With the proliferation of digital devices, health messages can be disseminated across multiple platforms, ensuring that they are available to individuals regardless of location or socioeconomic status. This increased accessibility is crucial for public health campaigns, as it allows for the distribution of vital health information to diverse populations (García-Perdomo, 2021), including those who may have previously been underserved by traditional media (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; Kim et al., 2019).

*Challenges and Considerations:* While the potential benefits are clear, there are challenges to consider. These include addressing misinformation and ensuring content accuracy, privacy concerns and data security, balancing entertainment and educational value and ethical considerations in health message dissemination. Moreover, balancing entertainment with educational value is crucial to keep the audience engaged without compromising the quality of health information (Chen, Wang, 2021).

*Addressing misinformation and ensuring content accuracy:* In the realm of social television, the rapid dissemination of information presents a formidable challenge in mitigating the spread of misinformation. Ensuring content accuracy is paramount, as health-related misinformation can have dire consequences. Strategies to combat misinformation include employing fact-checking protocols and fostering media literacy among audiences. It is essential to establish trust and accountability, particularly in journalism, where the veracity of information is critical (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; García-Perdomo, 2021; Yang et al., 2023).

*Privacy concerns and data security:* The integration of social media with television raises significant privacy concerns and data security issues. Protecting users' privacy requires a careful balance between personalisation and the risk of data exposure. Anonymisation techniques and robust data protection measures are necessary to safeguard user information while still allowing for the personalisation that makes social television engaging (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; Kim et al., 2021).

*Balancing entertainment and educational value:* Social television must navigate the delicate balance between entertainment and educational value. While the primary aim is to inform and educate, the content must also be engaging to capture the audience's attention. Employing entertainment-education strategies can enhance the appeal of educational messages, making them more relatable and memorable for viewers (Kim et al., 2019, 2021).

*Ethical considerations in health message dissemination:* Ethical considerations in disseminating health messages through social television are complex. Issues include respecting viewers' autonomy, avoiding the perpetuation of social inequities and ensuring that content does not infringe on privacy or freedom of choice. Public health researchers and broadcasters must adhere to ethical principles that prioritise the protection of individual users (Colle, 2003; Hunter et al., 2018).

## 2. Materials and methods

The scope of the literature review was defined by the research questions, which aimed to explore the role of social television in health communication and its potential to influence health behaviours. Relevant databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO and Google Scholar were selected for the literature search. Sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings and reputable online publications. For the search strategy, a combination of keywords and phrases related to social television, health communication, audience engagement and interactive media was used. Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) were employed to refine the search results. Next, criteria were established based on publication date (within the last 10 years, 2014–2023), language (English) and relevance to the research questions. Studies that did not focus on social television or its application in health communication were excluded.

Titles and abstracts were screened for relevance, and full texts were reviewed to determine their suitability for inclusion. The reference lists of selected articles were also examined for additional sources. Key information was extracted from each source, including the authors, year of publication, study objectives, methodology, results and conclusions. Next, the quality of the sources

was assessed using established criteria such as the clarity of research objectives, appropriateness of the methodology and the rigour of the analysis. Finally, data was synthesised to identify common themes, trends and gaps in the literature. A narrative approach was used to integrate findings and provide a comprehensive overview of the research topic.

### 3. Discussion

The exploration of social television as a new media platform for health communication reveals a robust theoretical framework grounded in the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). These theories provide essential insights into how social television can influence health behaviours and facilitate public health campaigns.

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003) explicates the process by which new ideas, products, or technologies are disseminated within a social system over time. According to DIT, media act as catalysts for change, guiding audiences through a series of stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. In the context of social television, DIT can elucidate how health communication campaigns broadcast via interactive TV may lead to the widespread adoption of health behaviours among the populace (Rogers, 2003).

On the other hand, Bandura's (Bandura, 1989, 2001) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) highlights the significance of observational learning, imitation and modelling in behaviour change. Social television, with its interactive features, enables viewers to observe modelled health behaviours, engage in discussions about these behaviours and receive reinforcement through social media platforms. This dynamic interaction influences viewers' health decisions and actions, underscoring the critical role of observational learning in shaping individual health behaviours. The theory emphasises that this learning process is pivotal in behaviour modification, making SCT a valuable framework for understanding the impact of social television on health communication.

Despite the promising prospects of social television, significant research gaps remain. Current literature underscores the need for comprehensive methodologies to evaluate the impact of social television on health behaviour change. Many existing studies lack the methodological rigour required to draw definitive conclusions about the efficacy of social television in different sociocultural contexts. Additionally, there is a need for research exploring the responsiveness of social television to public health emergencies, an aspect crucial given the dynamic nature of health crises. Future research should also investigate the characteristics of health messages, digital communication strategies and the perceptions of healthcare providers to enhance the efficacy of social television as a health communication tool.

Social television holds considerable promise for global health campaigns, offering a platform that transcends geographical and cultural barriers. Its real-time engagement capabilities and potential to foster community dialogue make it an ideal medium for extensive health initiatives. Research indicates that social media, a core component of social television, can significantly advance health promotion beyond mere awareness, potentially driving long-term behaviour change. However, the sustainability of such behavioural changes requires further investigation to ascertain their long-term impact (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; Kim et al., 2019, 2021).

Looking to the future, interactive health communication is anticipated to evolve significantly. The integration of digital health solutions is expected to rise exponentially, as healthcare systems build trust in technology through peer usage, cost benefits and observed improvements in patient health outcomes. Innovations such as remote patient monitoring and other digital health tools are likely to facilitate more personalised and community-based care, reshaping the landscape of health communication (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kanchan, Gaidhane, 2023; Kim et al., 2019).

In African countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, etc., the potential for social television in health campaigns is particularly significant given the continent's rapid increase in digital technology access and widespread social media usage. Social television, which merges traditional broadcasting with interactive social media platforms, presents a unique opportunity to engage audiences in health-related discussions and interventions (Chen, Wang, 2021; Kim et al., 2019). This potential is further enhanced by social television's ability to promote active audience engagement through features such as live polls, Q&A sessions and social media discussions accompanying broadcasts. Such engagement not only elevates viewers' knowledge but also empowers them to take control of their health. In South Africa, for instance, social media has been identified as a tool capable of scaling health promotion programmes due to its low cost and ability to create virtual communities (Abroms, 2019; Chen, Wang, 2021).

One of the most notable advantages of social television is its ability to surmount geographical barriers. In many developing regions, especially in Africa, access to healthcare facilities and professionals is limited. Social television can bridge this gap by delivering health education and information to remote and underserved areas, playing a crucial role in public health campaigns (Abroms, 2019; Gunasekeran et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021).

Moreover, the interactive nature of social television allows for real-time feedback from the audience, which can be invaluable for health organisations in assessing the effectiveness of their messages and campaigns. Data collected from audience interactions can help tailor future health interventions to be more effective and targeted (Chen, Wang, 2021; Gunasekeran et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2019).

#### 4. Results

The literature review has identified a theoretical framework for examining social television as a novel media platform for health communication, rooted in the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) and the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Rogers (Rogers, 2003: 5) defines diffusion as “the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.” DIT explicates the manner in which new ideas, products, or technologies are disseminated within a social system over time. According to this theory, media act as agents of change, influencing audiences to adopt new behaviours or innovations through stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. Applied to social television, DIT can elucidate how health communication campaigns broadcast via interactive TV may lead to the widespread adoption of health behaviours among the populace.

Conversely, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), as proposed by Bandura (Bandura, 1989, 2001), highlights the importance of observational learning, imitation and modelling in behaviour change. Social television, with its interactive components, enables viewers to observe modelled health behaviours, discuss them and receive reinforcement through social media platforms, thereby influencing their own health decisions and actions. Bandura (Bandura, 2001) asserts that this process of observational learning is pivotal in shaping individuals' health behaviours, making SCT a crucial framework for understanding the impact of social television on health communication.

Despite the potential of social television, significant research gaps remain. Current literature underscores the need for more comprehensive methodologies to evaluate the impact of social television on health behaviour change. Moreover, there is a call for research exploring the effectiveness of social television across diverse sociocultural contexts and its capacity to swiftly respond to public health emergencies. Future studies should also examine the characteristics of health messages, digital communication strategies and the attitudes and perceptions of healthcare providers.

Social television holds considerable promise for global health campaigns, offering a platform that transcends geographical and cultural barriers. Its real-time engagement capabilities and potential to foster community dialogue make it an ideal medium for broad health initiatives. Research indicates that social media, an integral component of social television, can significantly advance health promotion beyond mere awareness, potentially driving long-term behaviour change. However, the enduring impact of such campaigns requires further investigation to ascertain sustainable behavioural changes.

Looking to the future, interactive health communication is anticipated to evolve dramatically. The integration of digital health solutions is expected to rise exponentially, as healthcare systems build trust in technology through peer usage, cost benefits and observed improvements in patient health outcomes. Innovations such as remote patient monitoring and other digital health tools are likely to facilitate more personalised and community-based care, reshaping the landscape of health communication.

In Africa (especially in Nigeria and South Africa), the potential for social television in health campaigns is particularly significant given the continent's rapid increase in digital technology access and widespread social media usage. Social television, which merges traditional broadcasting with interactive social media platforms, presents a unique opportunity to engage audiences in health-related discussions and interventions. This potential is further enhanced by social television's ability to promote active audience engagement through features such as live polls, Q&A sessions and social media discussions accompanying broadcasts. Such engagement not only boosts viewers' knowledge but also empowers them to take control of their health. In South Africa,

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One of the most notable advantages of social television is its ability to surmount geographical barriers. In many developing regions, especially in Africa, access to healthcare facilities and professionals is limited (Abroms, 2019). Social television can bridge this gap by delivering health education and information to remote and underserved areas, playing a crucial role in public health campaigns. Moreover, the interactive nature of social television allows for real-time feedback from the audience, which can be invaluable for health organisations in assessing the effectiveness of their messages and campaigns. Data collected from audience interactions can help tailor future health interventions to be more effective and targeted.

## 5. Conclusion

The integration of media literacy within interactive health communication through social television holds significant promise for enhancing global health outcomes, particularly in Africa. By leveraging the interactive capabilities of social media and the extensive reach of traditional television, social television can disseminate health information to wider audiences, engage viewers more effectively and ultimately contribute to improved public health across the continent. The transformative potential of social television in health communication is profound. As a medium that combines the interactive features of social media with the extensive reach of television, social television stands ready to revolutionise how health information is communicated and received.

Theoretical frameworks such as the Diffusion of Innovations Theory and Social Cognitive Theory provide a robust foundation for understanding the impact of social television on health behaviours and outcomes. These theories highlight the critical role of media as a catalyst for change and the power of observational learning and modelling in shaping health decisions. This research has demonstrated that social television is a pivotal new media platform, enhancing the effectiveness of health communication through interactive and participatory engagement. Features such as real-time feedback, personalised messaging and increased audience engagement make social television an essential tool for future health campaigns, particularly in reaching diverse and widespread populations.

Therefore, it is imperative for stakeholders in health communication – including policymakers, healthcare providers, media professionals and public health researchers – to recognise and harness the potential of social television. There is a pressing call to action for these stakeholders to collaborate in creating content that is not only informative and accurate but also engaging and accessible. By doing so, they can transform health communication from a one-way broadcast into a dynamic dialogue, empowering individuals and communities to make informed health choices. Future research should focus on identifying the most effective strategies for implementing social television in various African contexts and evaluating its impact on public health outcomes.

Moreover, while social television presents significant opportunities for health communication, ongoing research is necessary to fully leverage its potential. By addressing existing research gaps and exploring new dimensions of this medium, future studies can pave the way for more effective and inclusive health communication strategies.

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## Harnessing Mass Media and Media Education to Enhance Health Literacy on Maternal Health through IEC Materials

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### Abstract

The media actively participates in disseminating health information to a large audience. It has the power to educate communities to take proactive measures to enhance their health. The media plays a key role in increasing public awareness of health issues through information, advocacy, and education. Health education through Information, Education, and Communication is essential in maternal health, influencing pregnant women's access to information, decision-making, and healthcare-seeking behaviour. Effective communication between healthcare providers and pregnant women fosters informed decision-making and creates a supportive environment for discussing health concerns. Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) resources, such as pamphlets, posters, and films, are essential for spreading important health information and fostering favourable outcomes for maternal health. These materials cater to diverse literacy levels and cultural backgrounds, improving comprehension and retention of key health messages. In Uttarakhand's Bageshwar district, female literacy significantly lags behind male literacy, impacting maternal health outcomes. An observational study in Bageshwar's villages reveals that IEC materials, though available, often fail to engage the target audience due to language barriers and cultural mismatches. Enhancing female literacy through targeted education and empowerment initiatives is pivotal. Effective IEC strategies must include clear objectives, culturally relevant messages, and diverse communication channels to overcome these obstacles.

**Keywords:** Bageshwar, IEC materials, maternal health, Uttarakhand, health communication.

### 1. Introduction

The media greatly influences people's beliefs about health in traditional communities. The definitions and understanding of health can have far-reaching effects, influencing areas such as health education and promotion. The media's portrayal of health has a significant social impact because it can change people's perspectives, habits, and beliefs about health. It can also increase the intended audience's understanding of health-related topics (Marinescu, Mitu, 2016). Media education should be integrated into broader health communication strategies to ensure a comprehensive approach to maternal healthcare education. This involves collaboration between media educators, healthcare providers, government agencies, and community organizations.

Studies have argued of the main causes of the increased maternal death rate is low literacy rates. J.E Corrarino (Corrarino, 2013) emphasized the significance of health literacy in women's health, pointing out that it poses a significant challenge. The study highlighted how health literacy impacts women's understanding, their ability to adhere to medical instructions, and ultimately,

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their health outcomes. Women's literacy directly correlates with their capacity to comprehend and retain information. The study similarly underscored the importance of literacy among pregnant women, stating that it enables them to recognize warning signs during pregnancy, care for themselves adequately, and follow advice from healthcare professionals, leading to a safe and healthy pregnancy (Mojoyinola, 2011). Literacy is crucial for interpreting and implementing information found in written materials, as well as for adhering to guidance and raising awareness provided by community health workers. There is a reduction in maternal mortality per 100,000 females with every 1% increase in female literacy (Batool et al., 2020). The research highlighted the direct correlation between literacy levels and maternal mortality rates.

According to the study by N.Naveena (Naveena, 2015) the role of mass media is instrumental in assisting health communicators to extend their outreach, which is essential given that direct communication methods often require substantial human resources and tend to engage only a small audience in extensive, underserved rural areas.) The study *Role of Media in Health awareness* (Ouchene et al., 2024) emphasizes upon the media's social responsibility in the health field requires providing accurate and objective information and news to the public.

This duty entails a commitment to accuracy, the promotion of diversity, the assurance of fair representation, protection of freedom, and encouragement of social participation aimed at fostering interaction and yielding a positive effect. The dynamics surrounding health awareness are deeply intertwined with the societal challenges and health risks that confront the community. Thus, Health education encompasses a variety of educational experiences intended to encourage individuals to voluntarily adopt health-promoting behavior. Its primary goals are to enhance understanding and consciousness, making it a crucial element of health promotion.

The media serves an essential function in the distribution of information and the education of the public over time. This, in turn, contributes to the improvement of the audience's attitudes, knowledge, and practices (KAP) towards achieving better health (Catalan, 2011). Health education is an essential element in promoting health. Mass media plays a critical role in distributing health information and enhancing awareness of health education (Sharma, Gupta, 2017).

Health information and awareness about health education are effectively communicated through the mass media. By not only spreading awareness but also educating the community over time, the media plays a crucial role in fostering positive changes in audience attitudes and behaviours towards achieving optimal health. The media serves as a powerful tool in instigating behavioural changes by influencing knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes regarding health and healthy behaviours.

Print media, such as newspapers, magazines, leaflets, and brochures, have a significant impact on informing and educating the public about important events in their daily lives. Additionally, newspapers are one of the most crucial sources of health-related information globally (Sharma, 2015). Print media offers comprehensive details on nearly every health-related topic. The global health television channel has significantly influenced health outcomes, providing essential access to vital health information in developing nations (McConnell et al., 2024).

Mass media acts as a significant bridge connecting rural communities with crucial national information. Through platforms such as radio and television, it effectively influences target audiences to embrace new behaviours and serves as a reminder of essential information. Beyond raising awareness about new diseases and guiding individuals on where to seek assistance, mass media also plays a key role in keeping the public informed. Television recognized as an effective audio-visual medium, can reach a large audience and is a fundamental communication tool for delivering healthcare messages through advertisements and various health initiatives. However, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) stand out as a potentially powerful mechanism in addressing maternal health Challenges. The objective of health education is to improve overall health by influencing people's attitudes and expanding their knowledge by imparting health information to communities and individuals (Kumar, Preetha, 2012a). National health programs serve as the foundation for health promotion, and community involvement drives their execution. The government has made an effort to use information, education, and communication (IEC) to address health disparities.

Disparities in the use of services and their results, which are driven by structural variables including education, caste/ethnicity, economic status, and cultural traditions, make maternal health a critical public health concern (Hamal et al., 2020). Studies show that institutional and societal inadequacies contribute to the high rates of maternal death, which emphasizes the need for maternal health to be given top priority in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). India's goal

is to bring down the rate of maternal death to 70 per 100,000 live births by the year 2030. With disparities in service use and outcomes affected by structural factors such as economic status, caste/ethnicity, education, and cultural traditions, maternal health continues to be a critical public health concern.

Studies underscore that persistently high maternal mortality rates reflect societal and systemic shortcomings, reinforcing the urgency to prioritize maternal health within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). India is striving to achieve the target of reducing the maternal mortality ratio to 70 per 100,000 live births by the year 2030.

Efforts to address these challenges include state-initiated health schemes and educational programs aimed at enhancing maternal health awareness and service accessibility (Ray, 2006). The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was established in the year 2005 exemplifies broader efforts to deliver quality healthcare services in rural areas, with a particular focus on states facing significant health disparities, including those within the Empowered Action Group (EAG) (Vellakkal et al., 2017).

Despite these initiatives, significant gaps in the utilization of maternal healthcare services persist, particularly among young married women, necessitating targeted policies and improved program implementation, especially in economically disadvantaged states (Singh et al., 2021). Enhancing access to comprehensive antenatal care (ANC) and skilled birth attendance (SBA) remains crucial to mitigating maternal mortality risks and improving overall maternal health outcomes across India. While strides have been made in maternal healthcare in India, persistent challenges underscore the need for sustained efforts to reduce maternal mortality and improve maternal health outcomes, particularly among vulnerable populations and within underserved regions.

The International Communication Association initially presented the idea of health communication in 1975. The American Public Health Association then acknowledged health communication as a broad field within public health education and health promotion in 1997. A comprehensive approach to health and well-being promotion can empower individuals and communities, thereby addressing health concerns as emphasized in the study (Kumar, Preetha, 2012b). Furthermore, Communication is a crucial tool for educating, persuading, and inspiring people, organizations, and the general public about important health issues (Bernhardt, 2004).

Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) are vital for delivering health information and effectively influencing health attitudes and behaviours. They pointed out that printed formats like newspapers, leaflets, handouts, and articles can create significant barriers for illiterate individuals (Halliday, Agnes, 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to focus on the age, literacy levels, and geographical locations of the intended audience. Additionally, the authors argue for prioritizing audio-visual materials over printed educational content. IEC is a multifaceted process aimed at facilitating behaviour change, which involves stages such as receiving information, changing health behaviours, modifying those behaviours, and sustaining them over time (World Health Organization, 2001). Health communication serves as a proactive approach to disseminating health messages through various media technologies and organizations to raise awareness about diseases and illnesses (Oyama, Ngozi, 2017).

Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) are designed to empower individuals to make informed decisions and alter behaviours through educational processes. The Indian government has acknowledged communication as an essential element of the healthcare delivery system (Kumar, 2022). Communication is now integrated into all national health and family welfare programs through Information Education Communication (IEC) initiatives. By providing information, education, and communication (IEC), individuals are empowered to make informed choices regarding their health and overall well-being. Effective communication of reliable information is crucial in achieving this objective. The primary aim of the IEC is to enhance the utilization of health and family welfare services by generating demand and promoting better access. Communication is vital in maternal health, influencing pregnant women's access to information, decision-making, and healthcare-seeking behaviours. Effective communication facilitates the exchange of information between healthcare providers and pregnant women, empowering them to make informed decisions regarding their health and that of their unborn child. It fosters a supportive environment where women feel comfortable discussing their concerns and receiving guidance from healthcare professionals in health programs, IEC aims to raise awareness and transform attitudes to promote better health practices. The essential components of

an IEC strategy involve developing initiatives, identifying challenges and resources, establishing evaluation frameworks, executing plans with the support of community leaders, engaging audiences, and utilizing interpersonal and mass media platforms.

The IEC initiatives play a crucial role in bringing government policies to the grassroots level. They are essential for raising awareness about different programs and policies among the beneficiaries, particularly in rural areas. The government's welfare programs heavily rely on the active involvement of rural communities, which can only be achieved through the widespread dissemination of information. The significance of the IEC lies in its thorough research and consultation with target groups, enabling a better understanding of their needs and requirements.

*Empowering Communities through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) interventions* (Hasan, 2024) discusses the essence of careful planning and consideration in developing effective Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials. The steps include: 1. Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the target audience's requirements, literacy levels, language preferences, and cultural background. This will assist in 1. customizing content and messaging to effectively engage the desired audience 2. establishing the goals of IEC materials 3. identifying the specific behavioural changes or knowledge dissemination that the materials aim to accomplish 4. working closely with the subject matter experts to create precise and pertinent content. Ensure that the information is clear, easy to comprehend, and addresses the identified needs of the audience. Use language that is familiar to the audience and suitable for their literacy levels. Keep sentences brief and use plain language to enhance comprehension. 7. Before finalizing the materials, conduct pre-tests with representatives from the target audience. Collect feedback on clarity, relevance, and cultural appropriateness to make any necessary adjustments. Choosing the right medium is crucial for effectively communicating the message to the intended audience. Engaging with different levels of government, NGOs, and local support groups, collaborating with the media for widespread coverage, supplying resources, and training IEC workers are all indicators of a successful IEC campaign.

The success of health and developmental initiatives in rural areas relies on the implementation of effective IEC strategies. Building strong relationships with the community, crafting compelling messages, choosing the right communication channels, gathering feedback, and ensuring the availability of necessary resources are all crucial factors in determining the efficacy of these strategies.

In this context, Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials serve as essential tools in disseminating crucial health information and promoting positive maternal health outcomes. These materials encompass a wide range of formats, including posters, leaflets, brochures, videos, and audio messages, designed to cater to diverse literacy levels and cultural backgrounds. By presenting information in visually engaging and culturally relevant ways, IEC materials help to improve comprehension and retention of key health messages. The effective use of communication and IEC materials has been associated with positive maternal health outcomes, including increased antenatal care attendance, improved maternal nutrition, higher rates of institutional delivery, and reduced maternal and neonatal mortality.

## **2. Materials and methods**

The state of Uttarakhand has been recognized for its poor performance, particularly as a primary contributor to maternal fatalities. The National Health Family Survey Report (NHFS-4, 2017) highlights significant disparities in literacy rates, especially in rural areas. Historical data reveals that female literacy in Uttarakhand has improved over the decades: from 4.8 % in 1951 to 7.8 % in 1961, with a substantial increase to 60 % by 2001. During the same period, male literacy rose dramatically from 32 % to 84 %. The Census of India 2011 reports female literacy at 70.01 %. Despite these improvements, significant disparities in female literacy persist, impacting health outcomes.

Women's literacy is crucial for maintaining higher health standards. Low literacy rates adversely affect women's health, leading to complications during pregnancy. Bageshwar district exemplifies Uttarakhand's challenges in maternal health, with female literacy at a mere 63.7 %, compared to male literacy at 80.36 %, according to the 2011 census. The district, encompassing 947 villages illustrates the stark literacy disparity between genders. Literacy empowers women to make informed decisions and access vital information for reproductive health. Enhancing maternal health literacy is instrumental in improving knowledge and awareness, enabling effective

management of pregnancy-related complications. There is a strong correlation between their utilization of maternal health services and women's literacy (Kateja et al., 2007). Thus, addressing female literacy is pivotal for advancing maternal health outcomes in Uttarakhand.

Set in this milieu, this exposition discusses health literacy and IEC materials concerning the Bageshwar district of Uttarakhand. Notably, the education and empowerment of women are intrinsically intertwined with maternal health literacy, serving as a pivotal determinant of both maternal and child health outcomes. In Bageshwar, female literacy lags significantly behind males, at 69.03 % as reported in the (Census Handbook, 2011). Health literacy, encompassing mothers' ability to access, evaluate, and utilize information regarding women's and children's health, directly influences maternal and child health-related risks and nutritional factors. Given the significance of maternal health literacy in influencing health behaviours and outcomes, addressing the disparity in female literacy rates becomes imperative for promoting optimal maternal and child health in Bageshwar and similar regions. The arguments of this exposition are based on an observational study conducted in the villages of Kathayatbara, Bilonasera and Mandalsera and Bajinath community health centre of Bageshwar district, Uttarakhand.

Note, WHO suggests adhering to the following framework principles when creating, carrying out, and assessing IEC interventions, i) well-defined goals ii) client-centeredness iii) suitable research design iv) focus on positive behaviour modification v) meticulously developed and evaluated instructional messaging appropriate lines of communication, vi) the use of low-cost instructional resources, and graphic messages with cultural relevance that can be used at home vii) integration with the healthcare delivery system and viii) oversight, assessment, and feedback systems.

IEC Materials included posters, wall paintings, brochures, flipcharts, placards and the maternal and child health card disseminated by Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA). IEC materials analysed were available at the community health centre, Bajinath and Block coordinator office, National Health Mission in Bageshwar district. Schemes highlighted in the materials included (Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, 2016; Janani Suraksha Yojana, 2005; Poshan Abhiyaan, 2018; Ayushman Bharat Yojana, 2018).

In Uttarakhand, the Family and Health Welfare Society established a functional Information and Communication (IEC) cell under the Director-General to address maternal health issues effectively (IEC Cell, 2011). "Conventionally, the IEC approach is used in the field of reproductive health for creating awareness, increasing knowledge, changing attitudes and moving people to change their behaviour or adopt an innovation" (Akhund, Avan, 2011). The execution of IEC strategies follows a methodical and comprehensive approach, beginning with the development of an action plan tailored to specific needs and areas. This is followed by the creation of messages by professional media agencies, pre-testing of materials, and their subsequent dissemination. The strategy also includes the formulation and implementation of media strategies, and the evaluation of the impact of IEC materials. The IEC strategy employs a variety of media to ensure wide reach and impact.

Healthcare professionals are in charge of using various health learning resources to educate the public about health issues mainly,

i) Electronic media includes radio and TV commercials focusing on key topics such as antenatal care, breastfeeding promotion, vasectomy, and adolescent reproductive health, under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).

ii) Print media includes resources that highlight maternal health, such as calendars, flipbooks, pamphlets, folders, and posters.

iii) Outdoor media includes buses, video vans, hoardings, and lit signs that draw attention to important issues like female foeticide.

Furthermore, interpersonal communication plays a crucial role through population education programs for higher secondary schools, orientation training camps for service providers and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) workers, and workshops on Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) and NRHM. These multifaceted communication strategies aim to enhance maternal health literacy and promote positive health behaviours among women and their families. The National Health Policy places significant emphasis on utilizing visual communication materials to elucidate the benefits available under various health schemes.

Despite concerted governmental efforts, a noticeable gap has been identified in the optimal utilization of resources. This gap poses a significant challenge to the attainment of desired goals outlined within the framework of sustainable development. Therefore, there is an imperative to

delve deeper into understanding the underlying factors influencing individuals' interest levels in engaging with communication materials. This critical examination is essential for addressing barriers and fostering effective communication strategies to enhance health outcomes.

The significance of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials in enhancing maternal health literacy cannot be overstated. This encompasses the capacity to identify risks and make informed decisions regarding nutrition throughout the maternity journey. Maternal health literacy also plays a pivotal role in facilitating the smooth adaptation of newborns during the postnatal period and contributes to overall health outcomes. The interpersonal aspect of this skill is particularly pertinent in the context of newborn healthcare.

Maternal health literacy encapsulates both cognitive and social abilities necessary for accessing, comprehending, evaluating, and utilizing health-related information and services to promote the well-being of both mother and newborn. Proficiency in health literacy empowers mothers to assess their health, make well-informed healthcare choices, and seek medical assistance promptly when needed. Thus, nurturing maternal health literacy through the effective utilization of IEC materials is vital for enhancing maternal and newborn health outcomes.

### 3. Discussion

*The influence of education on health: an empirical assessment of OECD countries for the period 1995–2015* (Raghupathi, 2020) discusses how Individuals with advanced educational qualifications tend to experience improved health outcomes and longer lifespans than those with lower levels of education. It is important to emphasize that higher education, especially at the tertiary level, plays a significant role in affecting factors such as maternal and infant mortality rate, life expectancy and vaccination. Education significantly influences health by fostering greater self-awareness regarding personal well-being and enhancing access to healthcare services.

Health education plays a vital role within the healthcare system and holds the promise of enhancing global health outcomes (Rizvi, 2022). Health education initiatives play a crucial role in shaping positive attitudes and behaviours related to global health. By enhancing these programs through digital platforms and broadening the range of health education topics, we can ensure that these interventions have a meaningful and lasting impact.

Effective health communication plays a crucial role in influencing individuals' decision-making processes that encourage healthier choices. Thoughtfully crafted health communication resources can significantly shape social norms and behaviours, ultimately contributing to improved health outcomes (Handebo et al., 2022).

There are major direct and indirect effects on the usage of maternal health care from the Maternal and Child Health Book. Mothers who use the Maternal and Child Health Book are more likely to directly seek maternal health care, which takes into consideration several influencing factors. Through increasing mother awareness, the book also indirectly supports the use of maternal health services. It is essential to encourage the Maternal and Child Health Book's successful use to improve maternal health habits. The impact of maternal literacy and paternal occupation was shown to be quite small on crucial outcomes such as the use of family planning services, TT vaccination, skilled birth attendance, and prenatal care (Lengkong, 2023).

Addressing health issues can lead to an overall enhancement of the population's health status. Individuals with strong social support tend to achieve higher health literacy scores. Conversely, those with restricted financial and social resources are more prone to experiencing lower health literacy (Sabaghinejad, 2023).

In contrast, maternal education and parity emerged as the most significant factors impacting these outcomes. Specifically, maternal education demonstrated a positive correlation with maternal awareness of the safest birth attendants, as well as with the utilization of antenatal care and skilled birth attendance. Maternal education was associated with an increased understanding of antenatal care immunization, which subsequently had a favourable effect on the utilization of antenatal care immunization services.

IEC intervention programs deliver information and raise awareness in a culturally sensitive manner to specific groups of individuals through various media. This approach is designed to enhance knowledge and skills while persuading and motivating individuals to modify their behaviour. The process of IEC involves several stages to effect behavioural change: receiving information, altering health behaviour, and ultimately, sustaining these changes (National..., 1998).

The importance of IEC is a vital tool for disseminating health information and promoting positive changes in health attitudes and behaviours. However, they noted that printed materials such as newspapers, leaflets, handouts, and write-ups present challenges for illiterate individuals (Halliday, Agnes, 2020). Additionally, the authors advocated for the use of video and visual materials instead of printed educational resources to enhance comprehension and effectiveness. Therefore, it is crucial to consider factors such as age, literacy level, and location when targeting specific audiences. Factors such as age, gender, marital status, availability of adequate time for delivering health education, and the recognition of the importance of printed IEC materials in conveying fundamental concepts were found to have a significant correlation with the use of these materials (Geleta et al., 2022).

**Utilizing Diverse Media Channels:** Leveraging mass media channels, including television, radio, and digital platforms, can effectively reach a wider audience. These channels can broadcast culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate content that addresses maternal health issues, ensuring that information is accessible to diverse populations.

**Incorporating Visual and Audio Materials:** Given the challenges faced by illiterate individuals, using video, animations, and audio materials can significantly enhance understanding and retention of health information. Visual aids such as infographics and pictorial representations can simplify complex health concepts, making them more comprehensible.

**Media Literacy Education:** Training community health workers and educators in media literacy is essential. Media education can empower them to create and distribute engaging and relevant IEC materials. These professionals can also guide mothers on how to access and interpret health information from various media sources, fostering informed decision-making.

**Community-Based Media Initiatives:** Implementing community-based media initiatives, such as local radio programs or community theatre, can provide platforms for disseminating health information interactively and engagingly. These initiatives can also facilitate discussions and address specific concerns of the community, promoting greater involvement and adherence to health practices.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continuous monitoring and evaluation of IEC campaigns are crucial to assess their impact and effectiveness. Feedback from the target audience can inform the refinement of strategies, ensuring that the materials remain relevant and impactful.

The integration of mass media and media education is critical in overcoming the challenges associated with the effective utilization of IEC materials for maternal healthcare. Employing diverse media channels, incorporating visual and audio materials, and providing media literacy education can enhance maternal health literacy. This, in turn, empowers mothers to make informed health decisions, improving maternal and newborn health outcomes. Using mass media in conjunction with targeted educational initiatives can significantly contribute to achieving better health standards and behavioural changes in maternal healthcare.

**Case 1:** It was noted that the printed materials available at the Community Health Centre were presented in the local language. However, there was an absence of posters in the Kumaoni Language, which created difficulties for rural women regarding their ability to read the information. Additionally, most posters contained excessive text, which further complicated readability. Only a limited number of posters achieved a suitable balance between minimal text and ample illustrations.

*“Mamta, an 18-year-old mentioned during a focussed group discussion I feel interpersonal communication with the Community health worker in the native language Kumaoni is more comfortable than reading the information from posters, flipcharts or Maternal and Child health books.”*

**Case 2:** The IEC printed materials contained illustrations in some posters, while most of them were filled with information that rural women struggle to read. Additionally, the use of graphics does not match the cultural settings of the district. This mismatch between the content and cultural context makes the IEC printed materials less engaging and comprehensible.

*“Tanuja, a 17-year-old woman from Kathayatbara, discussed in the interview I cannot read and write properly as I have done schooling till Class5th. I have been engrossed with household activities since then, and have not finished my education. I am not interested in reading the booklets distributed by the Community health workers.”*

**Case 3:** The IEC printed materials highlighted the disparity in literacy levels between the government and non-government agencies responsible for creating the posters. A significant



portion of rural women are unable to read communication materials and instead rely on community health workers for information on maternal health. The inadequate literacy levels concerning IEC material have been identified as a gap, leading to further investigation.

*“Rekha, a 22-year-old woman from Mandelsera, revealed in the interview that I had to discontinue my education when my marriage was finalized. As a result, I was unable to complete my studies. I also have a two-year-old child and am currently occupied with managing household duties, with no plans of pursuing further education”.*

#### 4. Results

The comprehension and effective use of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials for maternal healthcare face significant obstacles, primarily due to low literacy rates among women, some of the challenges are:

**Language:** *Evaluation of IEC Materials* (Pathfinder..., 2018) the criticality of minimizing text density in materials intended for public consumption. They emphasized the necessity of ensuring that information intended for rapid assimilation is not burdened with superfluous textual content. In the Bageshwar district, the community health centre provided printed materials in Hindi, not a single poster was available in the Kumauni Language. This discrepancy prompted concerns among rural women regarding the readability of the posters. Furthermore, a majority of the posters contained excessive text, posing readability challenges. Only a few of the posters featured minimal textual content and a greater emphasis on illustrative elements.

**Limited Literacy:** Low literacy levels hinder women's ability to read and understand the information presented in IEC materials. Complex medical terminology and detailed instructions become inaccessible to those with limited reading skills, reducing the efficacy of these educational resources.

**Graphics and Illustrations:** The integration of layout and design in printed materials should be tailored to suit the intended audience (Jahan et al., 2014). Printed materials must be visually appealing and well-structured. Numerous printed materials tend to present an excessive amount of information under subheadings (Arnold, Boggos, 2020). Similarly, the importance of ensuring that visuals complement rather than compete with textual content is stressed in his study. Drawings and photographs must be easily comprehensible and culturally, socially, and economically appropriate. In the context of the Bageshwar district, the IEC printed materials featured illustrations in some posters, albeit most were inundated with information that rural women found challenging to grasp. Furthermore, the use of graphics did not align with the cultural settings of Bageshwar, this mismatch between content and cultural context rendered the IEC printed materials less engaging.

**Cultural and Linguistic Barriers:** The IEC materials are often not tailored to the local dialects and cultural contexts of rural areas like Bageshwar. Without translations into local languages such as Kumauni, the materials fail to resonate with the target audience, further limiting their impact.

**Lack of Visual Aids:** The predominance of text-heavy IEC materials, as opposed to visual aids, poses a significant obstacle. Visuals and illustrations can bridge literacy gaps, but their limited use of current materials reduces the effectiveness of health communication efforts.

**Health Literacy and Behavioural Change:** Even when women can access and understand IEC materials, translating this knowledge into practical health behaviours is another challenge. Low health literacy impedes the ability to critically evaluate and apply health information, which is crucial for effective maternal healthcare. Maternal and child health cards are distributed by ASHA; the beneficiaries are not inclined towards reading the content of the booklet. Women have access to Healthcare services and visit the community health centre. However, they would not make time to pause and read the health information. Regular meetings are conducted in the office of the block coordinator with beneficiaries. Placards and flip charts are shown by the community health workers to educate women on Poshan under the Anaemia Mukht Bharat Scheme.

To overcome the obstacles in effectively utilizing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials for maternal healthcare in Bageshwar, it is essential to develop and distribute resources that are both linguistically and culturally appropriate. Incorporating more visual aids is crucial to cater to audiences with low literacy levels. Efforts should be concentrated on enhancing female literacy rates through targeted education and empowerment initiatives.

The current educational materials are often in the official mother tongue but lack translation into local dialects such as Kumauni. This linguistic gap significantly impairs the comprehension

and engagement of the intended audience. Additionally, the graphical representations in these materials fail to reflect the cultural relevance of health issues, diminishing their impact. For instance, at the community health facility in Baijnath, posters and wall inscriptions aim to raise awareness about maternal health. However, the pictorial representations do not resonate culturally, reducing their effectiveness.

Some suggestions to narrow the identified gap include ensuring that community health workers and health professionals are well-informed about the educational qualifications and marital status of the community they serve.

1) Efforts should focus on the dissemination of health information in the local dialect, complemented by visual aids to enhance understanding.

2) The communication strategy must maintain a neutral and approachable tone to foster women's comprehension and dialogue.

3) Effective health communication and health literacy are vital to the roles of community health workers and healthcare providers must receive training in these areas.

4) This objective can be achieved through regular assessments of the materials and methods employed by stakeholders, alongside training in both verbal and written communication skills.

5) When designing interventions, it is vital to take into account the cultural beliefs and practices of the community to improve health literacy.

6) Existing programs may be modified and restructured based on insights gained from the evaluation and monitoring of projects and their results. Additionally, policies at the national, local, and state levels can be adjusted to enhance health literacy outcomes.

7) According to the first five indicators of the Millennium Development Goals, health literacy is a potent tool that empowers women to achieve long-term objectives and enhance their health.

Thus, these suggestions may serve as a spur to improve maternal health literacy in Uttarakhand's Bageshwar district. The state government programs must ensure that women receive relevant messages that will enhance their health and help them achieve policy goals within the maternal health sector of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Uttarakhand.

## 5. Conclusion

Media education plays a crucial role in overcoming the challenges associated with the effective utilization of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials for maternal healthcare in Bageshwar. By equipping community health workers and educators with skills in media literacy and communication, it is possible to create and distribute materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. Media education can enhance the design and dissemination of visual aids, ensuring they are relevant and engaging for low-literacy audiences. Furthermore, media education can empower women by providing them with the knowledge and tools to access and interpret health information, thereby promoting better health outcomes.

### Skill Development for Community Health Workers and Educators:

Media education equips community health workers and educators with essential skills in media literacy and communication. These skills are pivotal in understanding how to effectively convey health information through various media formats. Training in media literacy enables these professionals to critically evaluate and select appropriate content that resonates with the target audience. By understanding the principles of effective communication, they can create messages that are clear, concise, and culturally sensitive, thereby enhancing the overall impact of IEC materials.

### Creation of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Materials:

One of the significant challenges in Bageshwar is the linguistic diversity and cultural specificity of the region. Media education provides the tools necessary to create IEC materials that are not only in the local dialects, such as Kumaun but also culturally relevant. This ensures that the materials are more relatable and understandable for the target audience. For instance, using local symbols, attire, and settings in visual aids can make the information more accessible and engaging for the community, thereby increasing the likelihood of its acceptance and utilization.

### Empowerment through Knowledge and Tools:

Media education empowers women by providing them with the knowledge and tools needed to access, interpret, and utilize health information. When women are educated on how to navigate various media sources and critically assess the information presented, they become more informed

about their health and the health of their children. This empowerment leads to better health-seeking behaviours and outcomes. For instance, women who understand how to read and interpret health posters or booklets are more likely to follow recommended health practices, attend prenatal check-ups, and seek timely medical advice.

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## Media Consumption by Russian Youth as a Factor of Political Socialization: Request for Media Literacy Education

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### Abstract

Media consumption by young people has traditionally been receiving much attention within Russian science. However, scholars rarely analyze various aspects of political dimension of media practices widely spread among young people. In this regard, the purpose of the study was to analyze the influence exerted by media consumption on the nature of modern youth political socialization.

The article presents a brief overview of the latest research on media practices of modern Russian youth, highlights the features and trends of media consumption by the “digital” generation, i.e. personalization of consumed content, priority of online forms of information dissemination, “situationality” and ritualization of news consumption, a high level of technical literacy, an increase in the scale of digital escapism, multi-screen communication, etc.

The main attention is paid to the importance of media consumption by young people during their political socialization. Distinctive properties of media and cyber socialization are highlighted, and their role in shaping the attitude of young people to events occurring within the country and abroad is shown. Specific practical recommendations are formulated on the possibilities of correcting media practices and transforming media consumption by young people in order to form more balanced and objective assessments of political reality.

**Keywords:** youth, media consumption, media practices, Internet, political socialization, new media, media literacy.

### 1. Introduction

The constantly accelerating nonlinear development of society, among other things, involves dynamic spread of new types of mass media, increasingly widespread use of artificial intelligence and the latest digital technologies in everyday life. All this entails a whole range of various changes, including those affecting the content and nature of people’s media consumption. For example, according to M. Castells, emergence of digital means of transmitting content has become one of the main reasons for the burgeoning of “mass self-communication”, which assumes that an individual independently receives, generates and distributes information (Castells, 2004: 91).

The mixing of media consumption functions (i.e. getting information, entertainment, functions of personal identification, social integration, communication, etc.) and corresponding types of media consumption at the individual level can be considered as another consequence of the information space transformation (Fetsenko, 2023: 1682). This can be seen especially clearly in relation to young people (in our case, they included people born after 1990), who are more susceptible to the influence of various innovations than other social strata. Moreover, the rapid changes of different age groups’ media practices give scholars reason to talk about an emerging

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generational digital divide, manifested both in the varying degrees of mastery and intensity of use of digital media by representatives of certain groups of the population, and in “peculiarities of the existence of their representatives in real and virtual space” (Nikitina, Nikitin, 2023: 38).

On the one hand, it is obvious that the digital divide is the way things are, which is hardly possible to influence in any way: young people, in any case, will quickly become familiar with all kinds of technical innovations and more actively use them in their everyday media practices. On the other hand, media consumption habits acquired and consolidated in youth are most often preserved and developed in adulthood, which means that on their basis it is quite possible to build projections and trends that will determine the nature of interaction with media in the future (Poluekhtova, 2022: 95). Plus, it's hard not to agree with colleagues that the specifics of youth media consumption also “needs to be taken into account when organizing and implementing information and communication projects in the socio-political and social spheres” (Volodenkov et al., 2021: 44). Furthermore, in my opinion, it is precisely ignoring the peculiarities of media use inherent in young people that is one of the main reasons for the low efficiency of the state's efforts to provide information support for individual events, processes and policies in general.

## 2. Materials and methods

The empirical basis of our research consists of the results of surveys conducted in 2022–2024 by *All-Russia Public Opinion Research Center*, *Public Opinion Foundation* and *the Levada Center* (recognized as a foreign agent in Russia) that touched on certain issues related to youth media consumption. In addition, we clarified certain topics that were not covered by above mentioned centers through online surveys and focus group interviews conducted on our own. In November 2022 and 2023, faculty of the Department of Political Science of Saratov State University named after. N.G. Chernyshevsky surveyed 2018 and 862 respondents, respectively, aged 14 to 35 years. The online questionnaires comprised 24 questions, including 3 closed, 2 open and 17 semi-closed ones; 2 more questions suggested the need to assess on a five-point scale the level of one's trust in various sources of information and correctness of development of various spheres of public and state life in modern Russia. In total (over two years of conducting the online surveys), among the respondents there were 53.8 % women and 46.2 % men. According to the age criterion, respondents were distributed as follows: from 14 to 17 years old – 16.2 %; from 18 to 25 years old – 39 %; from 26 to 30 years old – 24.7 %; from 31 to 35 years old – 20.1 %. The final sample included residents of 50 constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

After quantitative processing of results of the online surveys, certain points were clarified and specified during focus group interviews. The first three of them (n = 36) took place in January 2023, another four (n = 42) – in January 2024. When forming the sample of focus group interviews' participants, we also bore in mind the age and gender characteristics of young people living in Russia. During the focus groups, respondents were asked questions about the reasons and motives for the use of information sources they preferred, as well as meanings they attached to certain concepts related to mass media and politics.

Taken together, we believe that the study conducted in this way gave us an opportunity to identify the general features of media consumption by modern Russian youth in the context of their political socialization.

## 3. Discussion

The changed media reality requires new approaches and perspectives for analyzing information consumption by young people. It should be noted that today this issue is being studied quite actively. Moreover, depending on who is doing this, at least three groups of research can be distinguished: academic, marketing, and conducted by professional centers for the study of public opinion.

The former, in turn, can be divided into subgroups, and specifics of each of them is largely determined by the sciences within which researchers work. Sociologists are more often interested in the quantitative parameters of youth media consumption, the demand for individual information resources, the phenomenon of media socialization and other related aspects (Lobodenko, Shesterkina, 2022). Psychologists and teachers mainly analyze the nature and consequences (including destructive) of the influence of media content on the individual (Luchinkina, Petrovskaya, 2019), as well as the role of media education in the formation of a full-fledged individual (Fedorov et al., 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2022). Specifically, some scholars believe that technological advancements create new ways of informing and persuading citizens in

the political advertising context (Minihold et al., 2024) and try to measure the impact of information and voting reminder ads on millennial voters' turnout (Haenschen, Jennings, 2019). However, this probable link seems to me quite difficult to pinpoint since there are many other factors to be taken into consideration. In most cases, it is arguably a combined result of different processes, circumstances, and facts that influence one's behavior more significantly than technological advancements and voting reminder ads.

I see even more ambiguous attempts to document the influence of different types of selective exposure on political learning. For example, J. Guo, H.T. Chen, and S. Lu argue that "both topical and information channel selectivity directly reduce audience's political knowledge while ideological selectivity does not significantly affect political learning" (Guo et al., 2024: 377). It appears that topical, information, and ideological kinds of selectivity are so closely intertwined that it is hardly possible to sort out and assess the impact of each of them.

Quite often, attention of scholars studying media consumption by young people is focused on schoolchildren (Anikina, 2017; Davletshina, 2021; Frolova, Obratsova, 2017) or university students (Cherevko et al., 2018; Vyugina, 2018). The rest of the youth (within generally accepted understanding – that is, under 35 years of age) becomes the object of study much less often or is mentioned in the context of the entire population (Poluekhtova, 2018; Shchepilova, 2014).

A significant part of the research is devoted to the analysis of motivational factors of media consumption (Dunas et al., 2020; Cherevko et al., 2018; Poluekhtova, 2018). Scholars are actively comparing the various reasons that motivate young people to use specific media sources (Couldry, Hepp, 2016; Soldatova et al., 2017; Vartanova, 2019). Specifically, it turned out that young people turn to mass communications (primarily the Internet) more for socialization and self-realization than for entertainment or obtaining necessary information (Dunas et al., 2020).

It is worth mentioning that the Internet is no longer viewed solely as a set of technologies. Rather, it has become a natural environment and an organic part of the daily life of the younger generation (Soldatova et al., 2017: 18). As a result, needs that were previously satisfied only offline can now be satisfied directly – through online communication (Sundar, Limperos, 2013).

The issue of social media influencers' impact on young people is also rather important, because it entails possibility of developing "parasocial" relationships by source characteristics of expertise, similarity, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and interactivity (Cheng et al., 2023). I am not sure whether it can predict higher receptivity toward the influencers' political advocacy or elicit the followers' sharing intention. But it seems quite clear that influencers may not only convey political messages, but also make it more comprehensible for youth. At the same time, it does not mean that "Influencers may thereby raise young people's confidence in their political self-competence, and consequently affect their level of political participation" (Harff, Schmuck, 2023: 147). Arguably, political self-competence as well as level of political participation are dependent upon several factors, not limited to social media influencers' role.

Unfortunately, there are not so many attempts to develop an effective model for developing the ability of young people to resist false information (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021; Frolova, Rogach, 2022) or to articulate the importance of media literacy for political communication in Russia (Bykov, Medvedeva, 2022; Jitsaeng, Tuamsuk, 2022). Exacerbation the situation is the fact that, according to scholars, the level of media literacy of most young people is actually not very high (Avdonina et al., 2022; Djumanova, 2022). In addition, they often tend to overestimate the quality of their own media competence (Frolova et al., 2022). All this together makes young people vulnerable to the spread of fake news and disinformation (Muzykant et al., 2023; Rojas-Kramer et al., 2022; Sarfo et al., 2023), which, in turn, necessitates paying more attention to the content and scope of media education practices used in modern Russia.

In general, despite the fairly wide range of issues raised by Russian researchers, the problems of youth media consumption can hardly be considered thoroughly studied. Firstly, as I.A. Poluekhtova rightly notes, "thanks to the efforts of many researchers, a large number of figures and data obtained by different methods, using different samples, are circulating in the public information space; different, often incomparable indicators (metrics) are given. This creates certain difficulties when analyzing media consumption, since the fragmentation and contradictory nature of the data makes it difficult to see the whole picture and track the dynamics of change" (Poluekhtova, 2022: 91). Secondly, certain aspects of media consumption by young people in the context of political socialization processes have not yet received proper understanding (Demidov,

Lomteva, 2022). In particular, it is not entirely clear what role the online forms of content distribution used by young people play in shaping their political views, perceptions and values.

In this regard, the purpose of this article was to determine the nature of the influence exerted by Russian youth media consumption on the content and results of their political socialization and to emphasize the potential role of media education in fostering better balanced, conscious, and secure behavior of youth within media space.

It should be noted that within the context of this study we use definition of media consumption proposed by V.P. Kolomiets', i.e. "social practice of using communication means (media) to obtain and master symbolic content and implement social connections and interactions" (Kolomiets, 2010: 61). At the same time, the focus of our attention is not on the entire complex of related processes of information consumption, but only on those aspects of it that directly affect the problems of political socialization of Russian youth. We consider the concept of "information consumption" as "a special type of digital activity of modern citizens associated with obtaining an information product (news, entertainment, analytical, etc.) on the Internet" (Volodenkov et al., 2021: 33) to be quite close in meaning to "media consumption".

#### 4. Results

Analysis of the existing research of scholars, as well as results of sociological surveys on this issue and focus group interviews conducted on our own, made it possible to identify the following distinctive features of media consumption by modern Russian youth:

1. Young people express a strong preference for new media. Having a fairly high level of technological literacy (V'yugina, 2017), they feel very confident in handling various gadgets, through which they receive all the information needed. Moreover, they can simultaneously have several technical devices with Internet access at their disposal (Amzin, 2016). Obviously, traditional media are no longer able to satisfy various media demands of "digital youth" (Dunas, 2021: 135) and have less weight for them than the new ones (Zelentsov, 2022: 39).

This feature is confirmed by the results of mass surveys. Thus, according to *All-Russia Public Opinion Research Center*, to receive news, the youth audience prefers to use Internet resources, among which the most popular ones are social networks (they were chosen as the main source of information about what is happening by 25 % of respondents in the age group under 25 and by 28 % of those who are 25–34 years old) and instant messengers (23 % and 19 % respectively) (Novosti, 2023). *Public Opinion Foundation* conducted a similar survey using a slightly different methodology (in particular, respondents could choose several answers to the question "From which sources do you most often learn news and information?"). However, the final results were largely the same: among 18–30 years old people 58 % chose the option "news sites on the Internet", 54 % - "forums, blogs, social networks, instant messengers" and only 24 % opted TV (Novostnaya, 2024).

2. Media consumption by young people is becoming individualized, and the content they receive is getting more and more personalized (Efanov, Stepanchenko, 2019: 72; Poluekhtova, 2016). Having access to a very large number of information resources, users have the opportunity to independently create news feeds for themselves, i.e. taking into account their own interests, passions, requests and preferences (Zelentsov, 2022: 41). That being said, individualization of media consumption did not eliminate its consolidating function: according to M.I. Davletshina, from time-to-time young people still practice watching streams, live broadcasts and other types of content together (Davletshina, 2021: 6).

It should be noted that during the focus group interviews conducted by the author, young people were asked to name the media resources they use more often than others. Indeed, the sets of sources preferred by respondents overlapped extremely rarely: out of 78 focus group participants, only three had more than one of the named sources matching. In other words, the configuration of the resources used, and, consequently, the content of information consumed about all that is happening for each young person is actually almost unique.

3. Largely irrational and partly ritualized nature of news consumption. Young people often turn to media resources not because they feel the need for any information, but because it has become a habit for them – e.g., they start or end their day scrolling social network feeds, while away the time in transport in this way, wait for their queues, etc. Such actions have become part of the everyday reality of a modern young person (Couldry, Hepp, 2017). There has even appeared a relatively new term "phubbing", the essence of which can be boiled down to the obsessive habit of being distracted by gadgets.



*All-Russia Public Opinion Research Center*' data suggest that 74 % of Russians go online every day, while the share of so-called "heavy users", i.e. those who spend more than four hours a day on the Internet, was 35 % in June 2023 (in 2018, there were 23 % of them). Among young people, there are 86 % of "heavy users" (Tsifrovoy detoks, 2023). Quite indicative is that regular users of social networks and instant messengers with communication functionality (*VKontakte*, *WhatsApp*, *Telegram*, *Odnoklassniki*, etc.) spend on average 272 minutes or 4.5 hours a day on them. Moreover, among 18-24 years old people, this figure is even higher: on average, young people spend 493 minutes or more than eight hours a day on messaging, reading news feeds, making calls and other activities (Novosti, 2023). Of course, part of this time interaction with media occurs in the background format.

4. Thematic diversity and, to some extent, chaotic nature of media preferences of the "digital" generation. Researchers note among young people "the presence of interest in a whole range of topics that are different from each other (politics, art, music and cinema, economy, incidents, etc.), and the absence of a clearly dominant one" (Kaminchenko, 2022: 12), the predominance of non-linear (on-demand) types of content and diversity of video consumption practices in terms of technologies used, services and forms of viewing (Poluekhtova, 2022: 102-103). At the same time, as the results of our own surveys have shown, young people are not always able to clearly explain the reasons for turning to a specific source of information. In this sense, it is hard to disagree with S.V. Volodenkov and his colleagues, who consider multipolarity, inconsistency and chaos to be characteristic features of information consumption in the digital space (Volodenkov et al., 2021: 35).

5. Another feature of youth media consumption – situational and event-based conditioning of access to specific content – is quite closely related to the previous one. As D.Yu. Kulchitskaya notes, "Quite often, respondents do not intentionally search for news, but get acquainted with it by reading and consuming other information. For example, this can happen when a person goes to the start page of a search engine and accidentally stumbles upon a title that interests them. Situational consumption of news content can also occur while viewing news feeds on social networks." (Kul'chitskaya, Filatkina, 2021: 6). It is also noted that young people are less attached to exact information sources and, in this sense, they tend to give preference to specific materials that attracted their attention (V'yugina, 2017: 39).

At last, it is obvious that interest in any topic is often determined by events and processes taking place in the country and around the world: the more resonant they are, the more likely it is that young people will pay attention to them and devote part of the time they spend in the Internet. For example, 43 % of the respondents we sampled at the end of 2023 chose the answer "The desire to be aware of what is happening, not to miss something important and not to fall out of the current agenda" as a key motive for tracking information on a specific topic.

6. A significant portion of Russian youth are characterized by commitment to their usual sources of information and reluctance to expand the range of media resources used. As a result, the views and attitudes young people form towards certain persons or what is happening are largely a derivative of those narratives that are broadcast by the sources they prefer (Hutchens et al., 2021: 718).

*Public Opinion Foundation* provides interesting data in this regard. In February 2023, 32 % of respondents aged 18-30 most often used only one or two sources of news information (Istochniki, 2023). According to G.I. Avtsinova and M.A. Kozhevnikova, there are even fewer of them: "Only about 10 % of respondents get ideas about news events from sources of various content of all categories, preferring to compare different points of view and positions with information broadcast on neutral channels, without value judgments and emotional background, and sometimes with historical documents and facts" (Avtsinova, Kozhevnikova, 2023: 41). We believe that, among others, this circumstance is a reason for the formation of proverbial echo chambers, the consequences of which may be polarization of political preferences of young people and, in particular, the greater (compared to the whole society) popularity of opposition-leaning political figures among young people.

At the same time, another important reason for the popularity of oppositional leaders among young people, in my opinion, is their significantly less exposure to the influence of media loyal to the authorities – primarily television channels. *The Levada Center* (recognized in Russia as a foreign agent) records a clear dependence of the choice of information source on the age of respondents: in the older age group (over 55 years old), about half of the respondents named state television channels as the most reliable and trustworthy source of information (55 %), while among respondents under 25 years only every fifth person thinks so (20 %) (Vospriyatie..., 2022).

7. Finally, the last feature of media consumption by young people is pragmatic, partly even “consumer” approach to news content inherent in some of them: when viewing any information, a young person, as a rule, seeks to satisfy one of his or her own interests (this could be the upcoming acquisition of something, a desire to learn something, communicate with someone, etc.). Of course, there are situations when a person is online and does not pursue any specific goal, but in most cases (s)he still clearly understands what (s)he needs at the moment.

In fact, depending on the goals pursued, scholars identify four strategies of media consumption: pragmatic, axial (actions on the Internet are focused on the implementation of attraction and recreational needs), real (involves a formal verification of what is happening in significant communities and realizes the social need for involvement and sense of community) and “data-driven” strategy (Internet activity aimed at acquiring and analyzing media content that is interesting to the user) (Bogdanovskaya et al., 2023: 7). It seems to us, that the first and fourth strategies overlap in many ways and to some extent even complement each other. Moreover, we believe that all four strategies are in a sense pragmatic, since in one way or another they are aimed at satisfying different types of needs that arise in a person

These are specific features inherent in the media consumption by modern youth. We do not want to evaluate them in terms of “good or bad” (as they are objective, so they should be taken for granted). Instead, we will note the key risks that arise in connection with this.

The main risk is associated with the enormous amount of time that the “digital” generation spends on the Internet. Obviously, this can lead to information overload, difficulties in mastering and systematizing information, and even to formation of the effect of clip consciousness. Besides, by plunging into their own echo chambers, young people become less tolerant of alternative views and values, unwittingly increase polarization regarding the most pressing socio-political issues and thereby contribute to the creation of additional tension in society (Chan, Yi, 2024; Filatkina, 2022: 143; Kaiser et al., 2022). Quite closely related to this is the practice of digital escapism, when young people escape from the real world into a virtual space that is often more attractive to them (Nuruzova, 2020: 459; Yang et al., 2023). It is also worth mentioning that scholars found significant positive relationship between social media use and social anxiety and smaller positive effect sizes for studies with adolescent-only samples (Nan et al., 2024). Lastly, one should not discount the idea of media drug addiction dysfunction, developed by P. Lazarsfeld and R. Merton back in the middle of the last century: if the majority of the audience’s time is spent consuming information, the share of it that can be devoted to organized social action inevitably decreases. The results of our surveys indirectly confirm this: 56 % of respondents believe that they take an active civic position, but only 23 % have taken an active part in any public events or actions over the past year. However, it is also argued that “political expression on social media can entail a public commitment to a political self-presentation, which may lead individuals to perceive themselves as politically active, interested, efficacious, and knowledgeable” (Lane et al., 2019: 49).

Huge amount of time spent by modern youth online gives reason to consider media as one of the agents of their socialization. Generally speaking, within Russian scholarship, there are two terms denoting this process. The concept of “media socialization” is used most often. D.V. Dunas interprets it as “a hybrid form of socialization of a modern person, in which the agents of socialization are: 1) “significant others” who exist in physical space and are close to the individual, socialization with whom continues in the media space; 2) “significant others” existing for the individual only in the media space (Dunas, 2021: 155). Along with media socialization, the term “cyber socialization” is sometimes used, which is usually understood as the process of qualitative changes in the structure of an individual’s self-awareness and motivational-need sphere under the influence of information and communication technologies (Aysina, Nesterova, 2019: 43), or – in a broader context – a set of phenomena associated with a person’s introduction to the culture of electronic communication, as well as to the values, norms and rules that determine the specifics of communication in cyberspace (Chitosca, 2006; Gálik et al., 2024).

In our view, taking into account the first feature of media consumption by modern youth highlighted above, these concepts can be considered synonymous. Both of them, in one way or another, focus on the role that new media play in shaping the worldview of young people. Moreover, this role is by no means unambiguous, since the influence of media can be both positive and negative. In the first case, a person safely masters the Internet space, fully uses its numerous opportunities and successfully transfers helpful experience gained in virtual environment in order to solve various problems in real life. In the second case, a high degree of user involvement in

virtual communications is combined with “a low ability for self-regulation when using network resources, the presence of deviant patterns when communicating in the Internet environment and/or high vulnerability to aggressive network interventions” (Aysina, Nesterova, 2019: 49).

An equally important negative aspect of media influence on young people was indicated by A.V. Selezneva. In her opinion, in their relationships with the state and society, young people are guided not so much by their own beliefs and principles, but by stereotypical images from the media space, which, in turn, reduces their political subjectivity, makes the process of political self-determination inconsistent and contradictory, and also contributes to the fact that political preferences of young people are becoming more relative and situational (Selezneva, 2023).

In what direction will the socializing impact of media on modern youth transform in the future? Based on what is observed in this area today, we see two vectors of further development as most likely.

1. According to data presented by *Meltwater* and *We Are Social* in their authoritative annual report “Digital 2024: Global Overview Report” (Digital, 2024), in the entire world and in Russia in particular, the trend towards an increase in the number of Internet users and the amount of time they spend online continues. It is logical to assume that in connection with this, the volume of information produced and consumed by people is also increasing. This means that there will be even less time and cognitive opportunities for its high-quality processing: it will simply be increasingly difficult for people to find the time and energy to critically comprehend what they actually see and hear non-stop in the online space; visual images will continue to increase their dominance over the logical perception of consumed content. As a result, the problems of information overload experienced by young people may become much more acute, and the effects of media may become more varied and less predictable.

2. Gradual loss of the monopoly of news aggregators observed today increases the degree of independence of young people in choosing the content they consume. Everyone begins to form their own media diet, building an information cocoon around themselves that prevents the penetration of ideas, values and views “alien” to its inhabitants. People actually find themselves in different information realities, which may well become a new basis for differentiation of society. Media socialization, thus, risks acquiring a new property for itself, i.e. the ability to potentially disintegrate society (primarily on political grounds).

## 5. Conclusion

Is it possible to somehow stop these negative effects of media socialization? In my opinion, such a possibility exists, but its implementation requires the adoption of systemic measures by the state. Unfortunately, the efforts of individual enthusiasts, scholars, or even non-profit organizations to solve existing problems will clearly not be enough.

First of all, the need to increase general level of media literacy and political culture of young people is obvious. Ideally, of course, it is advisable to solve this problem through the system of secondary, specialized and higher education. Moreover, in Russia, there are already examples of successful introduction of media education disciplines into curricula and even the opening of educational programs of this profile. However, experience shows that it is currently quite difficult to count on mass replication of such practices. Therefore, prospects for implementing a number of smaller-scale projects seem more realistic to us.

Obviously, it is possible to reach out to young people only in the space in which the absolute majority of them are present – in new, and not traditional media. The use of television and radio broadcasts, newspapers and magazines for this purpose will, by and large, be useless due to the lack of demand for these formats among young people.

Stories and pieces aimed at improving media competencies of young people need to be replicated in the most accessible, visualized and attractive form. Network users should learn about methods of manipulating public consciousness that are most often used and effective ways to recognize fakes and check the reliability of information through such usual for them media formats as short videos, pictures, cards, hypertext links, memes, etc. At the same time, the language used to present such content should be understandable not only to specialists, but also to the “average” young person.

It would clearly not be out of place to distribute specialized software and services with fact-checking functionality on popular social networks and instant messengers among young people.

Of course, the use of these resources should be free. Otherwise, the depth of their implementation in the everyday media practices of the “digital” generation will be minimal.

In addition to efforts to improve media literacy, it is also important to continue the fight against disseminators of false information. In this case, we mean both legislative and law enforcement activities: it is not enough just to increase the information “immunity” of young people, it is also important to fight the “viruses” that are trying to undermine it.

We are convinced that, ultimately, the mentioned measures will contribute to increasing effectiveness of socialization of the younger generation, including in the political dimension of this process: provided they are comprehensively implemented, media consumption practices inherent in youth will be much less likely to provoke the growth of protest sentiments and deepening of the split in Russian society along ideological and political grounds.

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## Artificial Intelligence as a Means of Visual Representation of the Lost Cultural and Historical Heritage of the Urban Landscape in Media Education

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### Abstract

This study was carried out to modern world presents the problem of introducing and using artificial intelligence as a visual representation means of the lost cultural and historical heritage. It is the urban landscape in mass and professional media education. Thus, based on the study of losses in the cultural and historical heritage, the authors develop different methods of traditional and digital visual-shaped memorialization. The aim of the research lies in artificial intelligence research includes the technological aspect of scientific and educational activities of students. According to the degree of vocational education proximity the cultural heritage and media education specialties, the use of artificial intelligence in related specialties is considered. The developed synchronization system of inheritance and the cultural and historical heritage study in media education made it possible to single out the representative forms of its restoration in the educational course. The authors of the article explore the connection has been established between the loss of cultural and historical heritage and the methods of its reconstruction and integration into media education. Using these methods, the study identifies the role of neural networks and artificial intelligence in the reconstruction of cultural and historical heritage in media education has been determined.

**Keywords:** visual-imaginative representation, cultural and historical heritage, visual dominants, recreation, visual appearance, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, media education, memorialization.

### 1. Introduction

The reflection of the modern Russian information society is associated the problem of representing the lost cultural and historical heritage as a whole is mainly socio-moral, but at the same time civilizational. It is closely related to the process of memorialization of domestic heritage in general and, in particular, in the urban environment. The protection of memorable places and architecture plays an important role in the restoration of cultural and historical memory. It indirectly affects the restoration of events and facts gaps in the chain studied in media education. Memorialization the cultural and historical establishment and significance of heritage ultimately determines the nature of figurative ideas about it. The forms of memorialization can be very different: expositions, exhibitions, display of culturally significant objects, consecration of places of memory. These objects in various combinations, ensembles, exposed to the action of time, have various destruction and loss. The way to provide the nature of this process is to lack of public

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attention, indifference to the protection of historical and cultural monuments, oblivion of historical memory is fraught with serious socio-cultural consequences. For example, in Omsk recently many valuable monuments have been lost, including the Assumption Cathedral, the Serafimo-Alekseevskaya chapel, and so on. They are recreated through collections of landscape photographs, the creation of which is the prerogative of media education.

With this situation it is connected as well management of stresses as notes Mona Alhasani and Rita Orji “Guided by the study findings, we provided actionable design recommendations and future research directions to facilitate the development of impactful persuasive time and stress management interventions” (Alhasani, Orji, 2024).

At the same time, according to Anne-Britt Gran, Peter Booth and Taina Buche, the problem depends on social change: “Algorithms are an increasingly important element of internet infrastructure in that they are used to make decisions about everything from mundane ... recommendations through tomore profound and oftentimes life changing” (Gran, 2024).

One of the effective means of recreating cultural and historical memory in the minds of recipients is visual-shaped presentation using media technologies. It is closely related to the possibilities of recreating losses based on the study of visual documents, filling gaps in history. In this process, a considerable role belongs to the samples of landscape photography. In this regard, the discovery of the lost cultural heritage in archival and author's photo collections of the photo clip allows you to see complexes of ensembles, estates, fortresses, which make it possible to compare the past and modern appearance of the city. In the future, the orientation of scientific activity to recreate the heritage of urban landscapes is necessary. Here an important part of the problem is the choice of the information field, which speaks Jan Švelch: “A part of this strategy is the video game industry's selective information disclosure, which I explore empirically on the example of telemetry infographics... how publicly disseminated infographics contribute to the normalization of player surveillance by presenting it as a source of harmless trivia to be collected and shared by fans and the specialized press” (Švelch, 2022: 5).

On this basis, it is quite possible to form a media landscape using its modeling, according to Li that as is it possible: “have found ways to build and maintain a vibrant media landscape composed almost exclusively of micro media industries and small-scale legacy and new media productions ranging from newspapers to podcasts, from radio shows to social media influencing” (Li, 2022).

An important component of this problem is to give the lost heritage a digital visual shape using the recreating capabilities of artificial intelligence. For this purpose, active digitalization is necessary, which allows, according to V.E. Vasilevskaya “not to lag behind the level of reality in an uncertain future” (Vasilevskaya, 2021). At the same time it can be noted the presence of social communications in universities, “in recent years, social media have developed the strong potential to effectively communicate and to create a value proposition about university educational services, research activities and their third role. The social media content should be designed in a way which creates value for social media users to build a stronger level of engagement and facilitate brand communication” (Eger, 2024: 157).

There is a thought attached to this teaching Joomi Lee, Dai-Yun Wu, Jih-Hsuan (Tammy) Lin, Jooyoung Kim, Sun Joo Ahn that exists “the unique affordance of time travel in virtual reality (VR) to enhance the perceived efficacy” (Lee et al., 2023: 6).

Our understanding of artificial intelligence is changing day by day because of point of view Laba N., that “visual generative media represent a novel technology with the potential to mediate public perceptions... Seeking to understand a visual culture in which algorithms become integrated into human processes of memory mediatization”. It is indisputable that “representation: drawing on AI-enabled media to generate images for ...another purposes where the lines between human and machine agencies blur” (Laba, 2024).

In this regard, the issue of the impact of virtual reality on cultural heritage becomes important. Byun and Ahn (Grace) states that “virtual influencers (VIs), computer-generated characters that serve as influencers, offer novel and cost-effective advertising strategies. VIs' roles and appearances are comparable to those of human influencers (HIs) in advertising in that they mimic humans in their behavior” (Byun, Ahn, 2023).

In this case, you need to see a deep differences, about which write W.Z. Hill: “Technological modernity understands media such as film in a way that produces a separation between nature and culture” (Hill, 2022).

At the same time, there it takes place to be the integration into the virtual world: “innovate the existing teaching mode, provide diversified teaching resources and environments, realize intelligent teaching evaluation and certification methods, etc., but also realize the real integration of people’s physical world and virtual world” (Wu, Hao, 2023). The implementation of these competencies brings students to virtual reality, which writes Slavomír Gálik: “Human identity is now extending to cyberspace of digital media. According to Turkle, cyberspace acts as a mirror in which one can get to know one another. However, virtual identity is not entirely virtual because it is continually linked to real identity through cognitive functions and abilities” (Gálik, 2019: 8; Gálik et al., 2024).

One of Russian authoritative scientists A.V. Ostroukh argues that content of digital heritage, the leading direction is on the use of artificial intelligence, highlighting two directions in its development: approaching the principles of human thinking and integrating already created systems into a single system (Ostroukh, 2020). In addition, one should agree with the opinion of Guk regarding the inclusion in the digital cultural heritage of "systems with elements of augmented reality and the prospects for the further development of virtual reality technologies in the field of culture." The resulting virtual environment becomes not only a place to acquire, but also to spread new knowledge, which contributes to the fact that “over time, the paradigm of consumer culture is replaced by a culture of participation” (Gooke, 2021).

The use of social networks, according to Zhang, is important for cultural and historical memory, causing a crisis due to the fact that opportunity appeared “to identify various crisis memory narratives, and then, rank-order analysis, cross-lagged correlation analysis, and multiple regression quadratic assignment procedure were performed to evaluate the reciprocal influences of crisis memory agendas of the second level (narrative salience) and the third level (narrative network) among different users” (Zhang, 2024: 218).

As for some Russian scholars, who analyzed the difference the aspects of problem. For instance, historical and methodological approaches to the educational potential of artificial intelligence and the principles of its are analyzed study I.O. Kotlyarova. She distinguishes: philosophical, sociological, psychological and pedagogical aspects. It should be noted that the technological aspect of scientific and educational activities is not indicated. We agree that the use of artificial intelligence for interpersonal interaction, self-identification and socialization of students is quite effective. However, it is equally important for group interaction and interactive communication. Following the author's principles: axiological, humanism and personification, subject, cognitive can be supplemented by the principle of integration, which most of all corresponds to the pattern identified by the author, which consists in the co-evolution of education and the scientific sphere (Kotlyarova, 2022).

So, at the same time, the media has a stable connection with the picture of the world in “the process of creating a certain... among the audience of various media, while emphasizing the influence of events that are attributed high importance on the attitude of society to the specific mentioned persons” (Knowles et al., 2023: 21). Therefore in restoring the visual appearance of the lost heritage. In the regard of some researchers “visualization of nature in cities fundamentally impacts how we imagine the urban environment and our role in caring for it... the project of urban renewal imagines and designs specific typologies of urban nature». They discusses «an experiment creating photo diagrams, which expands visual methodologies used ...augmented ...us to ‘read’ the landscape” (Jones et al., 2024).

## 2. Materials and methods

In order to study materials and sources on cultural heritage, artificial intelligence, in the media educational environment, there is serious pedagogical potential for the development of artificial intelligence according to curricula by designers, journalists, architects, multimedia directors, and future film specialists.

The methodology for assessing the degree of destruction of objects and differentiation of the lost cultural and historical heritage is closely related to the study of integration methods and forms of scientific knowledge into the educational process leading to digital representation. In addition, a comparative analysis of the methods of using artificial intelligence in professional media education.

### 3. Discussion

An analysis of media's publications and on the Internet shows three points of view. Three points of view. the leading direction is the views of A.V. Ostroukh on the use of artificial intelligence, highlighting two directions in its development: approaching the principles of human thinking and integrating already created systems into a single system (Ostroukh, 2020). In addition, one should agree with the opinion of D.Yu. Hook regarding the inclusion in the digital cultural heritage of "systems with elements of augmented reality and the prospects for the further development of virtual reality technologies in the field of culture." The resulting virtual environment becomes "not only a place to acquire, but also to spread new knowledge," which contributes to the fact that "over time, the paradigm of consumer culture is replaced by a culture of participation (Gooke, 2021).

Promotion of media culture in the field of education relevant now so "culturally responsive pedagogy has received increasing research attention and has been applied in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics ... in higher education to support an increasingly diverse student body in recent years" (Xie, Ferguson, 2022: 1215).

Many scientists consider the major use of artificial intelligence in the space of digital historical and cultural heritage. So, in the first approximation, in the process of compiling the media content of the lost cultural heritage in the form of chronotopes (Yablokova, Kalitina et al., 2024; Tsareva, Tarasova, 2023). It is necessary, according to Tsareva and Tarasova, to collect and analyze the wide space-time continuum to achieve the authenticity of the cultural heritage (Tsareva, Tarasova, 2023).

The similarity of artificial intelligence with human by the principles and his functioning on the basis of algorithms is noted by R. Dushkin and M. O'Connell which don't identify him with a human brain at all (Dushkin, O'Connell, 2022). According to a number of scientists, digital historical and cultural heritage is a promising area for the use of artificial intelligence technology. Digitalization of cultural heritage objects lays the foundation for the use of artificial intelligence in the process of converting artifacts into new forms that are part of the updated context, to which Tarasova and X include: "collection and analysis of data from a wide temporal and spatial content" (Tsareva, Tarasova, 2023).

However, digitalization does not yet provide the development dynamics provided by the processing of digitized data using artificial intelligence. In this regard, according to the strategy of using artificial intelligence presented by K.R. Oleshkovich, it becomes possible to create a reality that is not intended to replace people, but is a means of expanding human skills and capabilities and an excellent opportunity for the implementation of new ideas, including in the field of culture (Oleshkovich, 2021).

In the same direction, transactions of information systems are studied which «using conventional approaches to match entities share the common problem of missing important structural information beyond entities in the modeling process» and "allows graph neural network models to step in" (Zhiwen et al., 2023).

Further this strategy is M.M. Lariontsev, who gives the concept of the datafication of everyday life in the collective cooperation of people who are in the space of creative capital due to the expansion of reality in mixed reality technologies. The unified information space formed at this time ensures the popularization of cultural heritage (Lariontsev, 2020).

The third aspect of the cultural heritage preservation is developed by E.R. Abrukova, justifying the principles of the use of artificial intelligence in the restoration of cultural heritage objects, which make it possible to restore damaged objects, "analyzing materials with accuracy invisible to the human eye and providing opportunities for making more informed decisions. "The use of artificial intelligence in the field of restoration, as the author notes, not only increases the efficiency of work, but also allows a deeper understanding of the history and technology in creating works of art" (Abrukova, 2023). In the same direction A.B. Ivanov and V.G. Petrov explores various algorithms for the analysis and restoration of architectural monuments (Ivanov, Petrov, 2023).

It should be noted that the use of artificial intelligence is distributed, on the one hand, to the sphere of preservation of cultural heritage and, on the other hand, to its popularization and study for scientific and educational purposes, including media education. In this regard, the basic general principles for the use of artificial intelligence in modern education are justified.

The difference the aspects of artificial intelligence study and the principles of its use was carried out by I.O. Kotlyarova. She distinguishes: philosophical, sociological, psychological and pedagogical aspects. It should be noted that the technological aspect of scientific and educational activities is not indicated. We agree that the use of artificial intelligence for interpersonal interaction, self-identification and socialization of students is quite effective. However, it is equally important for group interaction and interactive communication. Following the author's principles: axiological, humanism and personification, subject, cognitive can be supplemented by the principle of integration, which most of all corresponds to the pattern identified by the author, which consists in the co-evolution of education and the scientific sphere (Kotlyarova, 2022).

We fully agree with D.A. Strunin, who claims that personification of artificial intelligence as a leading style of education is noted by, emphasizing purposeful support and feedback, personalized learning experiences that take into account assessment; style, preferences, fostering student engagement and motivation (Strunin, 2023) his point of view is developed by O.A. Pynova and R.S. Zaripova, noting that personalized learning refers to a variety of educational programs in which the pace of learning and the learning approach are optimized for the needs and interests of each student. It is noted that artificial intelligence will easily select the right pace for a student to gain knowledge using technological tools (Pynova, Zaripova, 2019).

It should be noted that in the studies of these authors, the collective experience of acquiring knowledge remains in the shadows. The collective-technological aspect stands out in the system view of the use of artificial intelligence in the work of A.S. Slavyanov and S.S. Feshina, who believe that the inclusion in the system of providing education based on artificial intelligence of a search information system that allows the formation of a database of the educational process from various sources will be able to simulate the thought process of students in a continuous mode of research activity (Slavyanov, Feshina, 2019). One cannot but agree with this provision.

According to O.R. Popov and O.A. Gorbachev, the interaction of artificial intelligence and neural networks in education is considered from the standpoint of cognitive science and a biological approach, which is aimed at progressing and "solving the riddle of the mind" by strengthening machine intelligence or creating humanoid intelligence in the form of an autonomous technical system of artificial intelligence. The authors imagine the integration of already created artificial intelligence systems into a single system capable of supporting machine learning (Machine Learning, ML) using artificial neural networks, which is the most promising technological trend of our time. At the same time, truly artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence, AI) covers "any technology that reproduces human thinking and such skills as, for example, understanding complex information, independently deducing conclusions and the ability to conduct a meaningful and coherent dialogue" (Popov, Gorbacheva, 2019). However these skills to which the car studies serve, most likely, as incentives of formation of those at the person.

In recent years, holding round tables on media education issues has been use considered the artificial intelligence in the field of preserving cultural heritage through its popularization and study of the most convex in visible and audible audiovisual forms finds its adequate expression in mass and professional media education.

The need for the integrative use of information technologies is written Abedi, Prestridge, Geelan, Hodge. They concided that: "Exploring the perspectives of multiple stakeholders involved in the initial teacher education space, such as teacher educators, pre-service teachers, principals and policymakers, could offer a more all-inclusive insight into the challenges and opportunities present in preparing pre-service teachers for a more effective digital technology integration in in-service classrooms" (Abedi et al., 2024).

In the research of artificial intelligence for mass media education are allocated the studies of E.A. Bondarenko, N.Yu. Nosova, M.D. Sokolova, A.V. Ostroukha.

The fundamental principle of media education is recreation and reproduction, modeling of perception using artificial intelligence, affirm by E.A. Bondarenko. Her point of view involves stimulating full-fledged natural creativity using artificial intelligence. At the same time, a heuristic departure from algorithms is assumed with their mandatory development, focusing on "making creative decisions, recognizing and implementing cultural codes,... perception of the target audience" (Bondarenko, 2023). The principle of the stimulating effect of artificial intelligence is indeed objective and effective. This position is fully consistent with the principles of the human brain, highlighted by N. Yu. Nosov, based on the use of a mass of logical mechanisms (including the so-called "fuzzy logic" scheme), is able to switch and thereby help solve the main problem within

the framework of the neurodynamic model) (Nosov, Sokolov, 2016). In the use of artificial intelligence in the field of professional media education, it can be distributed according to the idea for the training of journalists, designers, heads of film, photo, video studios, multimedia directors, animators, videographers, producers, screenwriters, film and television directors, film and television editing specialists, etc. In this direction, a few specialized studies can be noted.

The study of the process of generating neural networks through artificial intelligence as the prerogative of media education, the possibilities of its application and its limits led I. Kozlikhin and A. Demidov to interpret them as a kind of "new media," which should be assessed, in our opinion, in the context of traditional values (Kozlikhin, Demidov, 2020). According to the degree of proximity of vocational education specialties to cultural heritage, on the one hand, and to media education, on the other hand, the use of artificial intelligence in related specialties should be considered: museology, architecture and in media education: design, animation, journalism, cinema and video.

This idea is consistently developed in the research Jiang, while it is noted that "based on the cognitive mediation model, this study explored the pathways through which social media use was linked to..., taking into account different information acquisition patterns (e.g., media attention vs. information discussion), information processing (e.g., elaboration), and information seeking experience" (Jiang, 2022).

Research on the role of artificial intelligence in documenting history can be traced in the article Eduard Hovy, Martha Palmer, and Piek Vossen that states "unlike humans, artificial intelligence, at least current stage, processes stories in a much more atomistic fashion. While significant breakthroughs have been made over the past few decades, challenges continue as progresses necessitating creative solution" (Yang, 2023).

So, in the training of museum specialists, the use of artificial intelligence to form systems for creating electronic images of museum storage objects and integrating images, the most relevant is the digital transformation of traditional technical and technological methods for analyzing museum objects (Yumasheva, Guk, 2022). Since the systemic transformation of museum objects of cultural heritage for its development by students-museologists presupposes augmented reality, here the use of the media educational potential of artificial intelligence in the process of interaction with it is extremely necessary, as mentioned above.

At the same time, the use of artificial intelligence by students for architectural objects of cultural heritage is aimed, according to E.A. Akshov, at changing the creative process when creating architectural concepts using generative neural network modeling (Akshov, 2023).

Here, unlike museologists, the potential for media-educational interaction between students and artificial intelligence is much wider. E.L. Yelkina points out that in the media education areas and specialties themselves, emphasis is placed on audiovisual media systems. So, in the training of designers, where the creation of compositions in design plays a special role, according to, "neural networks do not create new ideas, are not the creators of innovative breakthrough visual concepts," a "the formation of professional skills in the education of student designers is impossible without the development of a special form of compositional thinking" with the help of new digital tools, actualizing the skills of working with artificial intelligence, which combines all the many visual information, created by masters of painting and design, which "develops the creativity, creativity of future designers" (Elkina, 2023). There is an interaction of the media educational potential of artificial intelligence with audiovisual creativity.

Didactic strategy training of designers, as claims D.A. Restrepo-Quevedo, R. Cuervo, J. Gonzalez-Tobon, J Camacho, E. Hernandez consists in "intersemiotic emergence ... for design learning, discussed from the perspective of social semiotics and communication studies. With this strategy, students orchestrate autotelic relationships using modes and personalized semiotic resources" (Restrepo-Quevedo et al., 2024).

It should be noted, as E.O. Katrangi, I. Yu. Kodenko, that the use of artificial intelligence for design students allows you to personalize the learning process in accordance with the individual needs of students, ensures their involvement in the process of cognition due to the advantages of material perception using virtual (augmented) reality (Katrangi, Kodenko, 2022). We see that here the process of interaction is personalized due to virtual reality.

However, according to M.B. Belyaeva and E.I. Kharisov, for animation students, media development using even more due to the visual images allocated by the author of the animated work, used in "such technologies as key forms (shape keys), motion capture (motion capture).

"Machine learning is used here for motion matching. The use of neural networks allows for marker-free capture of human face animations. Can be noticed, that it is necessary that the interaction of man and machine in the neural network space when creating identical images of the lost cultural heritage includes all the variety of situations, emotions, key forms of the appearance of the urban landscape. So there is a need that «to train the neural network on a pre-prepared set of different data, consisting of several thousand photographs of human faces in various situations that transmit numerous emotions, as well as a special coordinate grid indicating the key, according to the authors, points of the face» (Belyaeva, Kharisov, 2020: 27). As you can see, here the dominant role in media education with the help of artificial intelligence is played by the visual solution of animated images, including for cultural heritage.

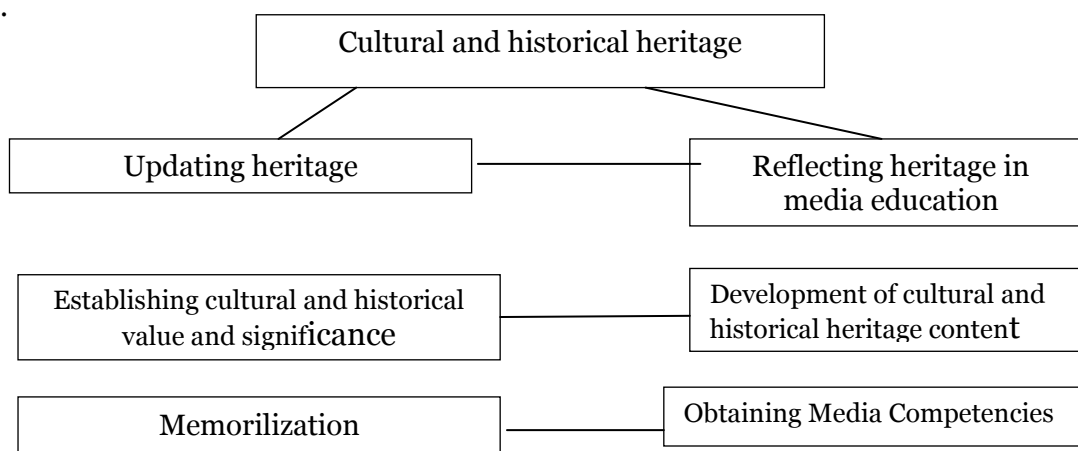
To animate movement in the process of restoring historical memory, it is important to rely on the psychological sect, the pattern that "we can better describe the sensations of movement in animated films that are ostensibly created frame by frame, thus defying our perceptual habits for watching movies and making sense of the movements we see on-screen" (Jong, 2022).

Unlike animators, training journalists requires mastering algorithms, which is based, according to A.P. Sukhodolov, A.M. Bychkova, S.S. Hovhannisyan, on artificial intelligence machine learning and is applicable for generating and analyzing texts. It is noted that a new generation of algorithms based on artificial intelligence is able to recognize the emotional coloring of the text. The authors note that artificial intelligence in journalism is used in data processing and analysis, interactive communication with the audience; tracking information reasons; validation of facts (fact-checking) image recognition; production of video content, etc. (Sukhodolov et al., 2019). Obviously, it is not the artificial generation of information that is important for student journalists, but its monitoring for reliability, analysis and convincing interaction with the audience.

It should be noted that in this process the leading role is played, according to A.V. Fedorov, the development of media competence of students, including critical thinking and perception. The author states that these processes develop when analyzing the features of the structure and functioning of media texts based on six key concepts of media education: agency, category, language, technology, audience, representation (Fedorov, 2015). Indeed, media competence, also produced in the field of artificial intelligence, cannot be mastered without critical thinking.

#### 4. Results

The system for synchronizing the processes of cultural and historical inheritance and the study of cultural and historical heritage in media education operates as follows. The actualization of heritage contributes to the emergence of opportunities is reflecting heritage in media education. The next stage in inheritance: the establishment of the cultural and historical value and significance of heritage sites predisposes to the development of the cultural and historical content of the heritage. The future memorialization fixes the value of objects of material and intangible heritage and allows students to obtain the media competencies necessary for media education (Figure 1).



**Fig. 1.** System for synchronizing inheritance and the study of cultural and historical heritage in media education.

However, only the presence of a reflected heritage in photo landscapes does not guarantee its reconstruction. It is important to represent its appearance, figurative meanings, visual dominants, which requires a thorough study of the state of objects and classification by species.

Types of lost cultural and historical heritage and a representative form of development of its various types in media education. Representation of visual images is closely related, according to N. Laba, with memory image recovery, so “seeking to understand a visual culture in which algorithms become integrated into human processes of memory mediatization, this study addresses representation” (Laba, 2024).

The study of the state of cultural and historical heritage objects reveals the degree of destruction (loss). By gradation, it is distributed as follows by gradation levels: 1. damage, 2. partial destruction, 3. loss of ensemble, 4. appearance deformation, 5. disharmonization and dispersal of the ensemble, 6. ruinization, 7. total destruction. These levels determine the methods of levels of recreation and the corresponding recreating and integrated visual representation. Recreating representation of the images of the urban cultural landscape, its architecture is associated with restoration, renovation, reconstruction. Visual representation integrated into the process of media education involves the construction of the city images, the reconstruction and visual images generation in the process of restoring cultural heritage are closely interconnected through demonstrative and presentationes forms of their introduction into medical education practice. Thanks to this, the imaginary and metaphysical components are combined in an updated context. It should be noted that there is a close connection between the degree of destruction and loss of cultural and historical heritage and the methods of its reconstruction and integration into media education, mediated by digital memorialization methods, including using neural networks and artificial intelligence (Table 1). These include: cuarcoding, creating virtual reality, inclusion in augmented reality, digital reconstruction of the architectonics of the ensemble and cultural and historical appearance, digital design of the image of the city.

Thus, digital memorialization methods allow us to determine the methods of using artificial intelligence in media education. For this purpose, recently effectively used: digital stylization of architectural objects, cataloging artifacts of the cultural landscape, digital segmentation of the cultural landscape, computer identification of architectural styles, media representation of heritage objects.

With this aspect Anne Kaun and Michael Forsman links the synthesis of digitalization of media competencies “in the process of translating digitalization into reality; they have become ambassadors of digitalization not only by fostering digital skills and competences in workshops and official training sessions but also, we argue, through a specific form of digital work, namely, digital care work” (Kaun, 2024: 5).

**Table 1.** The relationship between the degree of destruction and loss of cultural and historical heritage and the methods of its reconstruction and integration into media education

No	Degree of destruction of objects and types of lost cultural and historical heritage	Methods of recreating visual representation	Methods of recreating visual representation methods of integrated visual representation	Methods of digital memorialization
1.	Damages	Comparison of the damaged and pristine appearance of monuments	Virtualization of the image of monuments	Digital reconstruction of the architectonics of the ensemble and cultural and historical appearance.
2.	Partial destruction	Recreating the original images of the cultural landscape	Animation of the cultural and historical landscape	Creating integrity in virtual reality



<b>№</b>	<b>Degree of destruction of objects and types of lost cultural and historical heritage</b>	<b>Methods of recreating visual representation</b>	<b>Methods of recreating visual representation methods of integrated visual representation</b>	<b>Methods of digital memorialization</b>
3.	Deformation of the appearance	Recreation of the appearance of heritage objects	Demonstration of the recreated reality	Cuarcoding
4.	Loss of the ensemble	Immersion in the integrity of the heritage object	Recreating the visual dominants of the cultural and historical landscape I	Inclusion in augmented reality
5.	Disharmonization and dispersal of the ensemble	Generation of figurative representations of the urban landscape	Immersion into the educational process of digital analogues	
6.	Ruinization. Complete destruction, disappearance	The embodiment of the figurative meanings of the primogeniture of the monument	The generation of urban imaginary and metaphysical meanings of cultural landscapes.	Digital design of the city image

These methods extend to the study of a number of disciplines of student designers, future leaders of photo, video studios, and animators: both general art and professional cycles: Landscape Design, Landscape Studies and Architectural Design, Landscape Architecture and Media Landscape, Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art, General History of the Arts; Media studies, Media ecology, History of audiovisual arts. There is an objective connection between the methods of using artificial intelligence and methods of visual representation in the cycles of the studied disciplines (Table 2).

The concept of 'the artificial intelligence personification was coined by as a leading style of education is noted by D.A. Strunin, emphasizing purposeful support and feedback, personalized learning experiences that take into account assessment; style, preferences, fostering student engagement and motivation (Strunin, 2023).

**Table 2.** The connection of methods of using artificial intelligence and integrated methods of visual representation in the cycles of the studied disciplines

<b>№</b>	<b>Methods of Integrated visual Representation</b>	<b>Methods of Using Artificial Intelligence in Media Education</b>	<b>Disciplines Studied</b>
1.	Virtualization of the image of monuments	Media restoration of heritage sites.	Landscape and architectural design
2.	Animation of cultural and historical landscape	Computer animation and pattern recognition	Landscape design
3.	Demonstration of the recreated reality	Computer identification of architectural styles	Aesthetics and philosophy of art
4.	Recreating the visual dominants of the cultural and historical landscape	Digital segmentation of the cultural landscape	General art history
5.	Immersion in the educational process of	Cataloging artifacts of the cultural landscape	History of audiovisual arts

№	Methods of Integrated visual Representation	Methods of Using Artificial Intelligence in Media Education	Disciplines Studied
	digital analogues		
6.	Generation of urban imaginary and metaphysical meanings of cultural landscapes.	Digital stylization and combination of architectural objects.	Landscape Architecture and Media Landscape. Media studies. Media ecology.

This point of view is developed by O.A. Pyrnova and R.S. Zaripova, noting that personalized learning refers to a variety of educational programs in which the pace of learning and the learning approach are optimized for the needs and interests of each student. It is noted that artificial intelligence will easily select the right pace for a student to gain knowledge using technological tools (Pyrnova, Zaripova, 2019).

## 5. Conclusion

This study shows, that an objective connection between the methods of using artificial intelligence and the integration of methods of visual representation contains in the cycles of the studied disciplines in media education. It operates in a system of synchronizing inheritance and the study of cultural and historical heritage in media education. This connection is established between the degree of destruction and loss of cultural and historical heritage and the methods of its reconstruction and integration into media education. It extends to a set of methods for using artificial intelligence and integrated methods of visual representation in the cycles of the studied disciplines. Visual representation integrated into the process of media education. It involves the construction of images of the city, the various reconstructions, forms of media discourse, the generation of imaginary and metaphysical meanings of cultural landscapes.

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## Axiologically Marked Conflicts: Representation in Media Space

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the value conflict, which has a verbal embodiment, and in some cases it is impossible to distinguish it from a communicative (verbal, linguistic) conflict.

The purpose of the article is to study the verbal embodiment of value conflict in the categories of linguoecology. Modern media abound with information about conflicts and serve as a platform for the struggle of some values with others. Common communicative benefit is that, when verbalizing conflict, the techniques of rhetorical argumentation prevail over dysphemization and invectives. All of the above determines the relevance of the article.

Different linguistic units used in media discourse are considered as representatives of the conflict. For the first time, the article describes the means of representing axiologically marked conflict in media space, taking into consideration the linguistic and pragmatic potential of units of different levels and its representation in media texts of different genres. Such a description contributes to the formation of skills for confident recognition of not only value problematics, but also the means of its representation in media texts, and as a result, the skills and abilities to create relevant professional media texts, diagnose media texts causing and reflecting axiologically marked, significant for linguistic culture conflicts.

The novelty also lies in the study of standard and substandard units, neutral and expressive, nominative and tropeic ones, in common media text space, which can also contribute and determine the media education result, for example in creating impactful vivid media texts with an updated pragmatic effect. Media education and media literacy are mutually complementary. Predicting the language unit conflictogenicity in the media and skills to avoid it increase media literacy which is necessary for protection against cyberbullying, online fraud and other types of Internet threats.

The empirical material is traditional media texts of topical issues related to different genres, posted on the official websites of media. Not only traditional linguistic descriptions and class stratification, but also elements of contextual and transformational analysis have been chosen as research methods.

**Keywords:** media discourse, standard, communication, tolerance, substandard, borrowings, intentionality, linguoecology, value conflict, media space, media, linguistic, axiologically marked, media culture, media education, media literacy, media and information literacy.

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## 1. Introduction

Researchers made attempts to study conflict in value conflict in Ancient Greece. Heraclitus of Ephesus, Plato, and Aristotle associated conflict with the essence of human nature, with the contradictions of being and non-being, idea and matter. Philosophers of Modern Age (J. Locke, T. Hobbes) considered conflict to be a necessary social phenomenon. The special importance of social (including value) conflicts in social change was substantiated in the works by K. Marx, F. Engels, G. Simmel, E. Durkheim, M. Weber.

Today, it is possible to talk about the increasing role of the phenomenon of social conflict and the fact that conflict is a subject of interdisciplinary science research.

Often, a media text containing conflict (conflictogenic) units for one reason or another obligatorily takes the form of a verbal conflict (and sometimes a verbal crime), which, of course, should be the subject of close attention.

The article is devoted to the study of the value conflict, which has a verbal embodiment, and in some cases, it is impossible to distinguish it from a communicative (verbal, linguistic) conflict. The purpose of the article is to study the verbal embodiment of value conflict in categories of linguoecology. The media space, media communication is a platform for positioning different views, different interests, different news, different tastes and so on. Rhetorical techniques, and not language of entity, invectives, tricks, dysphemization, etc. are very important for harmonious communication, communicative well-being and ecological stability of the Russian language from the standpoint of ecological linguistics.

The novelty of the article is connected with detecting, describing and analyzing means used for expressing axiological marked conflict presented in media space. The authors paid special attention to the pragmatic co-meaning of a lingual unit and its use in different media genres. The novelty also lies in the study of standard and substandard units, neutral and expressive, nominative and tropeic ones, in common media space. It can also contribute to media education, in particular in creating media texts with an updated pragmatic effect. Increasing of the Media Education and extremely important in the reforming higher education system ([Barabash et al., 2022](#))

## 2. Materials and methods

The empirical material are traditional media texts of topical problematics related to different genres, including posted on the official websites of media.

Not only traditional linguistic descriptions and class stratification, but also elements of contextual and transformational analysis have been chosen as research methods.

## 3. Discussion

The opposite of conflict, oppositionality “bipolarity, collision includes opposite sides, and it can be: personality – personality, personality – group, group – group” ([Veliev, 2021: 24](#)).

Media prefer conflicts for the ability to hold attention by contrasting different opinions, points of view, and assessments ([Algavi et al., 2021](#); [Fedorov et al., 2019](#); [Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015](#); [Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2018](#); [Kayal, Saha, 2023](#); [Lane, 2020](#); [Langer, Gruber, 2021](#); [Macgilchrist et al., 2020](#); [Osipovskaya, Savelyeva, 2023](#); [Shin et al., 2022](#); [Skvortsova et al., 2022](#); [VanDuyn, Collier, 2019](#)).

Awareness in the ambiguity of conflict situations creates high interest in explicable disagreements. Thus, the real conflict also becomes a media construct, in turn, generating assessments, opinions, protests, etc. Many researchers have turned to the study of conflict from the point of view of language in the prism of legal norms.

One of the most discussed conflictological problems is the offensive sound of media text due to the use of conflictogenic units ([Aall, 2019](#); [Brusenskaya et al., 2018](#); [Golev, Obelyunas, 2014](#); [Gorbanevsky, 2003](#); [Keeskes, 2015](#); [Kulikova et al., 2018](#); [Polonsky, 2020](#), etc.).

An understanding of how to distinguish between reasonable proved criticism and insult has been approximated (but, of course, not fully achieved) ([Zavershinskiy, 2019: 134-136](#); [Shakhmatova, 2013: 267-280](#)). If the facts of the use of invectives and obscenities (and with obvious “offensive intentionality”) do not raise doubts when they are qualified within the framework of legal linguistics, then other cases (and most of them) are interpreted ambiguously.

#### 4. Results

There are statements that implicitly carry offensive potential and can be qualified by recipients in different ways. At the same time, it should bear in mind that a clear level-by-level differentiation of language units is not always possible and effective. This structuring of the grammar disciplinary system has certainly not been widely recognized. The traditional point of view is that lexis has specific units, while grammar first of all is a set of rules applied to these units, that is, significant elements are under the so-called “jurisdiction” of lexis, and the formative elements make up the grammar material.

In modern linguistics, this traditional point of view is often subject to revision. From the point of view of V.P. Danilenko, “the composition of phraseology, in turn, includes lexicology, morphology and syntax. The first of these disciplines is aimed at studying the lexical period of phrase formation, which consists in the selection of lexemes for the created sentence. Morphology explores the problems associated with a new period of phrase formation, during which the lexical forms of the word (lexemes) selected by the speaker in the first period of phrase formation are transmuted into its morphological forms. At last syntax studies the final period of phrase formation, which results in a finished sentence” (Danilenko, 2005: 29).

The most obvious conflictogens – invectives and obscene words in the late 80s and 90s became almost the most popular subject of research. The researchers even pointed to their positive component in social communication, and believed that their use leads to a decrease in aggression. It should be noted that, first of all, studies pointed to their ability to replace a fight, this was considered to be their civilizing capabilities (Shakhovskiy, 2013: 47).

For example, a memorable situation for everyone when V. Zhirinovsky doused B. Nemtsov with orange juice. Psychotherapists also note the importance of the lexis used to offend in the minds of the speakers. Researchers even present classifications of offensive expressions based on different grounds, such as external characteristics, insults related to a person's mental abilities, nationality, etc. (Matveeva, 2004: 125-126). In whole, as V.I. Zelvis wrote, the language of insult is becoming a popular research topic, more popular than other manifestations of the national language (Zhelvis, 2001: 18).

For example: *“In ordinary times, It is impossible to become a classic from a bezdarnyi grafoman (inept graphomaniac, scribbler). But now, in the era of civilizational breakdown, anything is possible. For example, the literaturnyi prokhozimets (literary scoundrel, in Russian it is a word play: the invective noun used by Yu. Polyakov, and verb walk are cognate words), what I call him, Prigovwalks. He appears to the public almost as a literary guru. And he is being seriously discussed”* (Polyakov, 2020a:440);

*“After all, it is in the era of breakage and collisions when figures emerge who cannot appear in normal, rhythmic time at all. For example, a president like Yeltsin... or a khryukayushchii (grunting) reformer like Gaidar”* (Polyakov, 2020b: 405).

Invectives and obscene words as conflictogens have been studied in detail and thoroughly in many domestic and foreign works (Allen, Burridge, 2006; Hobbs, 2013; Vikulina, 2018, etc.).

It should be noted that the latter case, of course, is not typical for a high-quality publication. The vernacular is given without punctuations and omissions, most likely because here a special case is a language game with methods of verbal action transmitted by the participle of the Present Tense, which would be lost with a more correct (ecologic) reproduction of the utterance. So, to eliminate this unit means to spoil the text.

*“The fragrant” dictionary, which I have studied perfectly, is a matter of context and skill. You definitely have to be a good guy, standing up for the Important Things, and never flaunt this lexicon in front of ladies and children. Good should be with fists, and an enlightened person with octane words in his arsenal. Is that clear, Bugger, hypocritical mother?”* (Kushanashvili, 2013).

As we can see, O. Kushanashvili formulated the most important restrictions on the use of obscenities and direct invectives.

The invectives used by Academician A.A. Zaliznyak against “amateur linguistics” are highly acquitted, and in particular in relation to such an odious figure as academician A.T. Fomenko. Characterizing the periodization of history presented by A.T. Fomenko, A. Zaliznyak uses such nominations as “nevezhestvennye i grubo tendentsioznye grafomany” (ignorant and grossly tendentious graphomaniacs”, “nevezhestvennaya chush” (rubbish, ignorant nonsense), “chudovishchnaya galimat'ya” (Zaliznyak, 2009). Invectives used by the researcher are reasonable.



Diverse and numerous substandard units can be attributed to conflictogens. Researchers often point out the linguistic liberties that journalists take (Aleksandrova, Slavkin, 2016), very often such units are used to create irony:

*“All of them are trying to “zamutit' biznes” (slang: start up business), as they now say, and stay in it. I will not talk about the distant and abstract. Here is an example of a neighbour and a well-known one. Our family is involved in several businesses. Some of them belong to us completely, some are half owned, but they are all created from scratch and directly by us. This is a typical medium-sized business. Who are we? A physicist engineer, a military builder, a teacher and an economic engineer of chemical production. And this is the most ordinary and typical situation. A very unpleasant story is emerging. They are disgusting, who “kidayut” (jargon: they cheat by taking away property or money for), “vparivayut fuflo” (jargon: sell you bullshit), corrupt officials – in fact, this is us” (Voevodina, 2011);*

*“Against the background of such a disposition, you can “vparivayut” (jargon: sell and to persuade somebody to buy) everything to the layman. It's enough to hint that all decent people love / have / are there / admire it (“all the Moscow people”), and those who, on the contrary, are, of course, “lokhi” (jargon: suckers). The man in the street will do the rest himself. He himself will ridicule those who do not appreciate what “vpendyurivayut” (jargon: he is being given rubbish) to HIM, he himself will strive to attach himself to the prestigious, creating a stir around him and thereby increasing prestige – in short, he will finish everything himself <...> When the “khaltura” (slang: hack) was institutionalized, and works of art turned into art objects, it means an ordinary product, all the usual production criteria began to apply to them. They began to reduce costs, simplify technology, etc.” (Voevodina, 2015);*

*“Once upon a time, children pretended to be adults, today the opposite is true: adults actively “kosyat pod” (jargon: pretend sounds like mow) down under children. No one has the right to become not only old, there is no question about it – but also even not young. It is best to remain a preschooler, about six years old. In general, modern media, public discourse, and the whole atmosphere of society are focused on six-year-olds. Rather, it's like this: for adults who have retained the clarity of mind typical for preschoolers. One of the American directors said that cinema in America is created for on a coloured teenager – his level of understanding and way of thinking. For us, this probably corresponds to the kindergarten way of thinking and all its cute features” (Voevodina, 2016)*

Headline: *“Art crooks and “lokhi” (jargon: suckers)” (Voevodina, 2015).*

Such linguistic units are used in the media language as a means of attraction, in order to create irony. And it goes without saying that, it is important to remember about the sense of proportion: *“In my opinion, it is very indicative: to scourge corruption, to flee from a corrupt regime and lawlessness to a place where the law is supposed to respect and it is one for everyone – and immediately start “obkashlivat voprosiki” (slang: think of, sounds like: coughing up small questions)” (Popov, 2023: 6);*

The social style taste generated by the unprecedented before ratio of different speech phenomenon in the media language. The use of speech elements, the use of language means from lower registers in media has long been described by researchers (Baranova et al., 2022; Brusenskaya et al., 2021; Kudinova, 2011; Redkozubova, 2014, etc.).

VI. Novikov included such words in three editions of the Dictionaries of Buzz Words (Novikov, 2005; 2008; 2016).

Moreover, the author often speaks negatively about these words in his essays, and this is an important point, the essence of which is that in order to recognize a word as buzz:

*“Gnabit’ (jargon: abuse). That's a nasty word. I didn't even want to include it in the book, but scientific objectivity requires...” (Novikov, 2016: 53).*

*“Po ponyatiyam (jargon with the meaning: by the code of criminals). One of the ugliest expressions produced by the Russian language” (Novikov, 2016: 206).*

Many authors pay attention to the abundance of jargon in advertising. For example, E.A. Redkozubova writes about a large number of substandard units in our advertising, about the language game and pun based on the substandard and gives examples of such use of the advertising media space: *“My obuem (jargon idiom and meaning: we will cheat, but sounds like: We will shoe) the whole country (the slogan of the shoe company); “It's time brat' kassu (jargon expression with meaning: it's time to steal; pun: kassu sounds like cash register)! (advertising of cash registers);*

U nas ne zarzhaveet!(Russian idiom with meaning: We won't let anything rust; pun: sounds like *rust*)(advertising of anti-corrosion coatings); – *Every day I gruzhu druzei* (jargon with meaning: *I bother with my problems*; pun:sounds like *load up my friends*); – *A ya ikh razvozhu* (slang: *denghu*; pun; sounds like *unmarry*); *Ya ih dostayu* (slang: *they fed up with me*); – *I spend hourspravlyayu druz'yam mozgi.* (slang: *I scold my friends for wrong behaviour*; pun: sounds like *setting my friends' brains straight*);*And I insert them so that their behaviour was good* (slang: *I scold my friends for wrong behaviour*; pun: sounds like *I insert them*)...” (Redkozubova, 2014: 172).

The substandard as a whole is characterized by a tendency to expand the areas of use. We can talk about the communicative expansion of all substandard units (Brusenskaya et al., 2021; Kudinova, 2011; Redkozubova, 2014; Roth-Gordon, 2002, etc.), and therefore about reducing the potential for value conflict caused by the use of such language units in the media sphere.

Onomastics (all types of onyms) is one of the most conflictogenic areas in the lexical system of the language, which is due to the peculiarities of the symbolic nature, primarily the semantics and pragmatic content of onyms. N.A. Bikeikina noted the following areas of conflict functioning of anthroponyms: 1. naming a child; 2. choosing a name; 3. correcting and changing a name; 4. translating a name (Bikeikina, 2011).

Toponymic renaming expresses the interests of people with different beliefs, naming in the field of urbanonyms and markings conveys different aesthetic and ethical attitudes causing the manifestation of a value conflict. The value conflict can be explicated with different types of onyms, in which different value attitudes are positioned, compared, correlated and even opposed.

Onymic units of the language, their classifications on different grounds and from different points of view are studied by researchers, they become the subject of scientific conferences of different levels and the topic of scientific articles and dissertations (Alderman, Inwood, 2013; Bikeikina, 2011; Crețan, Matthews, 2016; David, 2013; Golan et al., 2019; Golomidova, 2018; Gorbanevsky, 2003; Mozhgovoy, 2012; Veliev, 2021), but they are also given great attention in speeches in the press by public figures and in articles by writers and publicists. Conferences are regularly held on various aspects of onomastics, and problems related to the study of onyms are considered within the framework of interdisciplinary science.

Issues of renaming or returning former names to cities and streets are widely covered in the media space. The last such period in our country is the 90s of the XX century. Extensive literature is devoted to numerous renaming of the 1990s (the works by M.V. Gorbanevsky, V.I. Mozhgovi, S.A. Nikitin, E.A. Terentyev, T.V. Shmeleva, L.M. Shchetinin, and many others). To date, the severity of the problem of renaming has decreased only partially. The problem of naming and renaming is widely covered in the modern media space. The public is concerned about the ease with which cities and streets that had either original names or were named after writers or political figures were renamed at first, and then the process of returning the former names begins with the same ease. Sometimes personal nouns (discordant names and surnames) are delt in court. Researchers pay great attention to the study of the problems of the conflictogenicity of onyms, analyze the potential conflict of onyms, as a result of which they become the subject of litigation. The names of different types of products or company names are also often subjected to linguistic and legal expertise and become the subject of litigation. For example, the subject of a lawsuit covered in press (it should be admitted, in the newspaper with the name “Southern Capital”) was the name of two travel companies, one of which was named the “Travel Agency of the Southern Capital”, and the second one was also a travel agency by type of activity and was named the “Southern Capital”. Thus, a common name indicating the type of activity was included in the name of one company, that is, it was actually the onym, and another company's common name indicating the type of activity of this company was not included in the name. From the point of view of philology, the names of these companies can be interpreted both as different and as the same.

P. Vlasov describes the situation when he saw an ice cream with the name “Porn Star” in the store, then he “returned” to this subject and told how they actually reacted to the conflict situation in the relevant department:

*“I already wrote how I filed a complaint with Rospotrebnadzor (Federal Service for Supervision of Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being) about an ice cream called “Porn Star”, sold in the “Perekrestok” (the name of the store “Crossroads”) next to an ordinary ice cream, freely available to any child. An official from Moscow, N.Y. Mozhgalina, sent me a formal reply: there is nothing illegal in selling “Porn Star” ice cream in places accessible to children,*

since there is no “information presented in the form of naturalistic images or descriptions of human genitals and (or) sexual intercourse” on the jar. I think that's about the same everywhere — here it is, the average temperature in the hospital (idiom: ballpark). Such people are ready to “fight evil” only on command from above, for all other cases they will have plenty of reasons to stay away” (Vlasov, 2023: 2).

Commercial companies often use either foreign-language borrowings in their names or in the names of their products, or use Latin letters for the Russian name, or create a mixture of Cyrillic and Latin graphics in one name, called the term graphohybridization. This is regularly criticized because it provokes a social conflict, the conflict between society and, as the expression goes, these names, because, as O.R. Bondarenko, with whose opinion we fully agree, notes “the preservation of the Cyrillic alphabet is one of the indispensable conditions for keeping the viability of the Russian language and Russian-speaking identity” (Bondarenko, 2019: 32).

It is indisputable that “artificial onomastics inevitably follows the general trends and linguistic fashion for “xenophilia” (Veliev, 2021).

Objective prerequisites for changing the situation have appeared only recently: after the adoption of amendments to the Law on the State Language in 2023.

“So far, the Cyrillic Latin alphabet (transliteration of foreign languages), the Latinized Cyrillic alphabet (“translation” of native words or long-assimilated borrowings into Latin) and graphohybrids takes a huge part of the onymic space” (Veliev, 2021: 166).

The analysis of the value conflict makes it possible to address the problems of the “communicative well-being” Russian linguistic culture representatives as well as contributes increasing the media education and media literacy level which is necessary for protection against cyberbullying, online fraud and other types of Internet threats (Muzykant et al., 2022; Muzykant et al., 2023; Rybinok, Muzykant, 2023). Children, teenagers, or pre-university youth who have media literacy (Fedorov, 2001; Fedorov, 2009; Fedorov, 2010; Fedorov et al., 2014; Fedorov et al., 2019; Fedorov, Chelysheva, 2002; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2018) can easily recognize suspicious messages and avoid becoming victims of scams. The proper level of media literacy is necessary for further person’s development. It is important to start learning media literacy as early as possible, school age is an important period in a person's life when certain psychological properties, behavioural stereotypes and certain thinking are formed.

## 5. Conclusion

A value conflict has verbal embodiment, and in some cases it is indistinguishable from a communicative (verbal, linguistic) conflict.

The most obvious conflictogens (markers of a conflict text) are substandard units, and attention was also focused on non-obvious markers of conflict.

In accordance with the priorities of ecological linguistics (Kulikova, 2022a; Kulikova, 2022b; Kulikova et al., 2023) the focus was not only on the conflictogens themselves, but in whole on the issues of the Russian language “health”, constructive and destructive phenomena in lexical and grammatical borrowings, changes in the etiquette sphere have been analyzed.

The analysis of media shows that units of all the language levels can act as destructive units (morphemes, lexemes, lexico-grammatical categories of nouns, grammatical forms, syntagmas, utterances, texts). A linguistic conflict situation explicators such as lexical and grammatical conflictogens attract special attention conveying negative evaluation and pejorative pragmatics.

The description undertaken in this article will contribute to the formation of skills for confident recognition of not only value problematics, but also the means of its representation in media texts, and therefore the skills and abilities to create relevant professional media texts, diagnose media texts causing and reflecting axiologically marked conflicts significant for linguistic culture. The formation and improvement of such skills contributes to increasing the level of media education, developing skills of the qualitative linguistic and journalistic analysis of someone’s media texts, which, in turn, makes it possible not only to improve these skills in analysis, but also in creating own media texts. Media education and media literacy go hand in hand. Many training programs focus on memorizing facts and formulating answers to test questions, instead of teaching how to analyze information and draw out own opinion. People, especially children, who do not have sufficient critical thinking skills, can easily fall into the trap of false information and manipulation. Media literacy is necessary for protection against cyberbullying, online fraud and other types of Internet threats. Media education is a means of education and social adaptation of a person.

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## The Role of Media Education in Shaping the Conscious Choice of a Future Profession Among Young People in the era of Information Glut

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### Abstract

In a rapidly developing information society, and especially in the context of the implementation of the request for participation in the development of digital transformations, young people have to face a huge amount of information, find their place in which it becomes increasingly difficult to determine their future profession. Traditional approaches to career guidance based on testing and collecting information about various professions often prove to be insufficiently effective due to an overabundance and fragmentation of data. Despite the growing number of school graduates choosing to study in the secondary vocational education system (hereinafter referred to as vocational education), almost a third of potential applicants have no idea what they will do after graduating from a professional educational organization, while half would like to change the direction of training already at the training stage. This and other factors necessitate the improvement of existing mechanisms for the professional orientation of children and youth. In this situation, media education comes to the fore as a means to navigate the information field, critically evaluate information sources and distinguish reliable facts from manipulations and fakes.

In the context of modern information saturation, the role of media education in the career guidance of young people is increasing. It performs the following main tasks:

- It forms the competencies necessary for the younger generation to live in an information society: critical thinking, the ability to evaluate information sources, recognize manipulations and fakes, a culture of personal information security and information culture in general.
- Forms and develops an understanding of the specifics of professions related to mass media;
- Promotes an informed choice of profession based on an understanding of its requirements and capabilities, primarily in the field of media communications.

Thus, career guidance integrated with media education becomes a powerful tool that allows young people to make an informed choice of profession in conditions of information saturation and competition.

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**Keywords:** secondary vocational education, computer competence, mass media, media literacy, media images, media education, non-formal education, professional self-determination, digital literacy.

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## 1. Introduction

Currently, the mass media play a significant role in shaping the personality of children and adolescents. In terms of its influence, the media can be compared to a parallel school in which a child receives an informal education, learns social norms and learns to interact with the world (Bondarenko, 2013: 225). This "parallel school" has a huge advantage — it uses almost all channels of human perception: sight, hearing, tactile sensations, emotions, which makes its impact deep and pervasive.

Media education is a field of pedagogy that is at the junction with many other disciplines, for example, psychology, sociology and computer science. The purpose of media education is to understand how media affects a person, his development, worldview and behavior. It is impossible to imagine the modern world without media. Cinema, television, radio, the Internet with all its social networks and information services are not just entertainment, but a powerful tool that shapes our views, values and lifestyle (Fedorov, 2014; Gálik et al., 2024; Gálik, Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2022; Kačínová, 2019; Lomteva, Demidov, 2023; Vrabc, Bôtošová, 2020).

However, the ability to control the content and methods of information dissemination on social networks is quite difficult. The information space is in chaos, sometimes it is difficult to distinguish truth from lies, and advertising, propaganda and manipulation can easily disguise themselves as useful information.

We cannot protect children from TV, radio, and the Internet, but we can and must teach them to use the potential of existing means of communication competently and consciously. This is not just a necessity, but a vital skill that will help them navigate the information flow, protect themselves from manipulation and form their own, balanced and conscious picture of the world.

The modern educational system should take into account the influence of the media and actively integrate it into the educational process and the process of upbringing. Our task is to teach children to use this tool wisely and responsibly. In the modern world, we are literally drowning in the flow of information. This also applies to the field of education, and especially the choice of profession. On the one hand, access to information has become incredibly wide: the Internet is full of articles, videos, forums and blogs dedicated to various professions. On the other hand, this accessibility creates new difficulties. To distinguish reliable information from unreliable, to find really valuable sources, to critically comprehend the received data — all this requires certain skills. This is where media literacy comes to the rescue. A media literate person is able to navigate the information space, filter unnecessary data, search for reliable sources of information, use different information formats (text, audio, video) and critically evaluate their content (Levitskaya, 2022).

In the context of choosing a profession, media literacy plays a key role. A young person with media competencies can:

- To study various sources of information about professions and specialties of secondary vocational education. He can analyze information on the official websites of educational institutions, in professional publications, on specialized forums, in interviews with representatives of different professions;

- "Critically evaluate the information received. It is necessary to be able to distinguish subjective opinion from objective data, check information for reliability, determine the purpose of publication (advertising, education, propaganda), take into account the reputation of the source of information" (Bimrose, Brown, 2019);

- To form your own opinion about the profession and make an informed decision. He can evaluate his interests, abilities, opportunities, compare them with the requirements of the profession and make an informed choice of professional self-realization.

Thus, media literacy is an integral part of the profession selection process (Myasnikova, 2015). It allows young people to receive objective information, evaluate it from a critical point of view and make an informed choice of their future path. It is important to instill skills and interest in media literacy from an early age in order to help the future generation of Russians navigate the complex information space and make responsible decisions regarding the choice of future professional activities.

Speaking about the development of critical thinking in the structure of media literacy, it would be wrong to talk only about media literacy, since it does not exist in a vacuum, but is closely intertwined with other concepts — computer literacy, media and information literacy (MIG is a concept proposed by UNESCO in 2007), digital literacy. Yandex specialists have determined the level of digital literacy of modern Russian schoolchildren in grades 5-11 in various parameters above 80 % (<https://tass.ru/obschestvo/21214715>).

Experts at the Skysmart Online School believe that the proportion of those with an advanced level of digital competencies has remained unchanged since 2019 and is 27% (<https://skysmart.ru/articles/programming/cifrovaya-gramotnost>). UNESCO IITE experts believe that MIG is a complex concept that "covers all competencies related to information literacy and media literacy, including digital or technological literacy. In the context of MIG, the most important are the diverse interrelated competencies necessary to improve people's interaction with information and media, including for educational purposes and situations" (<https://iite.unesco.org/ru/mig/>). It seems that the MIG level of schoolchildren will require more complex and comprehensive tools for its assessment.

Thus, from the point of view of developing their own critical thinking in terms of choosing professions through the vocational education system, including those primarily related to the development of digital transformations, the modern Russian student already faces a difficult task – which literacy should he develop at school and further – computer, media, media and information, digital or other determined, among other things, by the current state of economic and information wars.

## 2. Materials and methods

As an empirical base, data from a sociological survey conducted by the Center for Economics of Continuing Education of the Presidential Library in the spring of 2024 among students of educational organizations of secondary vocational education were used. The sociological survey was conducted among students of secondary vocational education, studying in the last year of full-time education in the Sverdlovsk, Volgograd and Ivanovo regions. The sample consisted of 1098 people.

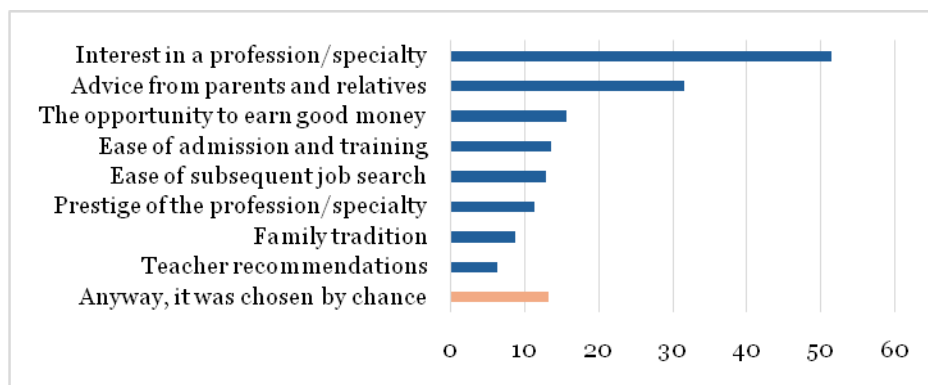
## 3. Discussion

The system of secondary vocational education is becoming increasingly popular among graduates of both ninth and eleventh grades. Most researchers came to the conclusion that having a practice-oriented orientation, the vocational education system is more interesting to young people for a number of reasons: shorter study periods; the possibility of employment at partner enterprises of the college; the possibility of obtaining a related profession/specialty; high demand for workers and mid-level specialists in regional labor markets. In addition, as the results of sociological surveys by the Center for Economics of Continuing Education of the RANEPA showed, 40.5% of the surveyed students of professional educational organizations replied that they did not want to take the Unified State Exam; 34.1% of the respondents had no interest in studying at high school and university; 27.3% seek to enter the labor market faster and 18.4% have the opportunity to earn well; lack of 14.2% noted financial opportunities to prepare and enter a university. A fairly high proportion of school graduates who joined the vocational school on the advice of teachers is 10.5%. Thus, the motives for choosing training in the system of secondary vocational education and its specifics should be the basis for the development of mechanisms for vocational guidance work.

An interesting picture emerges of the formation of professional choice by graduation. The survey showed that only 36.1% had a good idea of what they wanted to do professionally, and 21.1% had a weak idea of their future specialty. As a result, poor knowledge of the world of professions and the situation on the labor market often leads young people to join the ranks of the unemployed. Thus, at least this fifth of the respondents falls into the risk group of employment (including in the specialty), which is critical in the context of the need to provide the economy of the regions with mid-level specialists.

Some concern is also caused by the fact that among the main reasons for choosing a college course, young people name, in addition to interest in their chosen specialty (51.5% of respondents answered this way), but also the advice of parents (31.6%) (Figure 1).

In addition, 13.3% of young people replied that they did not care where to go at all. Thus, it can be noted that none of the respondents, when choosing a future profession, was guided by their real capabilities and their individual characteristics, and also quite frivolously chose their professional track, giving the right to choose to relatives. This is evidenced by the fact that 51.2% of college students already want to change their training profile in the process of studying. Logically, the question arises about the methods of modern career guidance and its effectiveness.



**Fig. 1.** Reasons for choosing the direction of vocational training, % of college students surveyed

Modern education is facing a new reality: Generation Z, who grew up in the digital age, has different values and style of thinking than previous generations. This imposes new requirements on career guidance, which should take into account the characteristics of this generation and be as adaptive as possible to modern demands (Bakanov, Vershinina, 2020).

Traditional methods of career guidance, such as lectures, meetings with representatives of professions, career guidance tests, are not effective enough for modern youth who are accustomed to a fast flow of information, multitasking and visual content (Kuzmina, 2013). It is important to understand that the current generation has a clip-based mindset, preferring short, dynamic videos, interactive formats and receiving information through social networks.

Against the background of these realities, career-oriented media projects available on the Internet are becoming a real find. These projects can be developed by both federal agencies and private manufacturers, offering a variety of formats and opportunities for career guidance.

An example of successful media projects can be considered:

- "Projectoria" (offers users the opportunity to choose a profession, take a test, participate in contests and surveys);

- "Ticket to the future" (a project that allows students to receive comprehensive information about specialties through communication with employers).

The advantage of media projects in the field of professional orientation of young people are:

- Accessibility: Internet resources are available 24/7, convenient for independent work and allow you to get information at any time.

- "Interactivity: the use of interactive formats, videos, games and tests makes career guidance more exciting and attractive for young people of different age cohorts" (Ignatev et al., 2019);

- Relevance: media projects are constantly updated, reflecting the latest changes in the labor market and offering information about promising professions.

It is necessary to indicate the main problems of career guidance work with young people:

- Its fragmentation: methods of career guidance, including digital ones, do not complement each other, but function in isolation, there are no uniform approaches and requirements for their implementation;

- Calculation for the average child: the proposed standard tests cannot take into account the individual characteristics and talents of students;

- There is a lack of specific information, as many media projects offer a general overview of professions without delving into the specifics of a particular specialty, requirements for professional skills, the labor market and career prospects.

The experience of Western countries shows that the career guidance system has been actively using mass media in recent years (Fedorov et al., 2020). Among the main trends in the use of media for career guidance are the following:

1. Digital Career Information Systems (CIS). CIS is a set of digital tools that provide users with information about professions, educational institutions, the labor market, and also help with choosing a career path. (Bakshi, Goss, 2019). The advantage of CIS is that their design and organization are designed for different categories of users.

2. Labor market Information Systems (IRT):

– forecasting the demand for specialists, IRT uses mathematical models and statistical data to predict the demand for specialists in various industries in the future;  
 – information about professions and training programs.

Examples of IRT include the Labor Market Information System (Switzerland); Eurostat (European Union) and Bureau of Labor Statistics (USA).

Online interactive career guidance systems are specialized online platforms that provide interactive resources for career guidance.

The main functions of online platforms:

- Virtual tours of educational institutions;
- Online consultations with professionals;
- Interactive tests and surveys;
- Group discussions and forums.

The advantage of these online platforms is the ability to create personal portfolios describing skills, qualifications, and work experience.

3. The use of chatbots in career guidance is aimed at automating the information of young people, identifying ways to solve the problem of choosing a profession.

4. Using career guidance applications that use the GPS capabilities of mobile devices to inform about employment and training opportunities. The advantage of the applications is the ability to provide complex information in an understandable and attractive form with easy navigation for young people.

5. Career simulators with improved AI. Career simulators with advanced AI can contribute to understanding the consequences depending on the decision being made regarding the options.

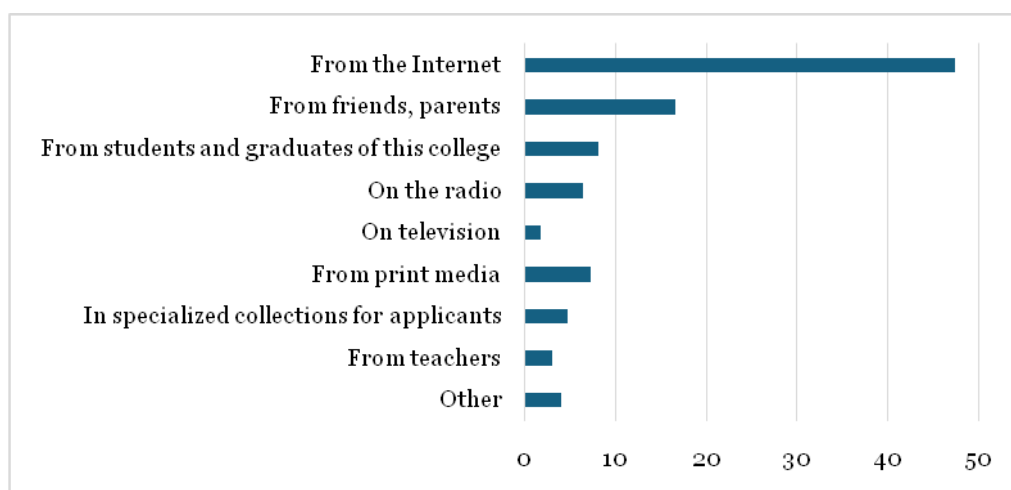
The undoubted advantage of using mass media is the ability to reach different categories of populations. So, as an example, the broadcasts of the weekly radio program Heta (South Africa) together with SABC Education in 10 official languages of the country for rural youth can be cited.

Thus, young people should be able to critically and subjectively evaluate the information they receive in order to form a stable idea of their future specialty.

Discussions with the participation of the authors on the issues under consideration were held within the framework of the activities of the RANEPa and the scientific and project activities of the IPCC (practical conference "Media education...", 2023; II International Scientific and Practical Conference, 2024; XXV National Scientific Conference, 2024).

#### 4. Results

Based on the results of a sociological study of the behavior of students of the SPE system, we can identify the main trend – the increasing importance of the quality of the digital services offered when choosing a college. This is evidenced by the results of a sociological survey (Figure 2).



**Fig. 2.** Sources of information about the college of study, % of the surveyed college students

Media preferences, whether they are movies, music, video games, social media or news channels, have a profound impact on the values of young people. First of all, media images convey certain ideals and behaviors that become standards for imitation and certain worldviews. Cinema

and the Internet, as two titans of the media industry, dominate the production of these images, having a profound impact on various aspects of people's lives, from their attitude to the characters to their choice of profession. Cinema plays an important role in the professional orientation of young people, which is associated with:

- duplication of reality. Cinema, together with its animation and multimedia, possessing incredible power of influence, actually assumes the function of duplicating reality. Films create an attractive, simplified copy of our lives, forming ideas about norms, behaviors and values.

- the creation of ideals and the formation of a cultural code. Movie characters become role models, broadcasting desired professional and personal qualities. Films can both maintain interest in certain professions and form inflated expectations leading to disappointment in reality, including influencing the formation of the spiritual and moral sphere of young Russians - future professionals.

- social context. Cinema reflects the current problems and trends of society, acting as an instrument of both propaganda and criticism. Films can influence public opinion, motivate to change or, conversely, lull vigilance, form attitudes demanded by the state and society for the development of social design, including in the format of media volunteering.

A wide range of films, animated films, and interactive games offered for career guidance with the development of digital technologies poses a difficult task of choosing in an information glut. The world of professions is changing rapidly, and what was relevant yesterday may be unclaimed tomorrow. How can we find a middle ground to captivate modern children without getting stuck in the past, but also without running too far into the future?

On the one hand, there are professions that, like eternal values, retain their importance for decades. Doctor, teacher, engineer – these and many other professions remain relevant and necessary. However, if we are talking about modern schoolchildren, their interests often lie in a completely different plane. A world where reality is often mixed with virtual reality, where technology is changing the usual way of life, attracts young people to professions related to IT, digital marketing, artificial intelligence, robotics.

That is why the task of a teacher and educator using cinema, film education and media pedagogy for career guidance in the field of vocational education and training becomes even more difficult. Of course, Soviet films can be an excellent source of information about traditional professions. They often show vivid examples of how people give themselves to their favorite business, what difficulties they face, and how they achieve success. However, there are also pitfalls. Modern teenagers can perceive such films as "relics" of the past, without finding in them a reflection of their own aspirations and interests.

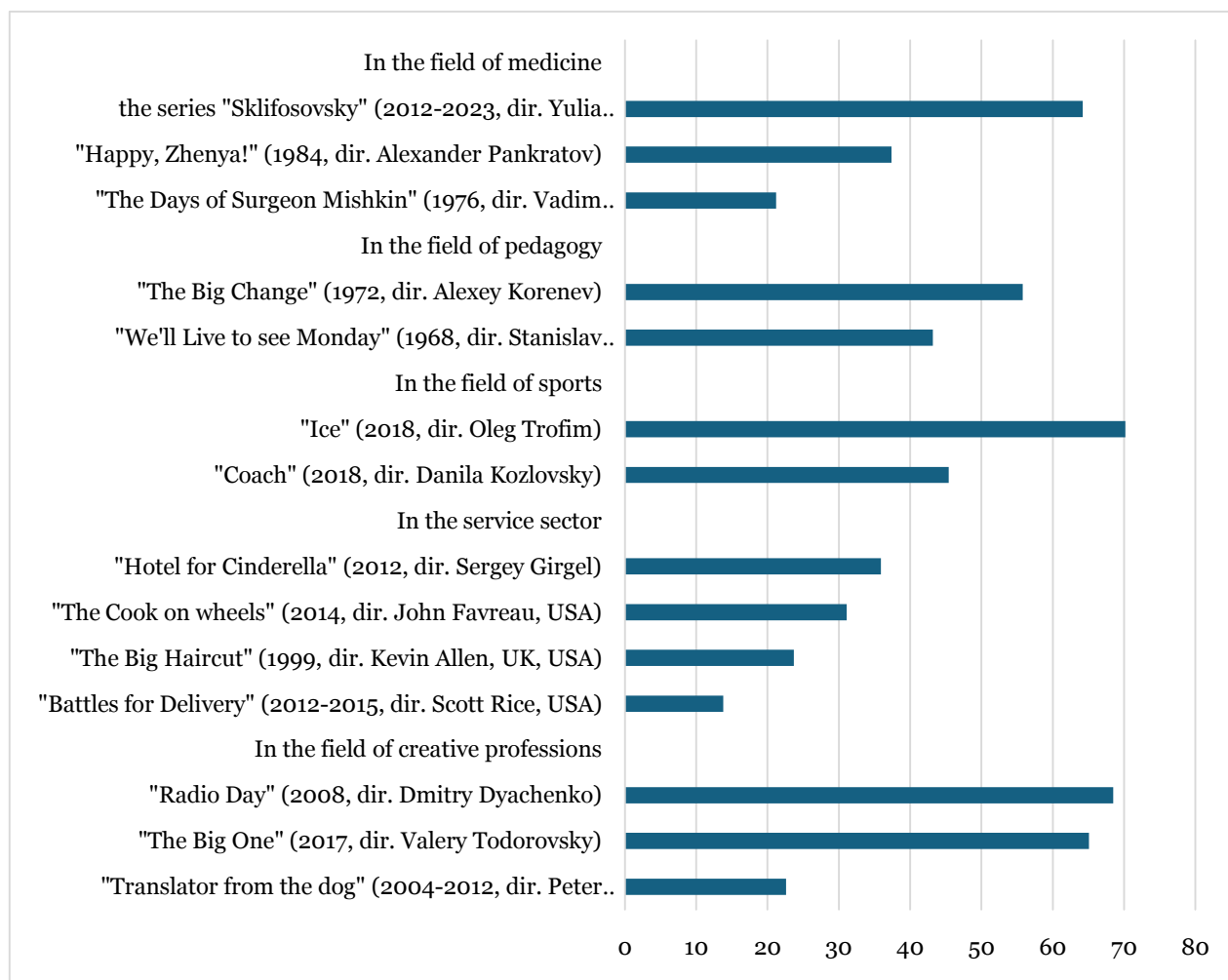
In this case, modern films come to the rescue, capable of reviving interest in the "classics" and presenting modern professions in a bright and fascinating light. For example, films about doctors, such as *Dr. House*, *Ambulance*, *Grey's Anatomy*, demonstrate not only the difficulties and obstacles faced by doctors, but also their non-standard solutions, their desire to save lives. They show that medicine is not only traditional methods of treatment, but also innovative approaches, the use of high technologies, as well as continuous self-development.

As for the IT sphere, the film *Social Network*, which tells about the creation of Facebook, "can become a fascinating lesson about how an idea can turn into a global project, how to be able to work in a team and make quick decisions, and how important it is to be flexible in a changing world" (Bakanov, Verzhinina, 2020). And the film *The Imitation Game*, about the decryption of Enigma, shows the role of intelligence and logic in solving complex problems, and how knowledge in mathematics and computer science can change history. It is also important to pay attention to films dedicated to the "professions of the future".

For example, *Interstellar*, which shows space travel, can inspire you to study astronomy, rocket science or space engineering. The films *Out of the Machine* and *She* demonstrate the development of artificial intelligence, robotics and programming, and *Blade Runner 2049* raises issues of bioengineering and genetics.

As an addition to films, you can and should use documentaries that tell in more detail about specific professions, the history of their development and current trends.

A sociological survey of young people revealed their preferences when choosing films that have a certain influence on the choice of specialty (Figure 3).



**Fig. 3.** A selection of films recommended by college students as part of career guidance

Thus, using cinema as a career guidance tool, you can captivate children with creative stories, show them a variety of professions, tell them about their history and about modern challenges. It is important to use both classic and modern tapes, taking into account the interests and age of the audience. The main factors influencing the professional choice of young people can be formulated as follows:

- Choosing a profession. Movie characters and images broadcast on the Internet can play a significant role in the professional self-determination of young people. The attractiveness of a profession seen in a movie or on a popular blog can be a catalyst for choosing a future career.

- Formation of values. Media images carry a certain set of values, which can be both positive and destructive. Unfiltered perception of these images can lead to uncritical acceptance of questionable ideals or behaviors.

- Social adaptation. Media images can influence young people's ideas about the norms of behavior, the fashion of communication and relationships. The discrepancy between these representations of reality can lead to difficulties in the process of socialization.

It must be said that the influence of media images on young people is ambiguous. The perception of information is influenced by many factors, such as age, level of education, personal values and critical thinking. There are a sufficient number of media resources that help young people navigate the information flow and critically evaluate media content. In this regard, it is necessary to develop media literacy skills among young people in order to minimize the negative impact of media images and use their potential for good.

## 5. Conclusion

The use of modern educational technologies makes the process of career guidance exciting and effective. In particular, feature films that allow you to look behind the scenes of many

professions, give students the opportunity to try on the role of professionals in various fields, to face the real tasks and challenges of the profession.

The influence of media images on modern society, especially on young people, is multifaceted and complex. Cinema and the Internet, as the two main producers of these images, play a huge role in shaping our worldview, values and behaviors.

The main role of media literacy is not only to avoid becoming a victim of information fakes. Media literacy is aimed at forming the foundations of media culture, media worldview and thinking among young people by means of screen creativity. This will provide an opportunity for the younger generation to develop civil-patriotic, spiritual-moral and information-legal competencies.

To successfully solve the problem of career guidance, it is necessary to create a unified system that will rely on the integration of traditional and digital methods. It is also important to increase the competence of teachers, career guidance specialists and psychologists so that they can effectively use modern tools and techniques. However, it is important to remember that career guidance is not just about finding information. It is necessary to take into account the individual interests, inclinations and abilities of each, as well as to provide young people with the opportunity to receive individual expert advice. Combining traditional career guidance methods with modern digital tools will create a more effective and convenient system for preparing young people to choose a profession and build a successful career.

There is also a clearly expressed political order to solve these tasks. In his instructions from 2021 on the development of film education at school and from 2023 on the development of animation as a creative industry, the Head of State identified the main players responsible for the implementation of state policy in this area – the Government of the Russian Federation and the Agency for Strategic Initiatives in terms of animation development, as well as the Ministry of Education of Russia (responsible for the development of the PDF as a whole) and the Ministry of Culture of Russia in terms of the development of film education at school.

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## Family and Family Education in Russian Feature Films During the Years of Media Education Revival (1955–1960)

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### Abstract

The article looks into the representation of family and family education in Russian feature films during 1955–1960 when Soviet filmmakers began to explore the complexities of family life, often reflecting the broader social and political changes of the time. Thus, the family became a microcosm for examining issues of identity, personal struggle, and societal expectations. Soviet feature films of the Thaw era offer a rich tapestry of family images that reflect a complex interplay between personal and societal changes during that period. By focusing on individual experiences and emotional depth, these films provide a critical lens through which to understand the evolving of Soviet family life and the broader cultural transformations of the era. They are valuable in the media education context for their nuanced portrayal of human relationships and their subtle critique of the socio-political context of the time. Soviet feature films of the Thaw era represent a rich and transformative period in cinematography, reflecting broader socio-political changes and contributing to the evolution of film as a medium. From a media studies perspective, these films provide valuable insights into the cultural production of the period, the negotiation of ideological boundaries, and the power of narrative and representation in shaping societal values, family values and historical memory.

**Keywords:** family, family upbringing, media, media text, media culture, media education, Thaw, feature films.

### 1. Introduction

The Thaw era, named after the political and cultural liberalization that followed the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 and the subsequent rise of Nikita Khrushchev, marked a significant period in Soviet cinematography. This era, roughly spanning from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s, saw a departure from the strict censorship and propagandist tendencies of earlier Soviet feature films (Tomoff, Gilburd, 2021). “Soviet industry and filmmakers strove to satisfy audiences’ hunger for films, while accommodating the political mood shifts that characterized the period. Film and filmmakers played a critical role in the Soviet Union’s attempts to get out from underneath Stalinist ideology” (Dobrenko, Woll, 2003).

N. Khrushchev’s policy was aimed at dismantling the cult of personality around J. Stalin and promoting a more open and less repressive society. “After the 20th Congress of the CPSU, political, economic and sociocultural changes began in the country. Overall, the 1960s represent an important milestone for promoting updated children’s and teenagers’ cinematography. The importance of this stage in the development of feature films for children and youth was

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accompanied by the opening of new filming sites designed specifically for the production of children's and youth feature films" (Chelysheva, 2017: 274).

Thus, relaxation of censorship allowed for more creative freedom and the exploration of diverse themes in literature, art, and film. Feature films started to address more contemporary issues and everyday lives of Soviet citizens, engaging audiences more directly. Film directors of the period under study experimented with narrative structures, sometimes employing non-linear storytelling and open-ended narratives. On the other hand, despite the Thaw, filmmakers still navigated a complex landscape of censorship.

Soviet feature films of the Thaw era represent a rich and transformative period in cinematography, reflecting broader socio-political changes and contributing to the evolution of film as a medium. From a media studies perspective, these films provide valuable insights into the cultural production of the period, the negotiation of ideological boundaries, and the power of narrative and representation in shaping societal values, family values and historical memory.

## 2. Materials and methods

The material of our research is comprised of audiovisual media texts on the theme of family and family education. The main method is a comparative hermeneutic analysis of Soviet films of the thaw era (1955–1960) focused on family issues (including: analysis of stereotypes, ideological analysis, identification analysis, iconographic analysis, plot analysis, character analysis, etc.).

We also reviewed and analysed books and articles related to family and family education in feature films (Bahun, Haynes, 2014; Baranov, Penzin, 2006; Beumers, 2007; Chelysheva, 2022; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2024; Fedorov, 2015, 2016; Fedorov et al., 2017; Graham, 2016; Kenez, 1992; Kosinova, Arakelyan, 2015; Kozlov, Gilburd, 2013; Lorence, 2011; Mikhaleva, Lozovitskaya, 2024; Oukaderova, 2017; Salys, 2014; Selezneva, 2022; Shaw, Youngblood, 2010; Shlapentokh, 1993; Prokhorov, 2013; Pshenitsyna, 2023; Vinogradov, 2020; Vu, 2020; Zhabsky, Tarasov, 2019; Ziborova, 2015). The following methods were used during the study: theoretical analysis and synthesis, comparison and classification, content analysis, descriptive and analytical methods, hermeneutic analysis.

## 3. Discussion

The Thaw era in the Soviet Union was a period of significant transformation in both school and family upbringing. Educational reforms and a more open cultural climate allowed for a more complex interaction between these two key institutions. While schools continued to play a crucial role in ideological and academic education, families increasingly influenced the personal and moral development of children, reflecting broader societal changes. This dynamic interplay contributed to the evolution of Soviet society, shaping a generation that was more critically engaged and culturally aware.

From a media studies perspective, examining the portrayal of these themes in contemporary films and literature provides valuable insights into the social fabric of the Thaw era. "In the 1960s, the USSR policy was structured in such a way that raising a child by professional teachers in public education institutions had priority over family education. It was believed that in the process of developing a child's personality, upbringing in the family plays a secondary role compared to school upbringing. This explains the difficulties in developing the theory of family education, as well as the scientific management of family education practice" (Novikova, Pristupa, 2021: 113).

The quantitative and genre analyses of Russian feature about family education provided by I. Chelysheva and G. Mikhaleva show that the number of feature films about family created from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s increased significantly in comparison to the previous periods (Mikhaleva, Chelysheva, 2024). The changes in the ideological course aimed at weakening ideological control over cinema production – all these factors significantly influenced the contents of feature films focused on family issues.

The screen representation of women (working class women, rural and urban women, and women from the intelligentsia) in Soviet cinematography during 1950s-1970s is studied in the book "Women in Soviet Film: The Thaw and Post-Thaw Periods (Routledge Contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe Series)" (Rojavin, Harte, 2017). It depicts the ambiguity of emerging gender roles, pressing social issues, and evolving relationships between men and women. It also casts a light on society and culture in this period of the USSR.

"Filmmakers during the "thaw" period could not even imagine the boldness with which the relationship between fathers and sons would be depicted in modern Russian cinematography.

Children in *Koktebel* and *Return* openly rebel against the ideals of their parents with their habit of obedience. The most openly slavish humility is shown in *Old Women* by G. Sidorov. It was under them – the older generations – that in the 20th century unimaginable outrages were committed against the most talented people, art and culture were corrupted. It was they – fathers and mothers – who silently endured the plunder of the richest country, the transformation of 90 % of the population into beggars. This is where the on-screen intolerance of those who have not yet left their tender age comes from” (Baranov, Penzin, 2006: 35-36).

M. Peacock who analysed Soviet and American film images of children of the 1950s and 1960s came to the following conclusion: “Contrary to the idealized image of mobilized and peaceful childhood created in official rhetoric, a large number of filmmakers constructed young characters with a clear disregard for the consensus that their leaders were so diligently trying to build. These kids had little in the way of ideological conviction. They prioritized their own desires and the needs of their families over their obligations to the state. They also appeared abandoned by the adult world around them as they struggled to survive in a harsh and unforgiving environment. Throughout the Thaw, the contested image of the child reflected Cold War anxieties in Soviet society” (Peacock, 2015).

A.S. Farafonova examines Soviet art of the period of Khrushchev’s “thaw” and its significance for the further formation of avant-garde movements of the late 20th – early 21st centuries. She explores its influence on the further development of avant-garde movements in the context of European movements and analyses the creative searches of artists of the period (Farafonova, 2020: 107).

The aesthetic of Thaw literature and feature films is also analysed by S. Greenwold: “The Brezhnev establishment was able to halt the cultural reforms begun during the Thaw, but a sea change in the cultural mentality of the Soviet Union had already occurred, the damage to the totalitarian edifice had been done” (Greenwold, 2002: 1).

N.I. Churkina provides a thorough study of teacher-parent meetings represented in Soviet cinematography of the 1960s, which allowed her to talk about the liberalization of school culture that began during the Thaw era: “liberalization trends include changes in the material and spiritual components of school culture, which manifested itself in transforming the external appearance of teachers and parents, as a result of which the boundaries of the acceptable norm become more flexible. In the spiritual component of school culture, examples of a departure from the teacher’s monologue, instructions and reprimands to dialogue and even discussion began to appear. The adult community begins to recognize the right to individuality of a student (especially a talented one), their right to express their own position, also in relation to the parental role model of behaviour and upbringing. All this stimulates the process of establishing a parent community. School films capture individual moments when parents have common goals and new values sprout (recognition of individuality, respect for children and their rights)” (Churkina, 2022: 181).

The phenomenon of the culture of the “sixties” in conjunction with the historical and socio-political contexts of the 1960s in the Soviet Union and Western European countries is deeply studied by S.P. Shlykova: “The creativity of the “sixties” of the last century affected all spheres of culture: music, fine arts, cinema, most of all finding its expression in literature and poetry. The cultural renaissance of this period was embodied in a humanistic orientation, an attempt to “humanize” the socialist system. For the first time in the years of the socialist realism dominance, the cultural hero was not a man-fighter, not a man-builder, but a reflective man who survived an ideological crisis. And despite the fact that the sixties continued to remain convinced of the correctness of Marxism-Leninism and the right path of socialist construction, their work had a significant impact on subsequent decades, ultimately contributing to a change in the political course of the Soviet Union” (Shlykova, 2022: 16).

Culturally, the Thaw period was marked by a renaissance in literature, art, and cinema. Filmmakers started to explore more personal and realistic themes, often focusing on the lives of ordinary people rather than the glorified depictions of socialist realism that dominated earlier Soviet cinematography. This shift allowed for a more detailed portrayal of Soviet society and its complexities. We think, “the Soviet cinematography of the “thaw” epoch based on the communist ideology: 1) placed special emphasis on moral education and overall youth culture promotion; 2) propagandized a humanist ideal of the film character – a romantic protagonist whose moral and human properties appeal to the audience; 3) used stereotyped role and gender media text character profiles; 4) broadened the scope of problems, narrative and genre range of media texts about university and students; 5) presented the media image of the Soviet student more realistically in

comparison to the cinematography of the Stalinism epoch; 6) presented an idealized media image of the university teacher as a true professional and transmitter of humanistic moral values and code of conduct; 7) created an idealized media image of the Soviet university in conformity with the government social policy of disseminating the idea of higher education among young people; 8) sometimes allowed the production of politically and ideologically neutral media texts; 9) altered the concept “struggle” in media texts about youth and created for youth: the focus shifted from the ideological or/and political struggle onto the moral and/or social struggle” (Mikhaleva, 2017: 183).

#### 4. Results

*The Thaw period feature films (1955–1960) about family and family education. Place of action, historical, social, cultural, political, and ideological context.*

1. *Historical context (dominant concepts: media agencies, media categories, media representations and media audiences). Features of the historical period when media texts were created, market conditions that contributed to the idea, the process of creating media texts, the degree of influence of that time on media texts.*

The Thaw period began after J. Stalin’s death, culminating in N. Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” in 1956, where he denounced Stalin’s cult of personality and his repressive regime. This speech catalysed a broader movement towards de-Stalinization, allowing for more openness in public discourse and artistic expression. The era saw significant political reforms, such as a general easing of censorship.

2. *Socio-cultural, ideological, religious context (dominant concepts: media agencies, media categories, media representations and media audience).*

Soviet society during the Thaw experienced a cautious reawakening of intellectual and cultural life. People were eager to explore themes of individuality and personal freedom that had been suppressed under Stalin. The younger generation, in particular, was influenced by this new sense of openness, seeking to break away from the rigid constraints of the past. This period also saw a rise in literacy and education, leading to a more informed and critical populace: “The main themes of the movies are the problems of the youth. The filmmakers analyse such themes as education, conflict between a child and an adult, and common mistakes of different generations” (Ianushko, 2022: 75).

a) *ideology, directions, goals, objectives, world outlook, the concepts of the media texts’ authors in the socio-cultural context; ideology, culture of the world, depicted in these media texts.*

The ideological landscape of the Thaw was complex and controversial. On one hand, there was a move away from the rigid Stalinist orthodoxy towards a more flexible interpretation of Marxist-Leninist principles. On the other hand, the state still maintained a firm grip on ideological control, and any artistic work had to navigate this delicate balance. Filmmakers used subtlety and symbolism to critique the regime and explore deeper human and societal issues without directly confronting the authorities.

Thaw films often depicted everyday life in the Soviet Union, focusing on small towns, rural areas, and urban settings. These films highlighted the personal struggles and aspirations of individuals, contrasting sharply with the grandiose and heroic narratives of earlier Soviet cinematography. For instance, films like *The Cranes Are Flying/Letyat zhuravli* (1957) and *Ballad of a Soldier/ Ballada o Soldate* (1959) emphasized human emotions and personal sacrifice, set against the backdrop of World War II, but with a more intimate and humanized perspective. In the film *Land of the Fathers* (1966) An elderly man makes up his mind to find the body of his son who was a Kazakh soldier and died fighting, and to bury him in the land of his ancestors. He is travelling with his grandson: “Toward the end of the journey, the boy loses his grandfather at a station, but they reunite at the end of the film, after the boy has found his father’s grave outside a European village, beyond Leningrad, on the other side of the empire. History materializes as genealogy, personified in three generations of a particular Kazakh family traversing the entire expanse of Soviet territory, first to fight the war, and then to make sense of loss” (Papazian, 2023).

b) *the world outlook of the characters in media texts about family.*

The Thaw period was a transformative era for Soviet cinematography, characterized by a newfound freedom to explore themes of personal and social significance. Filmmakers took advantage of the relative relaxation of censorship to produce media texts that were more reflective, critical, and artistically innovative. This period laid the groundwork for the subsequent

developments in Soviet and Russian cinematography, influencing the further generation of filmmakers and leaving a lasting legacy on the cultural landscape of the USSR.

Thaw film characters often display a desire for personal fulfilment and self-expression, diverging from the collectivist ideals that dominated earlier Soviet narratives. They also seek to balance their personal dreams and ambitions with their roles within the family and society.

The Thaw period in the USSR brought a significant shift in the values reflected in films about family, moving away from rigid collectivist and propagandist themes towards more humanistic portrayals. Thaw films often emphasized the inherent worth and dignity of the individual. Film characters were portrayed with greater psychological depth, and their personal struggles and triumphs were highlighted: in the film *The Cranes Are Flying / Letyat zhuravli* (1957), the plot focuses on the emotional and personal cost of war, portraying the deep grief and resilience of the protagonist, Veronika, thus underscoring the value of individual human experience.

A key value reflected in Thaw films is the importance of emotional authenticity and genuine human connections. Characters are shown striving for honesty in their relationships and dealing with their emotions openly: in *Ballad of a Soldier / Ballada o Soldate* (1959), the brief but touching interactions between Alyosha and the people he meets highlight the value of sincere and heartfelt human connections.

While exploring individual experiences, Thaw films also placed a strong emphasis on the importance of family bonds and love. The depiction of family life became more realistic and multifaceted, acknowledging both the support and the tensions that exist within families.

*The main stereotype of success in this world.* The main stereotype of success in USSR Thaw films about family and family education centres on personal and emotional fulfilment, moral integrity, resilience, authentic self-expression, and the ability to balance individual desires with family responsibilities. These films reflect a more humanistic and individual-oriented perspective on success, departing from the earlier, more collective-focused Soviet ideals.

3. *Structure and narrative modes in media texts (dominant concepts: media categories, media technologies, media languages, media representations).*

a) *the location and time period in media texts.* The films of the Thaw period often depicted families in realistic settings, emphasizing the everyday struggles and joys of Soviet citizens.

b) *the environment typical for these media texts, household items.* In USSR Thaw films about family, the environment and household items depicted provide a vivid representation of the everyday life and living conditions during this period. These films often emphasized realism and authenticity, showcasing typical Soviet households with a focus on both urban and rural settings. As for urban apartments, many families lived in “khrushchyovkas”, the mass-produced, five-story apartment buildings named after Nikita Khrushchev. These buildings were small, functional, and reflected the state’s focus on providing housing for all citizens. Family photographs were often displayed prominently, emphasizing the importance of family bonds and personal memories. Although less common by the Thaw period, communal apartments (“kommunalkas”) still existed, where multiple families shared common areas like kitchens and bathrooms.

c) *genre modifications.*

During the period under review, family-themed films of different genres were created – dramas, melodramas, comedies and children’s films (Mikhaleva, Chelysheva, 2024: 165). Among them are most films of dramatic and melodramatic genres: *Son / Syn* (1955), *Mother / Mat’* (1955), *My Daughter / Moya Dotch* (1956), *Fathers and Children / Ottsy i deti* (1958), *The Two Fedors / Dva Fyodora* (1959), *The First Date / Pervoe Svidanie* (1960), *Someone Else’s Children / Chuzhiye deti* (1958), *The Fate of a Woman / Sud’ba zhenshchiny* (1958), etc.

During this period, comedy films about family and family upbringing were also filmed, which were widely popular among viewers: *The Honeymoon / Medovy Mesyats* (1956), *Young One from Sabudara / Posledniy iz Sabudara* (1957), *A Bridegroom Without a Diploma / Zhenikh bez diploma* (1961), *Be Careful, Grandma! / Ostorozhno, babushka* (1961).

d) *(stereotyped) devices to depict reality.*

Characters in Soviet Thaw feature films were often everyday people facing relatable, real-life problems rather than heroic or idealized figures. The films were frequently set in recognizable, ordinary environments like communal apartments, factories, and small towns. Topics such as the generation gap, alcoholism, and housing shortages were explored more openly. Unlike the clear-cut, ideologically sound endings of earlier films, Thaw cinematography often left conclusions open

to interpretation, thus mirroring the uncertainties of real life. Characters were shown making morally ambiguous choices, reflecting the complexity of human nature.

e) *character typology (character traits, clothing, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, key gestures, presence or absence of the stereotypical manner of representing the characters in these media texts):*

- The age of characters: the age of children is in the range of 7–17 years, however, teenagers are more common. The age of the adult characters (parents, grandparents, etc.) can be anything;
- The education level: characters can have any level of education;
- Social status, occupation: the financial situation of children is approximately the same, they can be either from families of workers and farmers, or from the intelligentsia. The professions are different.
- The marital status of the characters: adult characters are mostly married; however, single parents also appear in films;
- Appearance, clothes, body build, features of their characters, vocabulary.

Characters ranged widely in age, from young children to elderly people, mirroring the demographic diversity of society. Characters are portrayed with psychological complexity, highlighting personal and familial relationships. Actors often appeared with minimal makeup and natural hairstyles, reflecting the everyday appearance of ordinary Soviet citizens. Costumes were typically simple and practical, often depicting the common clothing of the working class, such as workers' overalls, plain dresses, and military uniforms. This choice helped ground the characters in the reality of Soviet life. Sometimes, clothing was used symbolically to convey a character's social status, profession, or internal state. For instance, a worn-out coat might indicate a character's economic hardship. Thaw films featured characters with a variety of body types, reflecting real-life diversity. Characters were not idealized in terms of physical fitness or attractiveness. This inclusivity in body representation contributed to the films' authenticity. Characters displayed relatable human traits such as vulnerability, doubt, resilience, and kindness. They were depicted as neither entirely good nor bad but as multifaceted individuals. Dialogue was often in the vernacular, using colloquial and regional expressions to enhance the authenticity of the characters. This approach made the characters' speech more relatable to the audience. Conversations in Thaw films tended to be more realistic and less formal, reflecting the way people actually spoke in their daily lives. This included pauses, interruptions, and informal speech patterns. Characters often communicated through subtle, understated dialogue rather than overt, didactic speech. Some films included humour and irony in the characters' vocabulary, reflecting the complexity and sometimes the absurdity of everyday life.

f) *a significant change in the life of media characters.*

Significant changes in characters' lives often revolved around themes of personal freedom, individuality, and social progress (*Life Lesson / Urok zhizni*, 1955).

j) *the challenge that the characters face.*

Characters often face the challenge of balancing their personal dreams and desires with the expectations and norms imposed by society and family. This includes navigating career choices, romantic relationships, and personal identity. The films often delve into the emotional and psychological struggles of characters, including feelings of isolation, disillusionment, and the quest for meaning and purpose. Complex family and interpersonal relationships are central to many Thaw films. Characters deal with conflicts, misunderstandings, and the need to maintain or restore familial bonds.

Despite the challenges, characters frequently exhibit a sense of hope and optimism for the future. They believe in the possibility of change and improvement, both within their personal lives and in the broader societal context.

Characters strive for authenticity and truth in their lives and relationships. They seek genuine connections and honest expressions of their emotions and thoughts, rejecting the artificiality and pretences of the past. For instance, in *The Lady with the Dog / Dama s Sobachkoy* (1960) by Iosif Kheifits, based on Anton Chekhov's story, the characters Dmitri and Anna struggle with their feelings and societal norms, seeking an authentic and honest relationship despite the constraints around them.

Many characters deal with the lingering effects of past traumas, particularly those related to World War II (*Annushka*, 1959; *Lullaby / Kolybel'naya*, 1959). These films explore how individuals and families cope with their experiences and memories. For example, in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Ivan's*

*Childhood / Ivanovo Detstvo* (1962), young boy Ivan grapples with the trauma of losing his family during the war, highlighting the enduring impact of past events on the present.

Economic difficulties and material hardships are common challenges, reflecting the realities of Soviet life during the Thaw period. Characters often struggle with limited resources and the need to improve their living conditions. Some feature films, such as *Alyonka* (1961), depict rural and urban families dealing with economic constraints and the efforts to provide for their loved ones.

Female characters, in particular, face challenges related to gender roles and expectations. Thaw films explore the evolving roles of women in society and the conflicts arising from traditional versus modern values (Rojavin, Harte, 2017).

Thaw films often contain subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) critiques of the social and political system. Characters face challenges related to bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and the limitations of the Soviet regime. For example, the film *Nine Days in One Year / Devyat' dney odnogo goda* (1962) deals with the pressures and moral dilemmas faced by scientists working within the Soviet system, reflecting broader social and political tensions.

i) *solving the problem:*

The characters in USSR Thaw films often find solutions to their challenges through a combination of personal resilience, moral integrity, emotional connection, and subtle defiance of societal norms. Characters often draw on their inner strength and resilience to confront and overcome their challenges. This personal fortitude allows them to persevere through difficult circumstances: in *Ivan's Childhood / Ivanovo Detstvo* (1962), despite his traumatic experiences, Ivan's determination and resilience help him survive and fight for his cause, reflecting a deep inner strength. Maintaining moral integrity and making ethical choices are central to many characters' resolutions. These films emphasize the importance of staying true to one's values, even in the face of adversity. For example, in *Ballad of a Soldier / Ballada o Soldate* (1959), Alyosha's consistent acts of kindness and his ethical choices throughout his journey reflect his moral integrity, which ultimately brings him a sense of inner peace.

Emotional connections and strong family bonds play a crucial role in overcoming challenges. Characters often find solace and strength in their relationships with family and loved ones (*Test of Fidelity / Ispytanie vernosti*, 1954).

Thaw film characters often seek self-expression and personal growth as a way to address their struggles. Pursuing their passions and developing their identities help them navigate societal pressures and personal dilemmas (*The Fate of Marina / Sudba Mariny*, 1954; *A Man Was Born / Chelovek rodilsya*, 1956).

Adapting to new circumstances and accepting the realities of their situations are common ways for film characters to find solutions to their life challenges. This often involves adjusting their expectations and finding contentment within their limitations (*Life Lesson / Urok zhizni*, 1955).

Finding support within the community and fostering solidarity with others helps characters overcome their challenges (*The House I Live In / Dom, v kotorom ya zhivu*, 1957). This sense of collective strength is a recurring theme in Thaw films.

Maintaining hope and optimism for a better future is a vital coping mechanism for many characters (*It Happened in Penkovo / Delo bylo v Pen'kove*, 1958; *A Story About Newlyweds / Povest' o molodozhenakh*, 1960). This forward-looking perspective provides them with the motivation to continue striving despite difficulties.

## 5. Conclusion

During the Thaw era in Soviet cinematography, the portrayal of family life underwent significant transformation. Filmmakers began exploring the complexities of family life, often reflecting the broader social and political changes of the time. The family became a microcosm for examining issues of identity, personal struggle, and societal expectations.

Soviet feature films of the Thaw era offer a rich tapestry of family images that reflect the complex interplay between personal and societal changes during this period. Films began to emphasize individual experiences and personal narratives over collective ideology. Characters were depicted with psychological depth and complexity, showcasing a range of human emotions and moral dilemmas. These characters often embody a mixture of hope, disillusionment, and a yearning for personal and emotional freedom. The Thaw period allowed filmmakers to explore more realistic portrayals of Soviet life, focusing on individual experiences and interpersonal relationships within the family context.

By focusing on individual experiences and emotional depth, these films provide a critical lens through which one can understand the evolution of Soviet family life and the broader cultural transformations of the era. From a media studies perspective, they are valuable for their nuanced portrayal of human relationships and their subtle critique of the socio-political context of the time.

The characters in USSR Thaw films face a range of challenges that mirror the complexities of Soviet life during this transformative period. These challenges include reconciling with past traumas, balancing personal desires with societal expectations, navigating emotional and psychological struggles, dealing with complex family contradictions, facing moral and ethical dilemmas, overcoming economic hardships, and confronting evolving gender roles and social critiques. These films provide a rich portrayal of the human condition, reflecting the aspirations, struggles, and resilience of individuals within the broader context of Soviet society.

The solutions to the challenges faced by characters in USSR Thaw films are multifaceted, reflecting the complexity of their lives and the societal context. Personal resilience, moral integrity, emotional connections, self-expression, adaptation, community support, subtle defiance, and hope for the future are common themes that guide characters toward overcoming their struggles. These solutions underscore the humanistic and realistic approach of Thaw films, highlighting the strength and resilience of individuals in the face of adversity.

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## Measuring Reception of Advertising Endeavors through Quantitative Metrics

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### Abstract

Selecting an appropriate quantitative research method for analyzing advertisements can be challenging. It would require carefully identifying the advertising metrics, categorizing variables, and, most importantly, selecting an appropriate statistical method. However, it is imperative because the study of advertisements often correlates with the study of consumers from different mediums, especially when measuring the variables and their relationship to audio-visual advertisements. Quantitative research for advertising can be bifurcated into sections and subsections of different kinds, depending on the nature of the study and type of data; for example, there can be two different types of metrics that are useful in the quantitative analysis of advertising; they are categorized into theoretical and applied metrics. Sometimes, it is enough to apply simple methods like mean, median, and mode to analyze and conclude the data; however, on some occasions, the nature of the study compelled the researcher to apply complex methodologies like mean deviation, standard deviation, correlation, regression, etc. The study provides guidelines for researchers dealing with qualitative data for analyzing advertisements, with examples that make the methods comprehensible.

**Keywords:** advertisement, quantitative techniques, statistical analysis, advertising research.

### 1. Introduction

Advertising research considers numerous factors and variables to achieve accuracy, reliability, and validity. Quantitative and qualitative data collection methods can help measure and evaluate data derived from the variables relating to all three categories of advertising: display advertising, classified advertising, and classified-display advertisements for print media advertising (newspaper and magazine advertisements). These methods are also useful in measuring the variables and their relationship to audio-visual advertisements (television, radio, and film advertisements). The measurement of such variables is called mapping, which is defined as “objects on one set onto the objects of another set.” While applying the mapping in advertising research, one set can be the consumers, audience, or symbols, while the other set can be the numerals. Advertising research primarily deals with the creative and communicative variables that fall under the broader spectrum of marketing research. This is why advertising research covers not only audience-centric variables but also consumer-centric variables (Dayal, 2017). Vance Packard, in 1957, referred to advertising as “hidden persuaders,” which makes advertising omnipotent and omnipresent (Packard, 1957). Advertisements are also called “sellers of dream” and often referred to as “running business without advertising is like winking a girl in the dark” (Dayal, 2017).

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Another integral part of advertising research is copy research, which focuses on measuring the effectiveness of advertising messages (Dominick, Wimmer, 2003).

#### *Nature of Advertising Research*

Research has always been a scientific study. However, advertising research often lacks a scientific approach to measuring variables, precision, variability, and reliability (Dayal, 2017). For example, when we are making an assumption about a situation like a bowl is half empty or half full with clear soup, we are either being positively or negatively biased on our assumption. However, the moment we measure the quantity of clear soup in the bowl with the help of a scientific method, we can arrive at a logical conclusion with a quantitative outcome. Advertising research has gone through a series of progression and has become sophisticated over the years. Despite applying neuroscience, big data, eye tracking, structural equation modeling, survey data, field experiments, and other modern and sophisticated analysis techniques in analyzing the market, the understanding of consumer consumption is still not entirely comprehensible. Instead of complex and complicated analysis, qualitative analysis sometimes helps analyze advertising effectiveness before, during, and after the exposure (Belk, 2017).

The significant qualitative methods applicable to analyze the impact of an advertisement include in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations, projective techniques, and netnography (Belk et al., 2012; Kozinets, 2015). Among these qualitative data collection methods, the most common method is the focus group discussion, which is relatively quick and inexpensive and also helps in retrieving qualitative data in a natural setup. However, this method comes with a few biases, like individual dominating discussions, moderator bias, groupthink, and other distortions (Catterall, Maclaran, 2006).

For example, television advertisements and their audience perception can be measured in both qualitative and quantitative ways, where one of the most common methods of qualitative data collection is in-depth interviews (Zhou, Russell 2004, 2009). In-depth interviews are one of the commonly used ethnographic techniques that not only help in understanding the impact of advertising on consumers but also help identify the takeaways of the consumer (Belk, 2017).

One variation of an in-depth interview, under the qualitative data collection method, is called the projective technique, which enables the researcher to insert variation within the process. There are a few projective techniques that are common to the researchers, like word association, shopping list projective, image association, collage construction, storytelling, drawing, cartoon caption test, psychodrama, dream elicitation, thematic apperception test, metaphor elicitation, symbol matching, etc. (Coulter, 2006; Zaltman, Robin, 1995).

Advertisement research often involves experimental research design to test the variables and their influences to determine the factors that influence sales (Caballero, Solomon, 1984; Greco, Swayne, 1992). Causal research enables a researcher to determine the relationship between the advertisement and the consumers. In contrast, experimental research design is an appropriate methodology that helps in justifying the relationships (Vargas et al., 2017).

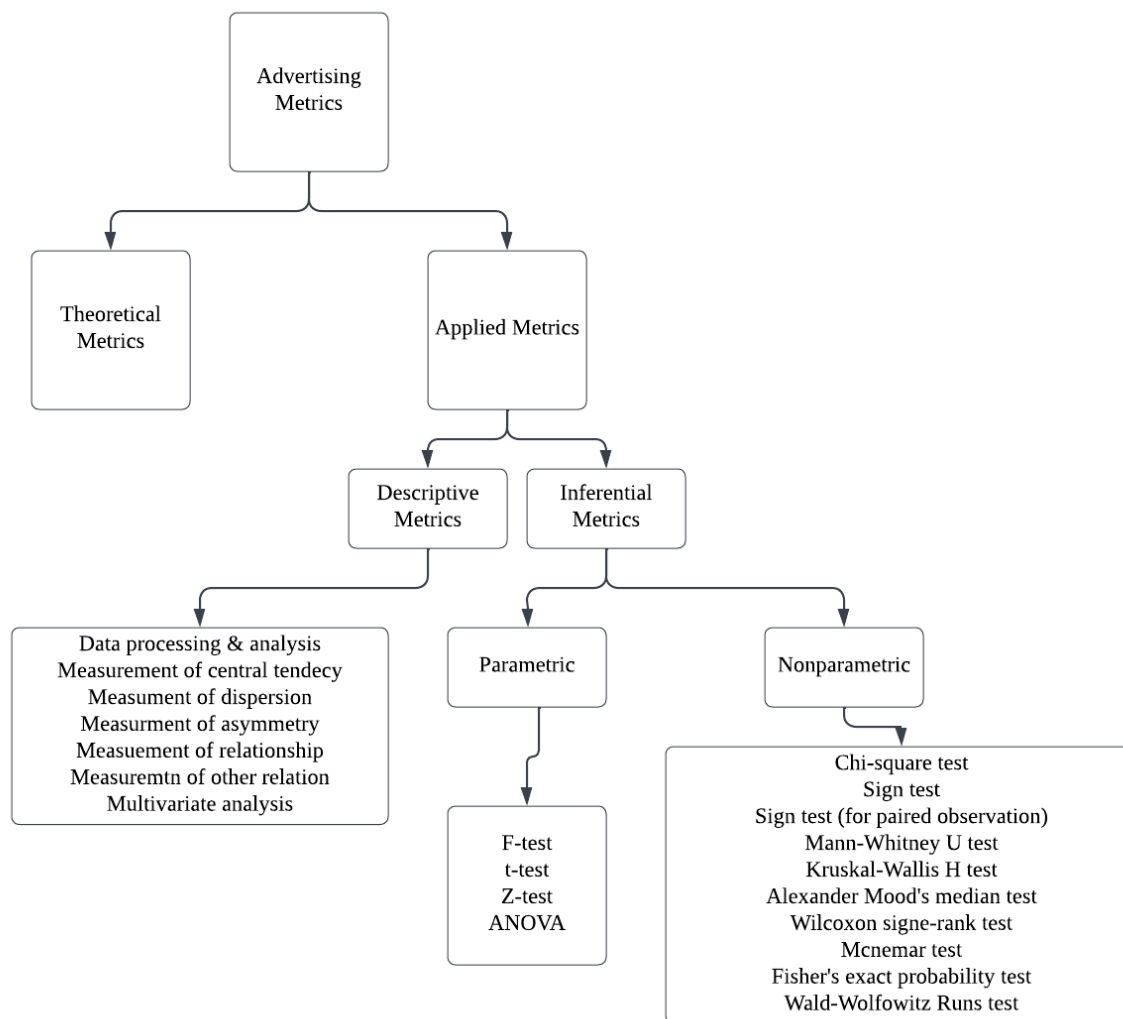
In experimental research, a researcher often manipulates or controls one of the causal variables while observing the corresponding differences in the outcome (Nisbett, Wilson, 1977). There can be one example of such circumstances where a researcher might want to control or manipulate one of the variables, like when a researcher wishes to find out the consumption pattern of the consumers on the point of purchase advertisements by conducting a survey asking people whether they would purchase a particular product after being exposed to the point of purchase advertisement and then analyze the result based on the responses collected from the participants.

#### *Quantitative analysis of advertising research*

There can be two different types of metrics that are useful in the quantitative analysis of advertising; they are categorized into theoretical and applied metrics. The theoretical metrics deal with the theories, techniques, and methods, while applied metrics apply those theories, techniques, and methods to find out possible solutions to the research problems (Dayal, 2017). The applied metrics can further be categorized into Descriptive and inferential metrics, while each of these categories has a number of statistical tests under them, which depend on the nature of the data and the variables.

Variables are considered essential in quantitative data collection when measuring relationships. The variables, primarily, can be changed and have two values. An example of a variable can be a person's age, height, weight, consumption of food, income, blood group, occupation, etc., which can be different from another person. Variables are also a result of logical

groupings of attributes. For example, if we consider gender as a variable, then male, female, and third gender can be the attributes. Studies try to measure the relationship between the variables by collecting data through quantitative methods, and the longer the list of variables, the longer time it would require for the researcher in data collection.



**Fig. 1.** Advertising metrics for quantitative data analysis in advertising research

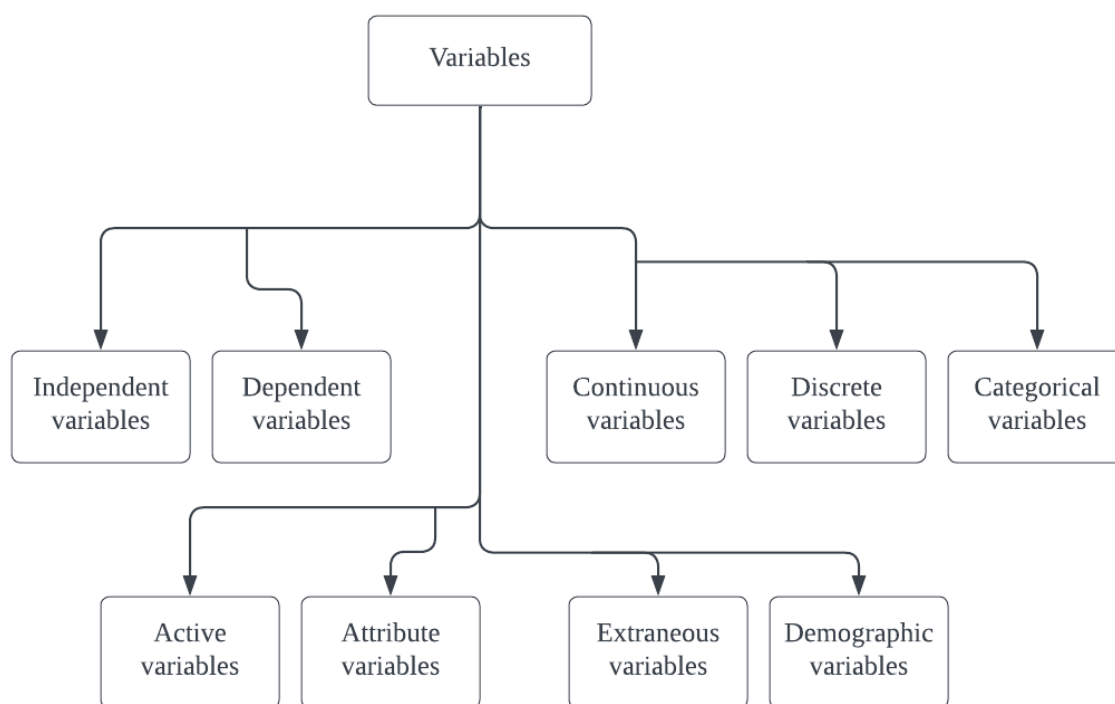
Source: Concepts proposed by Manoj Dayal in his book *Media Metrics: An Introduction to Quantitative Research in Mass Communication*, 2017.

Variables can be defined as “measurable factors through a process of operationalization. It will convert difficult concepts into easily understandable concepts, which then can be measured empirically.” Variables can be of different types, such as “Independent and dependent variables,” “Active and attribute variables,” “Continuous, discrete, and categorical variables,” “Extraneous variables,” and “Demographic variables” (Kaur, 2013).

These varieties of variables (Figure 2) make it easier for the researcher to collect data that is apt for the study. Independent variables are not affected by other variables. For example, when you are surveying consumers to understand whether their consumption is affected by a surrogate advertisement, the independent variable can be the age of the respondents. On the other hand, dependent variables are dependent on other variables. An example could be that the ratings of an advertisement would be different between the participants of a controlled group and the experimental group. Continuous variables are known for taking up an infinite set of values. An example could be the body weight of the consumers when you are trying to measure their eating habits proportional to the exposure to direct-action advertisements.

Discrete variables consider the values that are countable. For example, when you are trying to measure the impact of public service advertisements on television on a household, where the

number of people residing in the household is measured as ten or less. Categorical variable considers components like age group, religion, sex, educational qualification, etc.



**Fig. 2.** Types of variables

Source: 'Variables in research' by S. P. Kaur, published in the Indian Journal of Research and Reports in Medical Sciences, 2013.

An example can be the understanding of the male and female ratio when you are trying to understand the increase in sales of a garment brand after running repetitive advertisements on television. Active variables are the variables that are manipulated by the researcher. An example of an active variable is the number of advertisements shown to a control group. Attribute variables remain stagnant during the study. An example could be measuring daily weight loss/gain after exposure to an advertisement promoting fitness. The extraneous variable is a variable that the researcher is not studying but affects the dependent variable considered in the study. For example, you are studying the consumption habits of a set of consumers based on their income level; however, age and location also affect consumption, which can be considered extraneous variables. Demographic variables include demographic components such as age, income level, location, gender, etc. An example of the demographic variable can be studying the exposure of product advertisements on television for urban population.

After understanding the nature and types of variables, the study of measurement becomes imperative. The measurement can be defined as assigning objects, observations, or events, abiding by a set of rules. The segregation of measurement is applied when these objects, observations, or events represent a selective category (Schaw, 2006).

The discussion about measurement and its concept can be traced back to the work of Stevens in 1966, as he proposed four types of scales: Nominal, Ordinal, Interval, and Ratio scale (Borgatta, Bohrnstedt, 1980). For advertising research, all four of these scales are applicable to various perspectives. The nominal scale is applied when there is a question of name or gender appears. For example, when you are asking participants about their gender or the name of the brand they prefer. The ordinal scale helps in arranging the responses in a certain order, such as the numeric ranking, maximum-minimum, high-low, primary education, secondary education, higher secondary education, etc. For example, when you are trying to measure the educational qualification of the participants or the maximum and minimum number of consumptions of a product in an average month. The interval scale helps to measure the difference between two variables when the difference is equal and meaningful. An example of this scale can be the difference in temperature. The ratio scale includes true zero and the uniform intervals between two variables.

Examples of such measurements can be the crime rate, employment rate, etc. The application of nominal and interval scales is higher in advertising research compared to the ordinal and ratio scales (Dayal, 2017).

The statistical tools for advertising research vary across distinctive directions, descriptive and inferential statistics, based on the nature of data and their analysis (Figure 3). The descriptive statistical methods are again classified into six distinct categories: 'data processing,' 'measurement of central tendency,' 'measurement of dispersion,' 'measurement of asymmetry,' 'measurement of relationship,' and 'multivariate analysis.' Data processing includes the data in editing, coding, classifying, tabulating, and generally explaining the tables. This is the reason it is called a bridge between data collection and interpretation for a study (Dayal, 2017).

For example, when you collect data from a population who are exposed to a health-related advertisement, and then you aim to measure the changes in their attitude towards a healthier lifestyle, you need to collect the raw data from the population through the selected samples (if the population size is infinite), and refine the data to eliminate the unwanted interferences before applying statistical methods for analysis. Measurement of central tendencies helps in summarizing the data points with meaningful outcomes. In a data set, it has been observed that the data has a tendency to form clusters around the central value. This particular behavior of data is called central tendency. The statistical methods (mean, median, and mode) help in describing the data set with the help of one single value and also enable comparing one data set with another (Prasad, 2023). For example, you want to find out the central tendency for a set of data collected from audiences who are regular consumers of breakfast cereals and have also been exposed to the advertisements that promote such breakfast cereals on television. The measurement of central tendencies will help in describing the distribution of the entire data around the central tendency.

Measurement of central tendencies alone is not adequate to explain a set of data as two data sets may have the same mean but with completely different characteristics. Therefore, to understand the variability of data, measurement of dispersion is required (Manikandan, 2011).

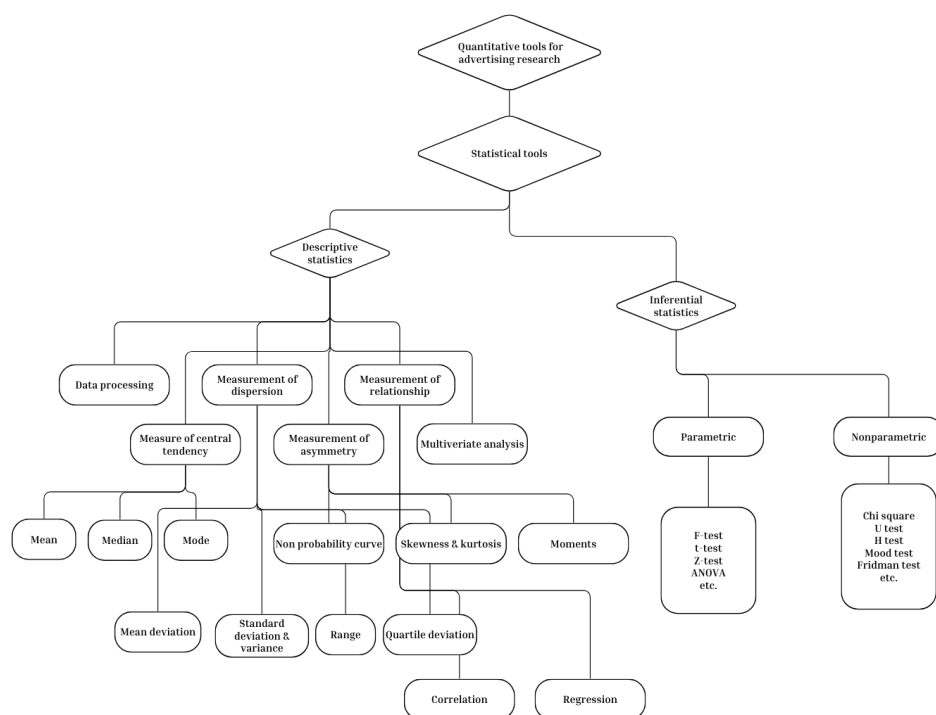
The measurement of dispersion is again segregated into mean deviation, standard deviation & variance, range, and quartile deviation (Figure 3). For example, you are trying to find out the age of the people who are consumers of a beverage brand, and the dispersion of data can be measured with the help of the method. Skewness is used as a measure of distortion or asymmetry in a symmetric distribution as it measures the deviation of random variables. Three types of skewness can be observed in a set of data: positive skewed (Mean > Median > Mode), zero skewed (Mean = Median = Mode), and negative skewed (Mean < Median < Mode) (Prasad, 2023). An example can be when you are trying to find out the consumption of buyers (for a sample) towards a particular product, and the data is found to be lower in most of the cases while higher in a few cases; the curve would be positively skewed, while the opposite circumstances (with most of the responses are on the higher side and a few on the lower side) would create a curve that is negatively skewed. The zero skewed is a situation where the values are equally distributed across both sides of the curve, and in this case, there are equal numbers of higher and lower consumptions observed across the buyers.

The directional or cause-and-effect relationship between the variables can be measured through the technique of either correlation or regression (Prasad, 2023). For example, while measuring the consumer's consumption of a health drink before and after exposure to a call-to-action advertisement, the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable can be measured to understand the advertisement's effectiveness on the consumer. Measurement of relationships is further divided into two distinctive categories: correlation measures the strength of the relationship between two variables, while regression defines the relationship between one dependent and one or more than one independent variable. There are different methods of calculating the correlation: "Pearson product-moment correlation," "Spearman rank-order correlation" etc., and different methods of calculating regression: "Method of least squares," "Simple linear regression," "Multiple linear regression analysis," "Polynomial regression," "Logistic regression," "Nonlinear regression," etc. (Runhua, Conrad, 2009). The multivariate analysis, under descriptive statistics, is applied to a situation when we try to identify the association between more than two variables (Bartlett, 1947).

For example, you are trying to find out the association between the consumption of alcohol and the surrogate advertisement on television and poster advertisements (displaying the bottle of alcohol) on the hoarding of the liqueur shop. Descriptive statistics helps analyze the data based on

the sample taken out from the population, whereas inferential statistics helps generalize the findings based on the sample to the population (Allua, Thompson, 2009).

For example, when you are trying to find out specific behavioral changes among consumers because of the exposure to a social advertisement from one group of samples to another group of samples, then inferential statistics become useful. Inferential statistics is further categorized into two significantly different categories: parametric tests and non-parametric tests. Parametric tests in advertising research are used to investigate the given parameters of a sample and its equality with another sample (Dayal, 2017). Parametric tests measure the variables at the ratio and interval levels (Allua, Thompson, 2009). Nonparametric tests are called distribution-free or assumption-free statistics (Dayal, 2017) and are measured at nominal and ordinal levels (Allua, Thompson, 2009).



**Fig. 3.** Quantitative tools for advertising research

Source: Concepts proposed by Manoj Dayal in his book *Media Metrics An Introduction to Quantitative Research in Mass Communication*, 2017.

## 2. Materials and methods

The research work attempts to discuss the quantitative methods for conducting research on advertisements. The objective of the study is to find the appropriate method for analysing an advertisement with the help of quantitative techniques. To attain the objective of the research, literature review method is used to understand the different available techniques. Thus, with the help of qualitative analysis, the existing methods are studied and analysed.

## 3. Discussion

### *Data Processing in advertising research*

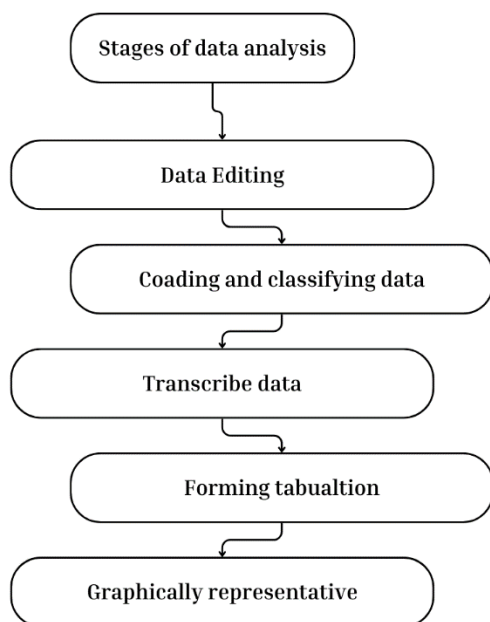
Data processing includes several stages, such as data editing, data coding, classifying data, tabulating data, and generally explaining the data. In quantitative research, hypotheses are used through deductive reasoning, while data analysis considers the data to pass through the research question or hypothesis, the objectives of the research, and the theories to form a conclusion (Dayal, 2017). J. N. Sharma, in his book "Research Methodology: The Discipline and Its Dimensions Law," 2007, and C. R. Kothari, in his book "Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques," 2004, explained data analysis as processing that helps in generalization and testing hypotheses, that is closely associated with the data processing. Data processing is considered a bridge between the collection and interpretation of data (Sharma, 2007; Kothari, 2004). For each one of the stages of data analysis (Figure 4), the raw data is modified to form a meaningful conclusion).

Data editing is basically turning the raw data into meaningful information by eliminating errors and omitting repetitions. There are two types of data editing widely applicable in the area of



advertising: 'Filed editing' and 'central editing.' While field editing takes place at the time of data collection, central editing is applicable once the data collection is over (Dayal, 2017).

For example, when you try collecting consumer data on their daily consumption habits of FMCG products through consumer surveys, the raw data can be collected and edited during the time of data collection and also edited at the same time, while the same data can be edited after the data collection process is over. The coding of edited data is essential for placing the units into their respective categories. Coding also involves applying codes and symbols to the data to reduce their numbers significantly and fitting them into categories. Based on the nature of the data, there can be 'numeric,' 'alphabetic,' and 'zero' coding that can be assigned to a set of data (Dayal, 2017).



**Fig. 4.** Stages of data analysis (Source: Concepts proposed by Manoj Dayal in his book *Media Metrics An Introduction to Quantitative Research in Mass Communication*, 2017)

For example, when a researcher is trying to find out the acceptance of a new deodorant in the market, 'numeric' coding can be the rating of the acceptance from 1–3 (where 1 denotes the accepted, 2 denotes the undecided and 3 stands for rejected). Similarly, an 'alphabetic' coding can be applied to identify the gender (a for male, b for female, c for transgender, etc.). 'Zero' coding refers to identifying the responses into dual categories; for example, if you are asking the participants whether they like the test of the health drink, the answers will be coded into 1 and 2 (where 1 is denoted as yes, and 2 is denoted as no).

Classification of data is necessary when a researcher is dealing with a large set of data. In most cases, data is grouped according to their homogeneity and classified according to the attributes and class intervals (Dayal, 2017; Riffe et al., 2019). For example, when you are assessing the perspective of consumers after they are exposed to an indirect action advertisement based on their gender, the collected data can be categorized based on the gender of the participants. The same samples can be grouped according to numerical classifications, like height, age, etc. Transcription is the previous stage of the data tabulation, where data is transferred to the datasheet to limit the shuffling process between the observation and responses (Dayal, 2017).

For example, a consumer survey has been conducted to identify the variables that cause the consumer to increase or decrease their consumption of certain products, and 500 responses are considered for analysis. The transfer of data on the datasheet will help in summarizing the data for all those responses and reduce the effort of the researcher to browse through individual responses. Tabulation helps align the data collected from the datasheet into rows and columns. Tabulation includes the time and space in arranging the data in a meaningful way that makes it easily comprehensible (Dayal, 2017).

Tables can be created based on the homogeneity of the data into various categories. For example, a researcher has collected data from consumers to understand the changes in their

behavior after they are exposed to an advertisement on the usage of sanitary napkins, and the tables are made based on gender (for example, female, male, third gender, etc.) and age group (for example, >15, 16-25, 26-35, 36-45, etc.) of the participants, etc. Graphical representation of data has the benefit of presenting the data in an interesting and eye-catching way. It makes a large quantity of data understandable for the readers and also helps in detailed comparison between datasets, measuring central tendencies, estimation, interpretation, and evaluation. There are a number of options available to present data in graphical format: 'vertical bar graph,' 'horizontal bar graph,' 'pie graph,' 'line graph,' 'pictogram,' 'frequency polygon,' 'cumulative frequency graph,' 'ogive,' etc. (Dayal, 2017; Wimmer, Dominick, 2006). For example, a researcher has collected data from 1000 samples on their consumption of cigarettes after being exposed to a public service advertisement displaying the harmful impact of smoking. The changes in the consumption of cigarettes pre-and-post exposure to the advertisement can be illustrated beautifully through bar graphs or line graphs in a study.

#### *Measurement of Central tendencies: application in advertising research*

Measurement of central tendency is nothing but the statistical average that is well accepted in studies concerning advertising research, as the studies often try to find a single figure that would describe the entire figure (Gupta, 2001). Mean is basically the calculation of the average, and for advertising research, the arithmetic mean is mainly applied rather than the harmonic and geometric mean. Arithmetic mean is the most popular method of getting a single value out of the observations (Dayal, 2017). For arithmetic mean, the sum of values is divided by the number of values in a set. For geometric mean, the Nth observation of the root of the set of values. The harmonic mean is basically the reciprocal of the arithmetic mean (Chakrabarty, 2021; Ramachandran et al., 2016; Jacquier et al., 2019).

## **4. Results**

### *Mean*

The formula for calculating the sample mean ( $\bar{X}$ ):

$$\bar{X} = (\Sigma X) / N$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$  (X bar) represents the sample mean

X represents the observations (score)

N represents the total number of observations

$\Sigma$  represents the summation of

An example would be the calculation of the mean purchase of a set of consumers for a toothpaste brand. If there are 10 consumers and the accumulated scores for the consumers are 120, then the sample mean would be  $\bar{X} = (\Sigma X) / N$  ( $\Sigma X = 120$ , and  $N = 10$ ),  $\bar{X} = 12$ .

### *Mean for unclassified data-*

For the unclassified data along with frequencies, the formula of sample mean would be  $\bar{X} = (\Sigma f X) / N$ . For example, the number of observations for a set of consumers on their purchasing habits of cookies over three months (consumer 1: 4 per month, consumer 2: 5 per month, consumer 3: 4 per month, consumer 4: 8 per month, consumer 5: 6 per month). The sample mean would be  $(\Sigma 4 \times 3 + 5 \times 3 + 4 \times 3 + 8 \times 3 + 6 \times 3) / 5 = 16.2$ .

### *Mean for classified data*

The formula remains the same for calculating the sample mean of classified data along with frequencies:  $\bar{X} = (\Sigma f X) / N$ . However, the X is calculated as the mid-value of the class. For example, the data on the frequency distribution of television advertisers and their successful advertisements are given (0-10 with a frequency of 15 for advertiser A, 10-20 with a frequency of 8 for advertiser B, 20-30 with a frequency of 14 for advertiser C, 30 - 40 with a frequency of 10 for advertiser D, and 40-50 with a frequency of 16 for advertiser E). The mid-value calculation of advertisers A, B, C, D, and E would be  $(0 + 10 / 2) = 5$ ,  $(10 + 20 / 2) = 15$ ,  $(20 + 30 / 2) = 25$ ,  $(30 + 40 / 2) = 35$ , and  $(40 + 50 / 2) = 45$ . Therefore, the  $\Sigma f X$  for advertisers A, B, C, D, and E would be  $(15 \times 5) + (8 \times 15) + (14 \times 25) + (10 \times 35) + (16 \times 45) = 1615$ , and the total number of frequencies for advertisers A, B, C, D, and E would be  $(15 + 8 + 14 + 10 + 16) = 63$ . And the  $\bar{X}$  would be  $1615 / 63 = 25.63$ .

### *Median*

The median refers to the mid-value of a distribution. Calculation of the median would require arranging the values in the observation in ascending or descending order and using the formula M

=  $(N + 1 / 2)$ th value to calculate the median. Here, M is represented as the Median, and N is the total number of observations (Dayal, 2017).

For example, a researcher observes the frequency of newspaper ads on jewelry for five consecutive weeks to calculate the median, and the observations are 5, 15, 8, 12, and 9. The values need to be arranged in ascending order, which makes the distribution 5, 8, 9, 12, and 15. The application of the formula  $M = (N + 1 / 2)$  th value would be:  $M = (5 + 1 / 2)$ , therefore M = 3rd value from the observation, which is 9. The arrangement of the observations in descending order would also provide the same median.

#### *Median for frequency distribution*

Calculating the median for frequency distribution involves two stages. First of all, the  $N / 2$  is calculated from the dataset, and if the  $cf$  is not present in the correspondent dataset, then the median would be the corresponding X of the immediately greater value of  $cf$ . Therefore, the equation for calculating the median for frequency distribution is  $cf \geq N / 2$ . (where  $cf$  is cumulative frequency, and N is the sum of frequencies) For example, the Frequency of television advertisements on the latest cell phone captured by different television channels for a week, and the observations are listed below:

**Table 1.** Imaginary dataset to calculate the median for frequency distribution

Cell phone advertisements for a week (X)	12	14	17	19	21
Number of television channels (f)	3	4	6	5	2

The first stage is to calculate the  $N / 2$  by calculating  $cf$ .

**Table 2.** Table showing the arrangement of data and the cumulative frequencies

X	f	Cf
12	3	3
14	4	$(3 + 4) = 7$
17	6	$(7 + 6) = 13$
19	5	$(13 + 5) = 18$
21	2	$(18 + 4) = 22$
	$\Sigma N = 20$	

Notes:  $\Sigma N = 20$

Therefore, the  $N / 2 = 20 / 2 = 10$

From the datasheet, 10 is not present; therefore, the immediate greater value 13 is considered, and the median for the dataset is correspondent X, which is 17.

#### *Mode*

Calculation on mode in a distribution refers to the highest number of frequencies. In a simple distribution, the mode is considered the value that occurs most frequently in a distribution (Dayal, 2017; Singh, 1986). Mode, in a distribution, can also be referred to as the value where the concentration of the items is heaviest (Gupta, 2011). For example, the number of ads for a brand is observed and recorded for twelve months, and the frequencies from January to December are 10, 8, 16, 11, 8, 9, 13, 7, 8, 11, 8, 10. The mode here will be 8 as the value has occurred four times (highest) in the distribution.

#### *Mode for frequency distribution*

For a frequency distribution,  $M_o =$  highest number of frequencies

For example, the conversion of consumers is captured for the advertisements on a website for a week, and the observations are recorded in a tabular format below:

**Table 3.** Imaginary dataset to calculate the mode for frequency distribution

Conversion of consumer (X)	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Number of web advertisements (f)	8	7	9	12	8	5	6	8

Here, the mode is 12, as it has the highest number of conversions.

For a classified frequency distribution, the following formula will be applied to calculate the mode:

$$M_o = l + [f_m - f_1 / (f_m - f_1) + (f_m - f_2)] \times h$$

Where:

$M_o$  stands for Mode

$l$  stands for the lower limit of the modal class

$f_m$  stands for frequency of the modal class

$f_1$  stands for frequency of class preceding the modal class

$f_2$  stands for frequency of class succeeding the modal class

$h$  stands for the width of the modal class

For example, the reach of advertisements among the consumers is captured in range (lower to upper) for a week, and the observations are recorded in a tabular format below:

**Table 4.** Imaginary dataset to calculate the mode for classified frequency distribution

Conversion of consumer (X)	55-60	60-65	65-70	70-75	75-80	80-85
Number of web advertisements ( $f$ )	5	8	9	10	8	7

Where:

The modal class for higher frequency is 70-75, as it has the highest frequency (10) among the set.

$$l = 70$$

$$f_m = 10$$

$$f_1 = 9$$

$$f_2 = 8$$

$$h = 5$$

Therefore, the mode will be calculated as:

$$l + [f_m - f_1 / (f_m - f_1) + (f_m - f_2)] \times h$$

$$M_o = 71.67$$

*Measurement of dispersion: application in advertising research*

In statistics, the word dispersion means the scatteredness, spread, or variation of data. There are a few methods that help in measuring the dispersion of data: mean deviation, standard deviation, variance, range, interquartile range, and semi-range. However, not all these methods are useful in advertising research (Dayal, 2017).

*Mean deviation*

Mean deviation is basically the arithmetic mean of the absolute deviation of values. It is called average deviation and is denoted by MD, or AD, or  $\delta$  (delta). Mean deviation is the average deviation between the values or items in a distribution (Mangal, 1987).

*Mean deviation for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution'*

The formula for calculating mean deviation for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution' is  $\delta = \Sigma |d| / N$ , where  $d$  is further calculated by applying the formula of  $X - \bar{X}$ .

Where,

$\delta$  represents the mean deviation

$d$  is calculated by subtracting  $\bar{X}$  from  $X$

$N$  represents the number of observations

For example, a leading newspaper publishes multiple classified advertisements a day, and this behavior was recorded for six consecutive days with the values as 12, 9, 8, 8, 7, 10

Here,

$$\bar{X} = (12 + 9 + 8 + 8 + 7 + 10) / 6$$

$$\bar{X} = 9$$

$$d = (12 - 9), (9 - 9), (8 - 9), (8 - 9), (7 - 9), (10 - 9)$$

$$d = 3, 0, -1, -1, -2, 1$$

$$\Sigma |d| = (3 + 0 + 1 + 1 + 2 + 1)$$

$$\Sigma |d| = 8$$

Therefore, the formula for mean deviation for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution'  $\delta = \Sigma |d| / N$  would be applied,

Where:

$$\Sigma |d| = 8$$

$$N = 6$$

$$\delta = 1.33$$

#### *Mean deviation for frequency distribution*

The mean deviation for frequency distribution is also called the deviation of grouped data. This method helps calculate the deviation of the frequency data, which are often presented in tabular form (Dayal, 2017).

The formula for calculating the mean deviation of frequency distribution is a little different from the simple distribution:  $\delta = \Sigma |f d| / N$

For example, the mean deviation needs to be calculated for the number of advertisements telecasted in a month on a toothpaste brand for different television channels. The frequency distributions are listed below:

**Table 4.** Imaginary dataset to calculate the mean deviation for frequency distribution

Number of television channels (X)	3	4	5	6	7	8
Number of television advertisements in a month (f)	4	7	3	5	6	2

To calculate the mean deviation in the above frequency distribution, we need to apply the formula  $\delta = \Sigma |f d| / N$

Now,

$\Sigma |f d| =$  Here the frequencies (f) need to be multiplied by the number of X to calculate the fX (Table 5).

$$N = \text{total number of frequencies are } (4 + 7 + 3 + 5 + 6 + 2) = 27$$

**Table 5.** Calculation of f, fX, d, |d|, and |f d| from the data set illustrated in Table 4

X	f	fX	d = (X - $\bar{X}$ )	d	f d
3	4	12	3 - 5.3 = - 2.3	2.3	9.2
4	7	28	4 - 5.3 = - 1.3	1.3	9.1
5	3	15	5 - 5.3 = - 0.3	0.3	0.9
6	5	30	6 - 5.3 = - 0.7	0.7	3.5
7	6	42	7 - 5.3 = - 1.7	1.7	10.2
8	2	16	8 - 5.3 = - 2.7	2.7	5.4
	N = 27	$\Sigma fX = 143$			$\Sigma  f d  = 38.3$

Notes:  $\bar{X} = (\Sigma fX / N)$ , the X should also need to be arranged in the ascending order.

Now that the  $\Sigma |f d|$  and N are found, the mean deviation of the frequency distribution for the above values (Table 4) would be easier and would calculate as:

$$\delta = 38 / 27$$

$$\delta = 1.41$$

#### *Standard deviation*

Standard deviation is one of the widely used methods of analyzing deviations. It was formulated in 1894 by Karl Pearson and is also called 'root mean square deviation' or 'second-moment dispersion' (Dayal, 2017). The deviations can be calculated for population, which is denoted by  $\sigma$  (sigma), and sample standard deviation is denoted by s (Ghosh, 2023). A higher standard deviation means the dispersion from the mean is higher, and a lower standard deviation means the values are concentrated near the central tendency or mean (Dayal, 2017).

*Standard deviation for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution'*

The formula to calculate the population standard deviation for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution' is  $\sigma = \sqrt{\Sigma d^2 / N}$

Where,

$\sigma$  stands for standard deviation

$d$  is calculated by subtracting  $\bar{X}$  from  $X$

$N$  stands for the number of observations

For example, the standard deviation needs to be calculated for the number of weekly push advertisements for a popular website, and the weekly observations are recorded as 15, 12, 11, 9, 7, and 6.

Here,

$$\bar{X} = (15 + 12 + 11 + 9 + 7 + 6) / 6$$

$$\bar{X} = 10$$

$$d = (15 - 10), (12 - 10), (11 - 10), (9 - 10), (7 - 10), (6 - 10)$$

$$d = 5, 2, 1, -1, -3, -4$$

$$d^2 = 5^2, 2^2, 1^2, -1^2, -3^2, -4^2$$

$$\Sigma d^2 = 25 + 4 + 1 + 1 + 9 + 16$$

$$\Sigma d^2 = 56$$

$$N = 6$$

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\Sigma d^2 / N}$$

$$\sigma = \sqrt{56/6}$$

$$\sigma = 3.05$$

Standard deviation for frequency distribution -

The formula for calculating standard deviation for frequency distribution is a little different:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\Sigma fd^2 / N}$$

Here, the  $d$  is calculated by combining their corresponding frequencies.

For example, the number of television advertisements for each day of the week are captured for seven different channels, and the observations are illustrated in the table below:

**Table 6.** Imaginary dataset to calculate the standard deviation for frequency distribution

Number of television channels (X)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of television advertisements in a week (f)	22	18	20	21	16	12	10

Now,

$\sqrt{\Sigma fd^2}$  = Here, the frequencies ( $f$ ) need to be multiplied by the number of  $X$  to calculate the  $fX$  (Table 7).

$$N = \text{total number of frequencies are } (4 + 7 + 3 + 5 + 6 + 2) = 27$$

**Table 7.** Calculation of  $f$ ,  $fX$ ,  $d^2$ , and,  $fd^2$ , from the data set illustrated in Table 6

X	f	fX	d = (X - $\bar{X}$ )	d <sup>2</sup>	fd <sup>2</sup>
1	22	22	1 - 3.56 = - 2.56	6.55	144.1
2	18	36	2 - 3.56 = - 1.56	2.43	43.74
3	20	60	3 - 3.56 = - 0.56	0.31	6.2
4	21	84	4 - 3.56 = 0.44	0.19	3.99
5	16	80	5 - 3.56 = 1.44	2.07	33.12
6	12	72	6 - 3.56 = 2.44	5.95	71.4
7	10	70	7 - 3.56 = 3.44	11.83	118.3
	N = 119	$\Sigma fX = 424$			$\Sigma fd^2 = 420.85$

Notes:  $\bar{X} = (\Sigma fX / N)$ , the  $X$  should also need to be arranged in the ascending order.

Now that the  $\Sigma fd^2$  and  $N$  are calculated, the standard deviation of the frequency distribution for the above values (Table 6) would be:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{420.85 / 119}$$

$$\sigma = 1.88$$

*Range*

Calculation of range is one of the easiest ways to measure the variance; however, this only considers the extreme values and neglects the values in between. The range is calculated through the subtraction of the lower value from the upper value (Dayal, 2017).

The formula for calculation of range for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution' is  $R = L - S$

Where,

R stands for the range

L stands for the largest value

S stands for the smallest value

*Range for 'simple distribution, 'unclassified distribution,' or 'ungrouped distribution'*

For example, the range needs to be calculated for the number of hoardings at five different locations, and the numbers are noted as 6, 12, 20, 22, and 30.

Here,

$$R = 30 - 6$$

$$R = 24$$

*Quartile deviation*

Quartile deviation helps in indicating the absolute measure of dispersion. The 'coefficient of quartile deviation' is calculated by dividing the quartile deviation by the average value (Dayal, 2017).

The formula for calculating the coefficient of quartile deviation is

$$\text{Coefficient of quartile deviation} = (Q_3 - Q_1 / 2) / (Q_3 + Q_1 / 2)$$

$$\text{Coefficient of quartile deviation} = Q_3 - Q_1 / Q_3 + Q_1$$

Where,

$Q_1$  is calculated as  $(N + 1 / 4)$  th item

$Q_2$  is calculated as  $3 \times (N + 1 / 4)$  th item

N is the total number of observations

For example, the price of a newspaper advertisement per sq. cm for seven days is identified and recorded as Rs. 500/-, Rs. 200/-, Rs. 300/-, Rs. 400/-, Rs. 400/-, Rs. 600/-, and Rs. 800/-.

To calculate the quartile deviation, the data sets are required to be arranged in ascending order, before applying the formula.

Therefore,

$Q_1$  is calculated as  $(N + 1 / 4)$  th item

$$Q_1 = (7 + 1 / 4) \text{ th item}$$

$$Q_1 = 2 \text{ th item}$$

$$Q_1 = \text{Rs. } 300/- \text{ or } 300$$

$Q_3$  is calculated as  $3 \times (N + 1 / 4)$  th item

$$Q_3 = 3 \times (7 + 1 / 4) \text{ th item}$$

$$Q_3 = 6 \text{ th item}$$

$$Q_3 = \text{Rs. } 600/- \text{ or } 600$$

Therefore, the quartile deviation is  $Q_3 - Q_1 / 2$

$$\text{Quartile deviation} = (\text{Rs. } 600/- - \text{Rs. } 300/-)$$

$$\text{Quartile deviation} = \text{Rs. } 300/- \text{ or } 300$$

The coefficient of quartile deviation would be  $Q_3 - Q_1 / Q_3 + Q_1$

$$\text{Coefficient of quartile deviation} = 600 - 300 / 600 + 300$$

$$\text{Coefficient of quartile deviation} = 0.33$$

*Measurement of relationship: application in advertising research*

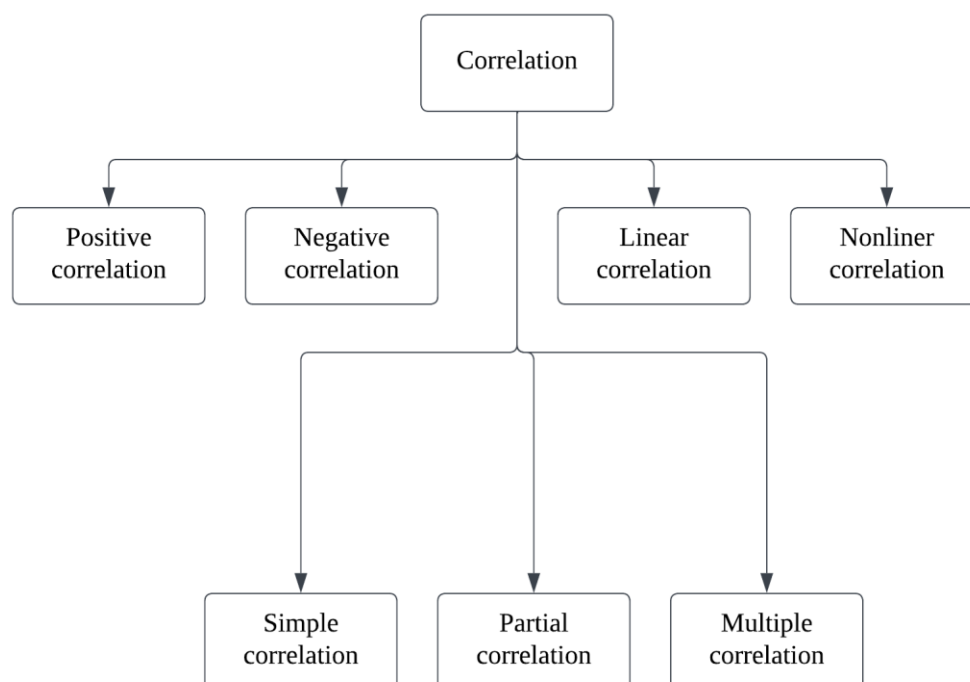
Measurement of relationship is basically the technique to measure the directional or cause-and-effect relationship between two variables (Dayal, 2017). For advertising research, both directional and cause-and-effect scenarios appear when considering the connection between two variables. For example, when a Facebook advertisement is considered for its effectiveness, then the relationship between page conversion and positive comments might help in understanding the effectiveness of that Facebook advertisement. In another case, sales of a product increase because of a direct-action advertisement, which indicates a cause-and-effect relationship between the advertisement and the sales volume.

*Correlation*

Correlation stands for mutual relationship and is often referred to as correlativity, covariance, interrelation, mutuality, interrelation, relationship, association, etc. One of the most widely used among these is covariance, which indicates that the changes in the values of one variable initiate the changes in the values of another variable (Dayal, 2017). Correlation has its applicability in a wide range of applications that help in gathering information about the

distribution of samples (Godfrey, 1980). The correlation coefficient is the numerical value of correlation, which calculates the extent, or degree and direction of correlation among the variables (Dayal, 2017).

Correlation can be segregated into three distinctive categories:



**Fig. 5.** Types of correlation. Adopted from the concepts proposed by Manoj Dayal in his book *Media Metrics An Introduction to Quantitative Research in Mass Communication*, 2017)

#### *Positive correlation*

A positive correlation indicates a direct relationship between the variables. The relationship defined in positive correlation can also be explained as when one variable increases, another variable also increases (Dayal, 2017). + 1 is considered the perfect positive correlation that shows the highest positive relationship between the variables (Mukaka, 2012).

For example, the correlation is required to be calculated between the Facebook advertisements and the number of shares of those advertisements on Facebook by the users. The observations are noted below:

Facebook advertisements: 11, 15, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30

Advertisements shared on Facebook: 14, 20, 23, 24, 26, 32, 40

The formula for the calculation of correlation is:

$$r = \frac{\sum (X_i - \bar{X}) \times (Y_i - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum (X_i - \bar{X})^2 \times \sum (Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

r stands for correlation coefficient

$X_i$  stands for the values of the variable X

$Y_i$  stands for the values of the variable Y

$\bar{X}$  stands for the mean of the values of the variable X

$\bar{Y}$  stands for the mean of the values of the variable Y

Therefore,

$$r = 0.96$$

#### *Negative correlation*

A negative correlation indicates the varying of the variables in opposite directions. In this type of correlation, when one variable increases, the other one decreases (Dayal, 2017). - 1 is considered the perfect negative correlation that shows the negative most relationship between the variables (Mukaka, 2012).

For example, you are trying to find out the relationship between Instagram advertisements and the number of shares of those advertisements on Instagram by the users. The observations are noted below:

Instagram advertisements: 25, 30, 40, 55, 75



Advertisements shared on Instagram: 45, 40, 30, 15, 10

The formula for the calculation of correlation would be the same:

$$r = \frac{\sum (X_i - \bar{X}) \times (Y_i - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum (X_i - \bar{X})^2 \times \sum (Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

Therefore,

$$r = - .1$$

*Simple correlation, Partial correlation, Multiple correlation*

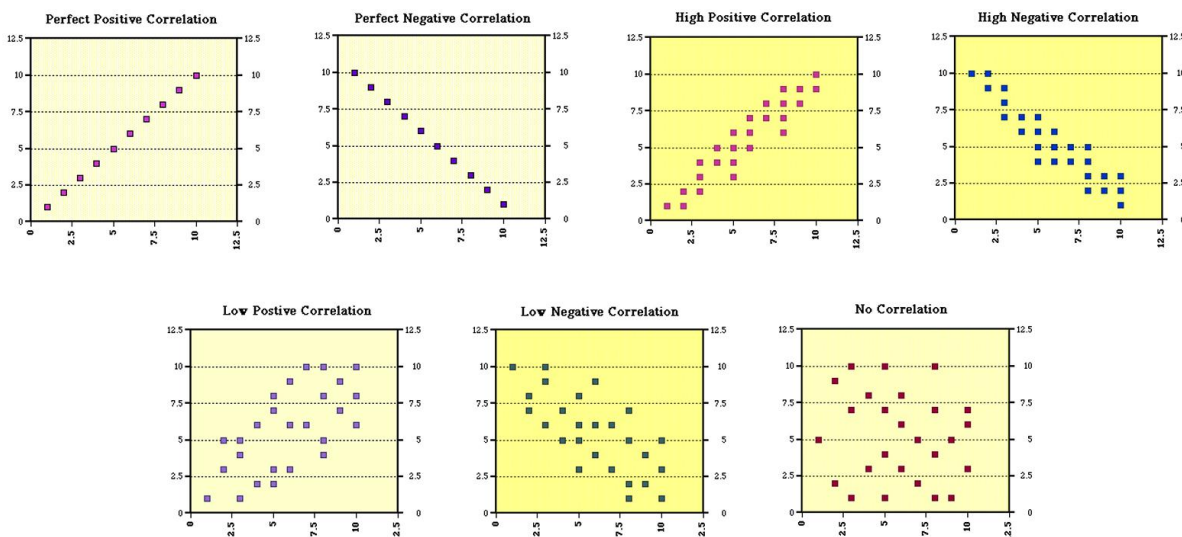
Simple, partial, and multiple correlations are different from one another based on the number of variables they consider. For simple correlation, the number of variables is only two. The partial correlation can consider more than two variables; however, only two of those variables would change while others would stay constant. The multiple correlation also considers more than two variables; however, in this case, all the variables change or vary constantly and simultaneously (Dayal, 2017).

*Linear and Nonlinear correlation*

Linear correlation indicates the changes between the variables in the same proportion (Dayal, 2017). The linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables leads to the linear regression model (Wang, Zhang, 2011). In nonlinear correlation, the changes between the variables are disproportionate (Dayal, 2017). The nonlinear relationship between the variables leads to the nonlinear regression model (Wang, Zhang, 2011).

**Table 8.** Correlation coefficients and their values (from Perfectly positive correlation to Perfectly negative correlation). Adopted from the concepts proposed by Manoj Dayal in his book Media Metrics An Introduction to Quantitative Research in Mass Communication, 2017)

Description	Correlation Coefficient
Perfectly positive correlation	+ 1
Very highly positive correlation	From + 0.90 to + 1.00
Highly positive correlation	From + 0.70 to + 0.90
Moderately positive correlation	From + 0.40 to + 0.70
Low positive correlation	From + 0.20 to + 0.40
Very low positive correlation	From + 0.00 to + 0.20
Zero positive correlation	00
Very low negative correlation	From - 0.00 to - 0.20
Low negative correlation	From - 0.20 to - 0.40
Moderately negative correlation	From - 0.40 to - 0.70
Highly negative correlation	From - 0.70 to - 0.90
Very highly negative correlation	From - 0.90 to - 1.00
Perfectly negative correlation	- 1



**Fig. 6.** Correlation coefficients and their values on scatter diagrams (from perfect positive correlation to perfect negative correlation) (RCUB, 2023)

The values of the correlation coefficient are the indicators that describe the relationship between the variables. Based on the values, the correlation coefficients can be categorized into thirteen different categories (Table 8), ranging from the 'perfectly positive correlation' to 'perfectly negative correlation,' leading its way through the 'zero positive correlation.'

#### Regression

The correlation helps in comparing two variables, where regression talks about the cause of the changes among the variables. In 1877, Sir Francis Galton was the first one to use the term regression while he was measuring the height of sons and their fathers. The finding of the study was interesting as he found that although short fathers have short sons and tall fathers have tall sons, the average height of the sons of a group of tall fathers is lower than the average height of the sons from a group of short fathers. Francis Galton called the connecting line the 'regression line,' which is later on termed the 'estimating line' (Dayal, 2017). The regression equation is primarily used to define the cause and effect between the variables. Regression helps to investigate how changes in the values of one variable impact the changes in the value of another variable (Sykes, 1993).

For example, if you want to find out the changes in sales of a garment brand because of social media advertisements, regression analysis would help. The data for the sales of the garment brand (denoted by 1 per thousand units in a week) is denoted as X, and the number of advertisements in a week is denoted as Y, which is given below.

$$X = 4, 6, 8, 10, 12$$

$$Y = 7, 9, 11, 10, 13$$

$$\text{For regression of Y on X: } Y = a + bX$$

$$\text{Where } b = \frac{N \times \sum XY - (\sum X) \times (\sum Y)}{N \times \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2}$$

$$\text{and } a = \frac{\sum Y - b \times \sum X}{N}$$

$$\text{For regression of X on Y: } X = a + bY$$

$$\text{Where } b = \frac{N \times \sum XY - (\sum X) \times (\sum Y)}{N \times \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2}$$

$$\text{and } a = \frac{\sum X - b \times \sum Y}{N}$$

**Table 9.** Calculation of  $\sum (X, Y, X^2, Y^2 \text{ and } XY)$  from the above data set

X	Y	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>	XY
4	7	16	49	28
6	9	36	81	54
8	11	64	121	88
10	10	100	100	100
12	13	144	169	156
$\sum X = 40$	$\sum Y = 50$	$\sum X^2 = 360$	$\sum Y^2 = 520$	$\sum XY = 426$

Now, to obtain two regression analyses, the data on X, Y, X<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup> and XY needs to be plotted in the formula:

For Y on X:

$Y = a + bX$ , where the values of a and b would be required; therefore

$$b = \frac{N \times \sum XY - (\sum X) \times (\sum Y)}{N \times \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2}$$

$$b = \frac{2130 - 2000}{1800 - 1600}$$

$$b = 0.65$$

$$\text{and, } a = \frac{\sum Y - b \times \sum X}{N}$$

$$a = \frac{50 - 26}{5}$$

$$a = 4.8$$

$$\text{Therefore, } Y = 4.8 + 0.65 \times X$$

For X on Y:

$X = a + bY$ , where the values of a and b would again be required

$$b = \frac{N \times \sum XY - (\sum X) \times (\sum Y)}{N \times \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2}$$

$$b = \frac{2130 - 2000}{2600 - 2500}$$

$$b = 1.3$$

$$\text{and, } a = \frac{\sum X - b \times \sum Y}{N}$$

$$a = \frac{40 - 65}{5}$$

$$a = -5$$

Therefore,  $X = -5 + 1.3 \times Y$

#### *Multivariate analysis: application in advertising research*

Multivariate analysis (MVA) is a technique that allows the analysis of the changes in the values of multiple variables simultaneously (Dayal, 2017). Data from multivariate analysis includes the observations from several variables for multiple objects or individuals (Chatfield, 2018). Multivariate analysis can be of two types: dependent methods and independent methods. The dependent methods contain both independent and dependent variables, which include techniques like 'multiple regression analysis,' 'multiple discriminant analysis,' 'multiple ANOVA,' and 'canonical correlation analysis.' The independent method allows data with multiple variables without dependency. The methods to calculate the MVA under the independent method are: 'factor analysis,' 'cluster analysis,' 'multidimensional scaling analysis,' and 'latent structure analysis' (Dayal, 2017).

Following are the formulas for a few multivariate analyses that are often used in the field of advertising research:

Multiple regression analysis -

If there are three variables  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ , and  $X_3$ , then the equation would be

$$X_1 = a_{1.23} + b_{12.3} X_2 + b_{13.2} X_3$$

Now, the values of the  $a_{1.23}$ ,  $b_{12.3}$ ,  $b_{13.2}$  can be obtained from

$$\sum X_1 = Na_{1.23} + b_{12.3} \sum X_2 + b_{13.2} \sum X_3$$

$$\sum X_1 X_2 = a_{1.23} \sum X_2 + b_{12.3} \sum X_2^2 + b_{13.2} \sum X_2 X_3$$

$$\sum X_1 X_3 = a_{1.23} \sum X_3 + b_{12.3} \sum X_2 X_3 + b_{13.2} \sum X_3^2$$

Multiple discriminant analysis -

Under multiple discriminant analysis, let us consider three variables  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ , and  $X_3$ , which would forming the equation like

$$Y = W_1 X_1 + W_2 X_2 + W_3 X_3$$

#### *Parametric and Non-parametric tests: application in advertising research*

Parametric tests are used to measure the given parameters to determine whether two samples are equal or not. Non-parametric tests are useful for micro-focused areas in social science like advertising research (Dayal, 2017). Parametric tests are used if the data is normally distributed, there is homogeneity between the variables, the data present a linear relationship, and it shows independence. The non-parametric tests are useful for the set of data that do not follow the normal distribution, and smaller sample size (Pandey, 2020). When comparing parametric tests with non-parametric tests, three major areas are to be considered: 'significance level,' 'power,' and 'versatility' (Anderson, 1961).

**Table 10.** Variation between parametric and non-parametric tests, based on the variables. (DATAtab, 2024)

Variables	Parametric tests	Non-parametric tests
One sample	Sample t-Test	Wilcoxon test for one sample
Two dependent samples	Paired Sample t-Test	Wilcoxon Test
Two independent samples	Unpaired Sample t-Test	Mann-Whitney U Test
More than two independent samples	One Factorial ANOVA	Kruskal-Wallis Test
More than two dependent samples	Repeated measures ANOVA	Friedman Test
Correlation between two variables	Pearson Correlation	Spearman Correlation

The selection between the parametric and non-parametric tests would become easier if the nature and number of variables were properly identified. The parametric and non-parametric tests differ based on 'one sample,' 'two dependent samples,' 'two independent samples,' 'more than two independent samples,' 'more than two dependent samples,' and 'correlation between two variables' (Table 10).

## 5. Conclusion

Selecting an appropriate quantitative research method for analyzing advertisements often becomes challenging for researchers as it would require carefully identifying the advertising metrics, categorization of variables, and, most importantly, selecting an appropriate statistical method. While researchers may get confused between descriptive and inferential statistics, one should remember that descriptive statistics works on the sample taken out from the population, and inferential statistics helps generalize the findings based on the sample to the population. The most common struggle is to select an appropriate test for the data collected for the study, where a list of available tests for both descriptive and inferential statistics under quantitative research comes up. Sometimes, it is enough to apply simple methods like mean, median, and mode to analyze and conclude the data; however, on some occasions, the nature of the study compelled the researcher to apply complex methodologies like mean deviation, standard deviation, correlation, regression, etc. Under inferential statistics, the methods are decided based on the distribution of data, where the parametric tests like F-test, t-test, Z-test, ANOVA, etc., are applied if the data is normally distributed and the non-parametric tests like Chi-square, U-test, H-test, Mood tests, Fridman test, etc. are used if the data is not normally distributed. There are differences in the parametric and non-parametric tests based on the nature of the variables as well. The tests of any kind under quantitative methodology to analyze a piece of advertisement or a series of advertisements and their impact over a period of time would depend on the objective of the research; therefore, a researcher needs to identify the objectives of the study before randomly selecting a quantitative method or a number of quantitative methods for the study.

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## Is Anime Still in Favour among University Students?

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### Abstract

Anime is widely known and has a numerous army of admirers all over the world. It originated in Japan almost 70 years ago, but, as time went by, this style of animation has won the audience, become recognised worldwide and still has not lost its appeal. The authors of the article aim to discover whether it continues to be popular today among the students of one particular Russian university and indicate the reasons for that. The methodology used in the paper involves literature analysis and synthesis, generalization, comparative analysis, statistical analysis, and a survey. The sample of the study consisted of 170 undergraduate students aged 17 to 20 from the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov (Arkhangelsk, Russia). The received results demonstrated that most students got acquainted with this genre while being at school but hitherto favour it. Anime, being an incentive for many young people, inspires them to study the history, traditions and culture of Japan and compare it with other countries, thus, being a part of the global anime community. The survey also revealed the main reasons of anime popularity such as a fascinating plot, variety of genres, bright images of the characters and identified the filmmaker with the highest number of votes.

**Keywords:** anime, survey, popularity, Eastern culture, university students, influence on the audience, perception, media text.

### 1. Introduction

Anime is not a new phenomenon as it was created in the 1960s but Western communities got acquainted with it in the 1990s (Ferreira et al., 2023). There is an opinion (Wahab, 2012) that it appeared even earlier, in the XIXth century, owing to technical and artistic knowledge exchange among Japanese, American, and European cultures. The first anime is considered to be *Imokawa Kukuzo genkaban no maki* that was produced in 1917 and combined fairytale elements of Japanese and Western cultures. During the Second World War anime alleged political agenda, the Pearl Harbour attack being one of the references (Wahab, 2012).

Many can argue about the phenomenon of anime but no one can refute the fact that anime can conquer both fans and professionals. A number of awards is a convincing argument, as Hayao Miyazaki's movies won the Best Animated Feature category twice: *Spirited Away* in 2003 and *The Boy and the Bird* in 2024. Moreover, Shinkai Makoto's anime *Your Name* has been screened in more than 100 countries (Hiroaki Mori, 2018). A surprising fact is that in 2020 the international anime consumption market reached 10.89 billion US dollars while in Japan the sum was US\$10.41 billion and that fact highlighted the shift of the industry from a domestic niche market to a global mass market (Ferreira et al., 2023).

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Among specific peculiarities of the anime movies researchers list “emotionality, expressivity and brightness, sensuality, imagery, denial of reality, symbolism, aggressiveness, blurriness and lack of specificity of the characters' speech, an exciting and fascinating story, aesthetics (increased attention to the beauty of the national nature), a specific manner of drawing characters and heroes (unnaturally large eyes of the characters, their exaggerated detailing; nose and mouth are depicted with wavy lines), individuality (anime culture is characterized by the opposition of the mass to culture with its desire to unify the personality)” (Kostetskaya, Vasilchenko, 2022: 361). Although anime embraces various genres ranging from daily life, romance, fantasy, magic, super power, mystery, action, supernatural, thrillers, and science-fiction series, prevailing anime characters have large eyes, a pointed chin, accentuated physical features, and a handsome and beautiful face design as the anime character type is ‘bishōjo’ that means a beautiful young girl in Japanese (Andari, Litaay, 2022; Leo-Liu, Wu-Ouyang, 2022; Wahab, 2012).

The aim of the current study is to determine the role anime movies play in the life of university students. To achieve the aim, a few objectives should be accomplished. Firstly, we consider the phenomenon of the anime with its underlying factors. Secondly, it is necessary to scrutinize classifications categorizing anime movies in order to understand potential influence of the anime on the audience. Finally, the survey of university students is to be carried out to grasp their attitude towards the phenomenon of anime.

## 2. Material and methods

The methodology of the study was based on analysis and synthesis of literature, generalization, classification, induction and deduction. First, we studied the literature on the problem and various classifications of anime. Then we considered students' understanding and attitude to this genre by administering an anonymous survey consisting of 12 open-ended questions. The questions were elaborated with respect to cultural mythology analysis, character analysis, and stereotypes analysis (Fedorov, 2007; Fedorov, 2014). The sampling frame for the study comprised 170 bachelor students aged 17-20 from Northern (Arctic) federal university named after M.V. Lomonosov (Arkhangelsk, Russia). The results of the survey were processed by the method of statistical analysis and presented in the digital form.

## 3. Discussion

When talking about anime, researchers refer to several concepts underlying the significance and popularity of anime. The first concept is cultural diplomacy. In our everyday life we think about international affairs when we encounter the concept of diplomacy. It is perceived as an instrument that countries apply to gain their interests in negotiations with their counterparts. “At the same time, global corporations face unprecedented opportunities to profit from the control of information, the inflection of cultural and political choices, and the circulation of ideas” (Bazalgette, 2009: 2). But along with traditional diplomacy another one should be mentioned, that is cultural diplomacy.

Japan is considered to be a powerful example of a country spreading its national culture throughout the world using soft skills or soft power. It refers to the strategy of persuading others to align with one's interests through cultural appeal and ideology rather than through military force. Anime operates within the realm of ‘soft power’ by using cultural artefacts such as anime to influence its audience ideologically (Wahab, 2012). We bear in mind that “media content is a text that provides insights into contemporary cultures. Media presentations reflect the attitudes, values, behaviours, preoccupations, patterns of thought, and myths that define a culture” (Silverblatt et al., 2013: 220). Anime is not the only one Japanese soft skill as most people have heard at least about one of Japanese national features: kimono, geisha, tea ceremony, Sakura blossom, samurai, karate, ju-jitsu, sumo, sushi, etc. Anime is of interest to people of different age, most anime fans are at the age of teenager to early adulthood (Andari, Litaay, 2022; Lipayeva, 2017; Shishkina et al., 2020). All the current generations have heard about at least one character: Doraemon, Hello Kitty, Ampan Man, Pokemon, Astro Boy, Sailor Moon, One Piece, and others (Kartikasari, 2018). But not so many people realize the fact that anime being a component of another culture can influence them in several spheres. Anime gaining its recognition led to the appearance of multiple fandoms and pop cultures worldwide manifesting in numerous activities, events, and communities such as cosplay, character figurine collection, fan made comics, fanfiction, artwork, mashup videos and amateur manga (Leo-Liu, Wu-Ouyang, 2022; Olkova, 2018; Reysen et al., 2020). Moreover,

researchers identified a new subculture 'otaku' that means 'people staying at home' in Japanese and that represents such features as affection for Japanese culture, preference for indoor activities, and shyness (Al-Sada et al., 2021; Leo-Liu, Wu-Ouyang, 2022).

At the same time researchers distinguish cultural politics behind anime that falls into three types: a) internationalization de-politicized (in order to gain the world market anime should blur distinct Japanese context as it will allow a wider imaginary space of identification for representatives of different cultures), b) occidentalization-internationalization (in contrast to the first type, it strives to implicitly portray Japan's superiority over the Western countries), and c) self-orientalized internationalization (the underlying idea is to show Japan's superiority among Asian countries and to present itself as a Western country of Asia) (Wahab, 2012).

The manifestation of these cultural politics becomes evident when we pay attention to characters, attire, setting, and lifestyle. For example, anime characters do not always share the same physical features of Japanese people. Rather often we can see them with blond hair, big blue or green eyes. Producers try to endow their characters with universal or westernized characteristics as it will help conquer the world market. Another underlying factor here is the cultural ambivalence as many Japanese people consider their culture to be between the West and the East. As for the attire, mostly, it tends to be a modern-type of clothing such as T-shirts and short pants, though some authentic elements are also present, let us name a head band, long tied hair, sandals, etc. Meanwhile, the setting resembles a typical residential area in Japan with such peculiarities as brick walls separating houses in the neighbourhood, entrance area where heroes are to take off their shoes before entering, sliding doors, corridors connecting rooms, convenience shops nearby, etc. Finally, the content of numerous anime displays a typical Japanese family that lives in the urban area (usually a nuclear family with one or two children where father works hard to provide the family and mother is a housewife engaged in cooking, cleaning and other household chores).

In family daily routine we encounter typical meals at lower tables, sleeping on futon instead of beds, particular style of sitting, bowing to older people, etc. These examples illustrate an attempt to fuse two cultures (Japanese and Western) in order to prove to be progressive and modern (Wahab, 2012). This fusion highlights the idea that Japan has enough technological and scientific capacity to compete with other countries, at the same time the country retains its uniqueness and prone to combine traditionality with contemporaneity (Wahab, 2012).

In many cases anime serves as the starting point for anime viewers to get interested in Japan and Japanese culture, particularly, popular culture such as manga, cuisine, fashion, pop and rock music, the Japanese language learning, tourism (Fernández-Bedoya et al., 2022). For instance, some food-themed anime or episodes touching upon Japanese cuisine culture induce anime viewers to taste Japanese food and then purchase Japanese cuisine products to cook them at home (Basaran, Sunnetcioglu, 2021). Anime has become so popular that the idea of the anime pilgrimage turned out to be feasible. Watching anime, its fans are often motivated to visit places featured in the anime. They actively interact both amidst their community and with people living in the areas portrayed in the anime. The notion of pilgrimage is reasonable in this context as it presupposes a trip to the sacred places, procurance of relics or souvenirs, and return to own place inspired by impressions and representations (Hiroaki Mori, 2018). This is the case of soft power that is considered to be the ability to attract, and attraction often leads to acquiescence (Hiroaki Mori, 2018). According to Nye (cited in Hiroaki Mori, 2018) soft power relies on three components: culture, a country's political values, and its foreign policies, when culture is widely represented worldwide as stated above. We should keep in mind that any culture incorporates two aspects equally valid: high value culture with pieces of art, literature, etc., and popular culture (Yuliani et al., 2021). Even if anime viewers do neither share nor support Japan's political values and policies, they do feel attraction to Japanese cultural phenomena. Researchers persistently emphasize Japan's ability to lure other countries without an element of coercion that is perceived as soft power (Yuliani et al., 2021). Moreover, the concept of Japanization has come into being (Basaran, Sunnetcioglu, 2021).

What worries researchers is the idea that many users perceive media figures and computing agents as human-like social interlocutors and according to media psychologists such users are liable to 'parasocial interaction' or 'parasocial relationship' (Leo-Liu, Wu-Ouyang, 2022) that is an alternative to real relationships.

What are the reasons that make anime so attractive for fans? Researchers (Reysen et al., 2020) emphasize at least four reasons that inspire and keep fans engaged. Firstly, the content of



anime itself. Although anime has different genres, it is prosocial in its essence as most of anime promote the ideas of helping others, empathy, social justice, cooperation, environmental sustainability, and so on. One of the world-famous anime directors Hayao Miyazaki often addresses the topic of ecology and environmental sustainability in his movies. Such anime movies as *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*, *My Neighbour Totoro*, *Spirited Away*, and *Princess Mononoke* can be mentioned in this regard. Many anime movies emphasize the moral message about the significance of protecting and preserving the environment from negative impacts (Mulyadi, 2022) such as temperature rise, erratic seasonal changes, climate change, etc. Secondly, skills and proficiency of artists, animators, and directors can persuade in sincerity and reality of the anime. Thirdly, voice actors engaged in anime become public faces and celebrities as their voices are inseparable with their characters. Ultimately, other fans help enhance global citizenship identification when an amateur becomes a person of the world (Gálik et al., 2024; Reysen et al., 2020).

Another point of view suggests that the popularity of anime culture can be explained by the following factors. Firstly, Japanese animators constantly create unique and unparalleled movies, interesting and exciting stories. Secondly, anime producers impart their own thoughts, feelings, emotions, experiences in their works. Thirdly, “most anime movies have a psychological, moral and ideological impact on the viewer. They teach the audience to confess their mistakes, forgive their enemies and not to be afraid to fall in love with someone they disliked and even hated not so long ago. Fourthly, anime proves that nothing in life is given for nothing, and in order to achieve your goal, you need to work hard and develop yourself. Fifthly, anime movies convey the idea that our life and destiny have a deep meaning, and each person has their own purpose in life, and a series of interconnected events have their own specific place and time. Finally, anime teaches the viewer the principles of life. They say that life is unfair but if you stop justifying your failures and bad luck with inequality or unfair treatment to you, and confidently follow the dream, you will definitely achieve it” (Kostetskaya, Vasilchenko, 2022: 363).

While analysing anime, researchers choose different criteria underlying their classification. The first classification (Golmohammadi et al., 2021) is based on the level of audience’s activity and consumption and it proffers three groups: 1) anime watchers (they watch a couple of anime series each year during their leisure time; anime may or may not be their primary form of entertainment, but they enjoy watching particularly popular and thought-provoking anime series; they may or may not collect anime merchandise and engage in fan-related activities), 2) Otaku (typically, these are introverted and socially awkward individuals with a deep passion for anime; they enjoy collecting anime merchandise, dedicating a substantial amount of their leisure time to watching and engaging in discussions about anime through online platforms; additionally, they may partake in cosplay, create fan fiction, and even produce subtitles for anime content during their free time), and 3) Nit (they are dedicated and somewhat obsessed anime enthusiasts; they prioritize watching anime, playing games, and staying updated on the latest anime news over their career and social interactions; Nit fans are known for their social isolation, as their intense passion for anime often takes precedence over other aspects of their lives; they have a consistent anime-watching routine and are less inclined to engage with others, opting to immerse themselves in anime and gaming instead).

The next classification is built on target audiences’ demographics. Researchers determined five target audiences that are keen on anime. These groups were set according to the demographic features but they are not final or cast-in groups (Ferreira et al., 2023). The first group is *Kodomomuke*. The anime from this group is for children under 12. Such anime usually narrates stories about family, friends, and animals that appear to be cute. In most cases this anime has some comic touch. The second group is *Shoujo*, and it is aimed at female teenagers. The age range varies between seven to 20 years old depending on the genre of the anime, for instance, everyday life stories, sports, relationships between boys and girls. The third group, *Shounen*, is designed for male teens and embraces such genres as action, adventures about sports, fighting. This anime may contain obscene humour and gauze of sexuality, and rather often they depict ways of becoming a stronger man. The fourth group is *Josei*. The anime from this group is targeted at young adult and adult females. They tend to be more existential, emotional covering heteronormative experiences. Characters of the anime of this group search for romantic love, men as well as women. The fifth group, *Seinen*, is created for young adults and male adults, portrays more dramatic plots, uncovering challenges of life, dealing with violence, psychological disturbances, and sometimes unveiling nudity (Ferreira et al., 2023). Also, one more group can be identified, narrating harem

stories and presenting a fusion of two target audiences' anime, *Shoujo* and *Seinen*, depicts a young man with attractive girls around him that is involved in romantic situations.

One more classification relies on genre variation criteria. Within this classification 12 groups were identified (Ferreira et al., 2023). The first one is *Isekai* embracing magic and fantasy anime. Characters usually possess anthropomorphic features and are represented by dragons, elves, magicians, kings, and others. In this group can be listed such anime as *KonoSuba*, *Overlord*, *Black Clover*, etc. The second group incorporates psychological anime with a plot full of mystery and horror, psychological terror, dramas, tragedies, suspense, some fantastic and supernatural creatures. *Death Note*, *Berserk*, *Sword Art Online* are examples of the anime of this group. The third group comprises dramatic romances, crime stories, and adult comedies all based on novels and games. Mostly they portray organized crime with a few or no elements of fantasy. For instance, these are *Violet Evergarden*, *91 Days*, *Romeo x Juliet*, and so on. The anime of the fourth group narrates time travel dramas and novels, bishounen reverse harem stories where 'bishounen' stands for a male character with traditionally feminine physical beauty traits and 'reverse harem' describes the setting where men surround a female protagonist. Also, this group comprises anime movies about vampires or comedies about otaku (those who have a strong affection for Japanese culture, prefer indoor activities, and can be characterised as rather socially awkward). *Tokyo Revengers*, *Vampire Knight*, *Himouto! Umaru-chan* are anime movies, to name a few, belonging to this group. The fifth group anime describes common, conventional everyday life charged with habitual work or studies, routine, household chores, reposeful and calming environment, the things that are understandable and habitual for people. Most anime movies of this group are comedies with a small number of dramas. This group is illustrated by such anime as *Yuru Camp*, *Citrus*, and *Spy x Family*.

Anime movies from group 6 narrate about magical contests produced with the help of spells and other supernatural forces. Even though the characters use numerous superabilities, the action habitually takes place in the real world. For instance, *Sailor Moon* (anime that appeared first in many countries), *Ao no Exorcist*, *Soul Eater*, and *Sakura Cardcaptor*. In anime of the seventh group the main hero is usually involved in a team and has to work in partnership with other contestants to win some sport or military contest. *Full Metal Panic!*, *Re:Creators*, and *Captain Tsubasa* can be mentioned in this group. The next group anime touches upon erotic content and uncovers nudity though most movies are of comedy genre and portray schools and school life. As example, we can cite *Monster Musume*, *No Game No Life*, and *Ishuzoku Reviewers*. Group 9 includes dramatic science fiction anime. It means sophisticated, philosophical, and questioning science fiction adventures when science fuses with fantasy to create new worlds with elements of drama. The anime of this group is *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, *Made in Abyss*, and *Psycho-Pass*. The tenth group refers to historical and scientific themes. Mostly, they are based on real events and facts, may belong a variety of genres (action, adventure, comedy, drama, etc.), and aim at teaching the audience as they cover different topics, for instance, history of Japan or European history. The anime of this group is *Vinland Saga*, *Kingdom*, and *Last Exile*. Group 11 is called 'Shounen and seinen fighting anime' that designates fight among male teens, young adults, and male adults. Generally, characters possess super powers, not only imaginary but real. Usually, a protagonist or a character becomes stronger in order to combat with more powerful enemies. This group is also full of fighting but in comparison with teamwork anime heroes here fight individually. *One Punch Man*, *Dragon Ball Z*, and *Naruto* should be quoted in this group. The final group includes cute girl anime of romances. The focus of such anime is a character or romantic story development, usually it does not possess any erotic aspect. Frequently, characters undergo some challenges on the path of their development. The examples of this group are *Girls and Panzers*, *Love Live! Sunshine!!*, and *Horimiya* (Ferreira et al., 2023).

As it has already been mentioned, anime has gain popularity across the globe, mainly as a kind of entertainment. But some researchers claim that anime can be successfully used to teach theoretical concepts in a variety of subjects (Taja-on, Vacalares, 2021). The reason for this statement is the fact that many students get more involved when there is a story to tell or be engaged in. It allows students to develop their creativity, analytical and critical thinking, get new knowledge, and master new skills. The same scientists carried out research aspiring to evaluate critical thinking skills of students who watched anime and those who do not. The results demonstrate that students who watch anime have a higher ability to analyse and make accurate decisions when they encounter some problems. The researchers explain this finding by diverse

scenarios and plot points present in anime, which engage viewers in the story and encourage them to speculate about potential outcomes and consequences. Moreover, the visual aspect of the anime helps interpret intricate themes and topics watchers face in their studies. One more interesting fact should be stated – the amount of time spent for watching anime does not affect the development of their critical skills where it will be 5 or 11 hours on watching per week (Taja-on, Vacalares, 2021).

Among factors of the anime motivating the audience, researchers list: 1) nobility and friendship that nurture the inner force of a teenager, 2) devotion to the motherland as the highest value of a person, 3) leadership qualities, 4) individualism, understanding the world through your own self, 5) humanism, compassion, dreaminess, ambition, motivation that strengthen any society, 6) ways and determination to overcome difficulties, 7) the heroism of the spirit, bravery and courage, 8) aspiration to help others, 9) nobility of characters (Musin, 2022).

Researchers confirm the influence of anime movies on teenagers, namely, in Russia (Dedov, Kulakova, 2020). They highlight that anime movies have impact on Russian adolescents' behaviour. Japanese anime is characterised by intensive emotional expression and rapidly changing images. Meanwhile, Russian cartoons depict national cultural uniqueness, realistic characters, vivid plots, polysemic and multi-purpose content. The fusion of both encourages teenagers to reflect more consciously, make decisions more responsibly, act in accordance with anime characters retaining Russian mentality and peculiarities of contemporary life virtualization. It results in specific subculture when adolescents combine high emotionality of the anime and pragmatism of current digital society. Thus, their behaviour becomes more spontaneous, they react immediately, their judgements become more superficial and literal (Dedov, Kulakova, 2020).

In spite of a huge number of anime fans, the amount of its opponents is increasing. They criticize anime for excessive violence, sensuality, and inadequate behaviour of those who are keen of watching and collecting anime movies that may lead to the escape from reality, aggressiveness, addiction, etc. Individual anime genres have received critical assessment due to the abundance of scenes containing aggression (fights, wrestling, violence, use of profanity), pornography (with demonstration of various forms of sexual deviations) (Ol'kova, 2018). Researchers claim that the reason for such ambiguous attitude towards Japanese anime is non-compliance with age limits and neglect of national and cultural limitations (Shishkinaetal, 2020). Findings show that 70–90 % of anime viewers perceive it as entertainment, 10 % – 30 % treat the anime seriously, and the most part of them are primary and middle school children. The striking fact is that from 67 % to 95 % of the latter do not orient in anime genres and do not follow age limitations that may result in psychic disturbance, stress, and other detrimental effects. Meanwhile, even the opponents acknowledge that the proper anime enables emotional and creative development, worldview evolution, moral values formation. The underlying factor of this ambiguity is the anime versatility, the abundance of anime genres, and the necessity to choose the proper one. Most anime movies pursue educational goals and aim at formation of such values as respect towards elderly, friendship, distinct differentiation between good and evil. The use of clear, available, and picturesque anime images expresses universal morals such as assiduousness, persistence in achieving aims and objectives, self-control, love, ability to forgive, modesty, etc. (Kostetskaya, Vasilchenko, 2022).

Generally, there are two reasons why people are so keen on media messages and what they want to find in them in contrast to real life. The first reason is impossibility to get some messages in reality. It is interesting to know how our planet looked like a couple of centuries or millennia before, how people behaved and felt during the American Civil war, to share and understand their feelings, emotions, sounds, etc. The second reason is the cost. Someone can not afford going to France in real life but s/he can afford to spend time and money to watch a travelogue on France, or they can afford lower emotional cost for watching someone else establishing and undergoing relationships with others (Potter, 2018: 303). Throughout the time, anime viewers reevaluate their being and attitude to material and spiritual values, perceive the surrounding world easier, try to improve the reality, delve into self-development, acquire new skills and competences, etc. (Shishkinaetal., 2020; Smirnova, 2022).

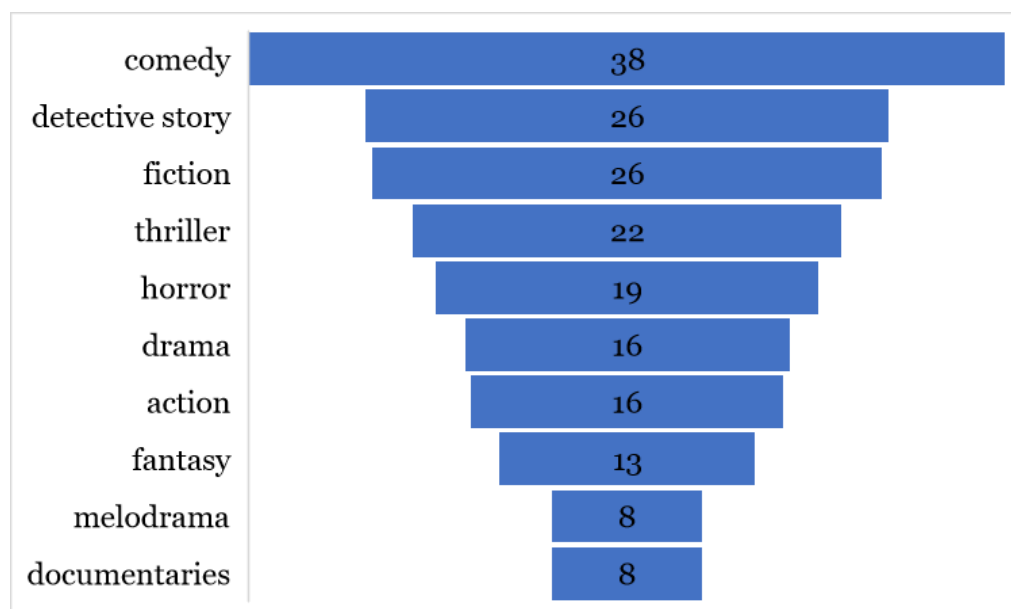
Meanwhile, encountering difficulties, some children or teenagers may escape from the problems in their imaginary world, looking for consolation and help. That is why the choice of the anime movie is a responsible and feasible task and viewers should be thoroughly taught to make this choice consciously. Though there is an opinion that current young generation is a digital generation, digital natives, and they are somehow naturally skilled and knowledgeable in their dealings with new technology, this viewpoint is brought into question by established researchers

(Buckingham, 2009: 7). We ardently support the idea that every person since the early age should acquire indispensable life skill that helps him or her grow up “in a world full of mass media, popular culture and digital media”, that involves “learning to analyze news and advertising, examining the social functions of music, distinguishing between propaganda, opinion and information, examining the representation of gender, race and class in entertainment and information media, understanding media economics and ownership, and exploring the ways in which violence and sexuality are depicted in media messages” (Hobbs, Jensen, 2009: 9).

#### 4. Results

To reach the aim of the study and find out whether and why anime is popular among students we conducted an anonymous survey. 170 bachelor students from Northern (Arctic) federal university named after M.V. Lomonosov (Arkhangelsk, Russia) answered the questions connected with this subculture.

In the first question respondents had to write their preferences in film genres. The number of variants was not limited. The majority of those who responded noted from three to five genres. The predominant number of voices was given to comedies. Only three students said that they neither watch nor like any films. Other results are presented in Figure 1. We attempted to find the connection with particular genres and anime addiction but unfortunately did not detect any correlation between them. This apparent lack of correlation can be explained by the multi genre essence of anime.



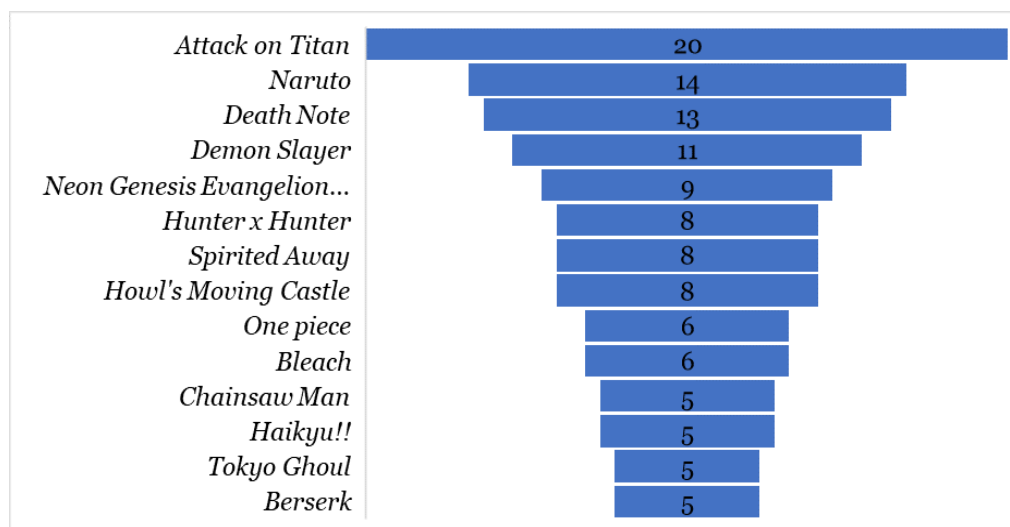
**Fig.1.** Film genre preferences (%)

The aim of the second question was to find out what the students know about anime. A half of those answered defines it as a special genre of animation or cartoons based on comics, myths or legends and touching upon various problems. 56 % of respondents closely connect it with Japan: *Japanese cartoons, created in Japan, an important part of Japanese culture exported to other countries*, etc. Only 9 % of the students do not know anything about this genre.

82 % of pollees got acquainted with anime while studying in primary or secondary school and only 12 % in adolescence. 40 % of those interviewed learned about it from friends and classmates, 20 % from TV, 11 % from the Internet and 4 % from social nets. 9 % and 36 % of respondents remember neither the age nor the source of their meeting with anime correspondingly.

Talking about frequency of watching anime 30 % of students have never done it, 30 % watch it rarely or from time to time, 6 % have watched it once or twice a life and only 25 % do it often. Interestingly, 9 % of respondents noted that they used to do it often but now they watch anime much less.

The most popular anime among students is *Attack on Titan*, one fifth mentioned it as their favourite. Other films are demonstrated in Figure 2. It is necessary to note that ten percent of respondents did not have any preferences, and 35 % did not give any answer at all.



**Fig. 2.** Favourite anime (%)

The question about beloved protagonists turned out to be rather complicated. Almost half of the students missed it, and 28 % of those answered had no favourites. Six percent mentioned *Naruto* from the anime of the same name, five percent *Levi Ackerman* from *Attack on Titan*, and three percent *Howl* from *Howl's Moving Castle*. All the other characters were mentioned less than three times. The prevalent director is *Hayao Miyazaki* with 50 % of voices. Then comes *Makoto Shinkai* with 11 % and *Hideaki Anno* with 5 % of voices.

Answering about advantages and disadvantages of anime respondents stated more pluses than minuses. Among things attracting to anime students noted plot (40 %), drawing and graphics (34 %), genre diversity (10 %), and characters (8 %). At the same time 13 % of students found no attraction in these films. The most common disadvantage is that it is time-consuming (10 %), develops an addiction (6 %), and demonstrates exaggerated emotions (6 %). Some respondents noted formation of unrealistic standards of beauty, unrealistic characters, too much fan service, vulgarity and cruelty. Strange enough, 71 % of interviewees left this question unanswered, probably they do not see any weaknesses.

When watching anime students have different feelings. 30 % get positive ones such as joy, interest, pacification, burst of motivation, and inspiration. Only four percent have negative emotions, for instance hatred, irritation, and aversion. 20 % of respondents wrote that their feelings vary depending on genres of the film and in this way, they are the same as when consuming any other creative content. Seven percent of those answered experience no feelings at all, five feel sadness, two feel excitement, and two more described their feelings as conflicting or mixed.

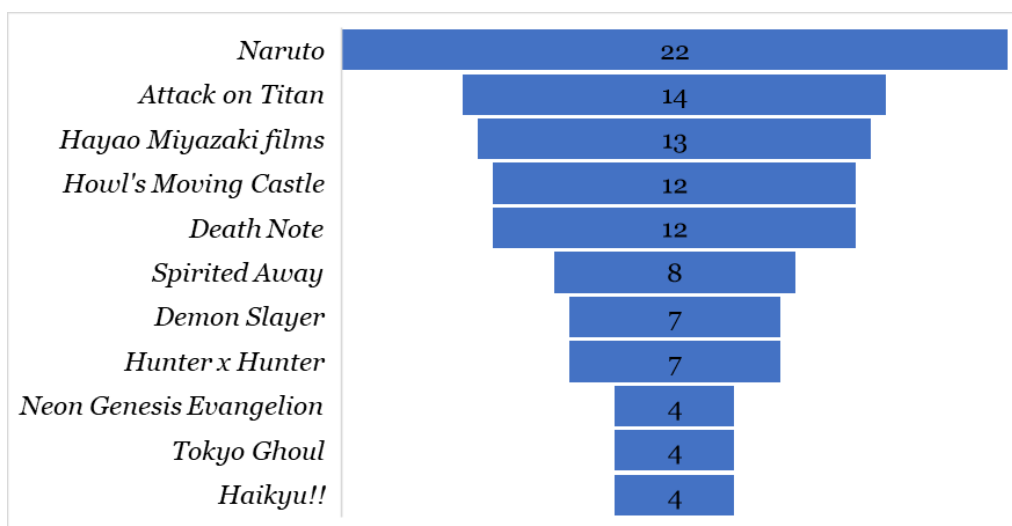
According to the survey, anime does not influence the life and outlook of 43 % of respondents. Others noted that it makes them think about life and how it is worth living, about things they have not thought about before, to reexamine priority. These films teach students to stay true to their interests, broaden horizon and allow to look at the world from different angles. Anime also helps mould the character traits and viewpoint, increase self-esteem, cope with a bad mood, sadness, overcome difficulties, be open to new things, think about loved ones, believe in yourself and never give up.

In the next question the interviewees had to share things about the culture of other countries they had learned while watching anime. More than a half got knowledge about Japanese and Eastern cultures. Thus, 26 % mentioned traditional dishes and food, 15 % traditions, customs and habits of eastern people, 6 % school/ university education, 5 % national clothes, 4 % Japanese myths and Gods, 3 % religion, 3 % martial arts, 2 % architecture, etc. Some students noted stereotypes of authors about other countries: *Russians are handsome with platinum hair, often gloomy, but kind, sociable and charismatic; Russians are harsh, Americans are self-confident, the English are mean*. Other students wrote about tolerance to people of different nations, lack of

racism, cult of respect to seniors and to people in general. Among the answers there were also some primitive ones: *Japanese streets are very narrow with a lot of wires; Everyone dyes their hair pink in Japan; Asia has a variety of food; Japan is quite a traditional country; Japan is the birthplace of anime or There are cherry trees in Japan.* Unfortunately, 22 % of respondents did not acquire any new information.

A very important problem was to understand students' ideas about popularity reasons of this media genre. The analysis of the answers revealed that the majority of viewers are probably attracted by plot (27 %): *a dynamic plot; a well-thought-out plot; non-standard plots; plots that are not covered in ordinary films; easy presentation of complex topics; a variety of topics covered from casual to serious; you can recognize yourselves in the characters,* etc. Bright images take the second place (15 %): *appearance of the characters; an unusual and unique drawing; a unique memorable drawing style; an animation style that allows to draw cute characters,* etc. 11 % of respondents consider variety of genres to be the third reason of popularity: *everyone can find something interesting; a variety of genres for every taste; interesting for different age groups,* etc. The next motive mentioned is fashion or hype (10 %): *fan devotion; the popularity of Eastern culture affects the popularity of anime; young people promote it; it is just trendy and something that can set you apart; it is popularized in Asian countries; mass propaganda on the Internet; competent PR; distribution in social networks; teenagers want to join the culture of the countries where their idols live; young people find themselves in the protagonists; constant discussion and hype around it; huge fanbase,* etc. Six percent of pollees expressed difficulty in formulating the reasons: *I do not know, it is strange to me; It remains a mystery to me; I am shocked that it is so popular* and regrettably 16 % did not give any answer. Some students also wrote about not very positive moments that may appeal people to anime: *everyone has become whiners and likes suffering; craving for something bad; the ability to escape from responsibility to another reality.* Moreover, we came across the following characteristic of anime lovers: *those who watch anime are strange and unsociable people having problems with psychological health, they live in their own inner world.*

The last question in the survey presupposed giving beginners recommendation of an anime to get acquainted with this genre. 22 % of respondents suggested to start with *Naruto*, *Attack on Titan* took the second place with 14 %, *Howl's Moving Castle* and *Death Note* shared the third one with 12 %. A noteworthy fact is that 13 % of students did not indicate a particular name but just mentioned *Hayao Miyazaki films*, thus giving this prominent director his due. Other recommendations are shown in [Figure 3](#).



**Fig.3.** Anime recommended to watch first (%)

## 5. Conclusion

Taking together, our findings have provided evidence that anime is still popular among university students. In spite of the fact, that students usually lack free time while studying, more than half of them continue watching it often or from time to time. Most of them refer to anime movies as a means of entertainment, though some of respondents note that anime influences their

personality, it makes them think about life and issues they have not thought about before. Students add that anime movies support them in their aspiration to stay true to their interests and to look at the world from different angles.

The most valuable outcome of this activity is acquaintance with not only Eastern but also Western cultures. Young people get knowledge about history, traditions, national customs, rituals, and habits of different nations. Anime watching developing critical thinking allows viewers to reveal stereotypes portrayed in the movies and evaluate them objectively.

The plot, diversity of genres and bright images of characters contribute to popularity of anime. We cannot but mention the emotional impact of this genre on viewers. Although some respondents admit that anime movies may be time-consuming, depict exaggerated emotions, and lead to a kind of addiction, the majority experience positive emotions while watching. The films inspire people to be more open-minded, inquisitive, sensitive, tolerant, and confident.

Thus, in the course of time anime has transformed from simple cartoons and stories into a multi-genre, colourful modern commercial industry that is interesting for different ages. With the variety and accessibility of this modern content, anime does not lose its appeal to students, allowing them to enjoy new movies and broaden their horizon.

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## **The Model of Cultural Identity Represented in Soviet Cinematography of the Second Half of the 1950s – First Half of the 1980s (The Era of “Thaw” and “Stagnation”)**

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### **Abstract**

The article reflects the results of a comparative hermeneutical analysis of Soviet feature films of the second half of the 1950s – first half of the 1980s, 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 described and systematized film images, types of movie characters and plot motives reflecting 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), which constitute the content of the structural-functional model of cultural identity developed by us, which is represented in the domestic cinema.

The analysis of research on the topic of the article has shown that the problem of cultural identity in the period under consideration was gaining relevance. This was due to the beginning of the weakening of the ideological press, which contributed to the revival of interest in culture. Filmmakers increasingly began to turn to folk culture, the peasant world, the history of pre-revolutionary Russia and noble culture. The characters' interpersonal relations were characterized by sincerity and frankness, mutual understanding and mental closeness. The images of nature embodied the feelings of despondency and longing, born of the boundlessness of Russian expanses and contemplation of fading nature. Images of mythologemes of Russian culture – river, tree, house – appeared on the screen.

**Keywords:** cinema, culture, identity, Soviet Union, thaw era, stagnation era.

### **1. Introduction**

During the Soviet period of national history, cultural and artistic figures, based on the Marxist-Leninist ideology imposed from above, created not only ideas, symbols and myths, but also ways of their encoding and interpretation. This set the unity of value and meaning orientations of public consciousness, contributed to the formation of a stable picture of the world and the supranational identity of the “Soviet man”. Cinema played a leading role in these processes.

As early as the 1920s, Soviet filmmakers began to create images of a “new” man and the world, imbued with the ideas of class struggle and the building of a just society. Despite the ideologists' desire to break the link between these images and the traditional values of Russian culture, it was

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preserved, and the weakening of the ideological pressure, which began in the second half of the 1950s, contributed to the revival of interest in national self-consciousness and cultural identity.

Along with the departure from the canons of socialist realism and the dying out of the screen forms developed by Stalinist cinematography, the image representing the sub-individual, class identity began to disappear from the cinema screens of the Thaw era. Screenwriters and directors increasingly began to look at the inner world of characters. As screen heroes they chose villagers and characters from Russian classical literature, tormented by internal contradictions, searching for moral guidelines and the basis of their own existence. Their images were created in the key of traditional for Russian culture meanings and values: respect for the soil and connection with the native land, love for the open spaces and Russian nature, preservation of connection with the past and the memory of ancestors, compassion, mercy and sacrifice.

## 2. Materials and methods

The article reflects the results of a comparative hermeneutical analysis of Soviet feature films of the second half of the 1950s – first half of the 1980s, 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 hermeneutical analysis of feature films in historical and cultural contexts that we used is based on the developments of A.V. 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 connected with the processes of a person's search for his own place in society and the formation of his sense of cultural belonging.

Based on the obtained results of hermeneutical analysis of Soviet feature films of the “thaw” and “stagnation” epochs, we described and systematized film images, types of film characters and plot motifs reflecting the prevailing “points of view” about cultural values, traditions and, characterizing stereotypical models of social interaction of characters in accordance with five types of cinematographic discourse (interpersonal, artistic-aesthetic, religious-ideological, historical-cultural, mythological), constituting the coexistence of the five types of cinematic discourse (interpersonal, artistic-aesthetic, religious-ideological, historical-cultural, mythological).

## 3. Discussion

To date, the problem of cultural identity representation in Soviet art cinema during the “thaw” and “stagnation” eras (the second half of the 1950s and the first half of the 1980s) has not been considered in scientific works. Some of its aspects are presented in studies of the construction of the human image and sociocultural reality on the Soviet cinema screen by culturologists, film historians and historians:

– O.V. Gorbachev explores the characteristic techniques of reflecting the state of social consciousness of the era in the subject world of Soviet cinema of the “thaw”. During this period, in his opinion, “peasant identity at the ideological level was being supplanted by collective farm identity” (Gorbachev, 2022: 171). The model of “demonstrative” consumption developed by Stalinist cinema is represented in village cinema. At the same time, individualization and unification of consumption are becoming more and more evident (Gorbachev, 2022);

– N.V. Glebkina examines the methods of representation of everyday life in Soviet cinematography of the late 1950s-1960s, which reflected the interests and worldview of filmmakers – bearers of a certain cultural tradition. Comparing their screen images of urban and rural everyday life, she concludes that “the city appears as a cold, rational beginning, opposing the sincerity, naturalness, and partly naivety of rural life” (Glebkina, 2010: 18);

– In historiographical studies of “village cinema” L.N. Mazur reveals the tendencies of poetization of the village as a special world filled with sincere feelings, wisdom, and genuine morality. In the 1960–1970s it acquired the features of a broad social phenomenon, acting as a defender of values that were peculiar to the people, the peasantry, contributing to the revival of national consciousness. The confrontation between the village and the city presented in the art

cinema expresses the pain of the peasant life that is being lost (Mazur, 2014);

– Based on the results of cultural analysis, E.V. Salnikova concludes that Soviet filmmakers search for the foundations of national identity in the “village cinema” of the 1970s, where, in a “transparent” space, characters do not find their own selves and find inner unity and peace (Salnikova, 2007);

– I.V. Shestakova, using the example of V. Shukshin's cinematography, shows how films of the 1960s-1970s about the countryside depict the process of disintegration of ancestral ties of the Russian peasantry, the problem of loss of self-identity by characters who lose their connection with home, family, and land is raised (Shestakova, 2015);

– V.Y. Mikhailin examines the methods of constructing a new Soviet identity in the “thaw” cinema. In his opinion, the characterization of the image of a “Soviet man” on the cinema screen of the 1960s has a traditional set of features characteristic of “socialist realism”: “the priority of public interests over personal ones; contempt for “bourgeoisie” and “vulgarity”; readiness for asceticism in the name of” (Mikhailin, 2015: 319);

– V.A. Kolotaev characterizes the general picture of the “thaw” era, in which, in his opinion, the works of such authors as, for example, K. Muratova, A. Tarkovsky, G. Shpalikov did not fit in. In the 1960s, society was in a state of reproductive identity, aimed at preserving and reproducing the ideals formed by heroes in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period. The cinematography was turning to Russian noble culture, folklore and ethnic roots, and religion. The efforts of filmmakers, with the exception of those who were engaged in assimilating what others had created in contemporary Western culture, were aimed at finding a solid foundation in the past (Kolotaev, 2011);

– According to N.A. Khrenov, in the era of the Thaw, the real task for filmmakers was to support collective identity. However, having been called to life in the era of the worker's gestalt and given expression on the screen, it was approaching “sunset” (Khrenov, 2013: 207). In the same period, “in many filmmakers there was a noticeable turn towards the deep foundations of individual life and, consequently, a protest against the depersonalization of the individual by the alienated machine of the totalitarian state” (Khrenov, 2006: 627-628);

– A.I. Tumanov considers the problem of the influence of state policy in the field of cinematography on the creation of genre forms, images of characters and models of social behavior that form ideas about national values and traditions in the audience (Tumanov, 2021);

– G.P. Sidorova, analyzing male images in Soviet cinema of the 1960s-1980s, concludes that the tradition that links modernity with historical memory and helps to preserve ethno-cultural identity continues. Its markers are archetypes of the masculine, first of all – Love, Search, Care and Heroism, and then – Rebellion, Power and Creativity (Sidorova, 2021);

– O. Romanova shows that Belarusian films of the “stagnation” period are characterized by the conflict of different models of national identity. Already at the end of the “thaw”, “non-socialist” author's cinema reflects the characteristic features of national culture: images of nature, peculiarities of family and social relations (Romanova, 2013);

– S.A. Breitman conducts an ethical and philosophical reflection on the trends in the development of Russian cinema in the context of traditional values of Russian culture. In his opinion, despite the harsh ideological dictate, the spiritual (aesthetic, moral, religious, existential) values of Russian culture were in demand in Soviet cinema (Breitman, 2004: 10);

– A.M. Maler, investigating the problem of the representation of christianity in Soviet cinema as the basis of traditional ethno-cultural identity, comes to the opinion that despite the anti-religious dictate, religious motifs appeared in Soviet films. This was facilitated by the fact that the Soviet system from a certain time “tried to adapt itself to the traditional mentality of a significant part of the Russian people, more or less consciously exploiting conservative mindsets – pochvenniki, patriotic, nationalistic, imperial and, finally, religious, i.e. orthodox”. Orthodoxy “was used by the Soviet authorities not as a dogmatic creed, but as the traditional ethno-cultural identity of the Russian people” (Mahler, 2023: 160);

– S.Y. Shchebrova, using the example of Central Asian cinema, shows how in the space of natural elements tamed by man, a paradise garden city emerges, depicted as a happy home, part of the sacred territory of the USSR. The heroes who built such cities displayed sacrifice and deeds, heroism and masculinity – sincerely idealized qualities that form the basis of the mythology of the Thaw (Shchebrova, 2020: 56);

The analysis of studies on the topic of the article showed that in the epochs of “thaw” and “stagnation” against the background of the weakening of ideological dictate aimed at maintaining faith in the ideals of the revolution, the need to appeal to cultural roots, the expression of national consciousness was actualized. Cinematographers in “village cinema” turn to the analysis of problems related to the destruction and restoration of ties with the family, family, home, nature and native land, in screen adaptations of classic works of Russian literature recreate images of noble culture.

#### 4. Results

##### *Features of the historical period of creation of feature films*

In 1953, Stalin died, and three years later, at the XX Congress of the CPSU (February 25, 1956), N.S. Khrushchev read a report “On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences”, which condemned Stalin's terror and repression. In the second half of the 1950s, the rehabilitation of the repressed began, and in 1958 the concept of “enemy of the people” was removed from the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

In the second half of the 1950s and early 1960s, the country made a tremendous scientific and technological breakthrough. In 1954, the first nuclear power plant in Obninsk was launched. In 1957, the world's first artificial satellite was launched. In 1961 the world's first human space flight was performed, and in 1965 the first cosmonaut's spacewalk in history was performed. Advances in science brought romantic heroes – scientists, engineers, geologists – to Soviet movie screens, whom young people aspired to emulate.

The “iron curtain” was opening between the USSR and the West. In July 1957, the International Festival of Youth and Students was held in Moscow, which opened for Soviet people the free world of capitalist countries with their symbols – jeans and jazz. In 1958, the musical “Man to Man” by G. Alexandrov was released, which depicted the performances of foreign artists at the festival. Jazz began to be heard in Thaw films (*Carnival Night*. Russia, 1956), *Zastava Ilyicha*. Russia, 1964) and others). In 1959, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee N.S. Khrushchev and U.S. President R. Nixon held a debate that initiated the establishment of cultural ties between the two countries, and in 1963, Moscow and Washington signed an agreement on the creation of a hotline.

In the 1950–1960s, the government was actively engaged in overcoming the housing crisis in the country. The situation was aggravated by rural migration and the resettlement from small villages. The number of residents in the cities was rapidly increasing. Overcoming the crisis was facilitated by the implementation of the state program for the mass construction of standard five-storey houses, where residents of communal apartments were relocated free of charge.

With the coming to power of Leonid Brezhnev in 1964, the “thaw” began to fade, democratic freedoms were curtailed, authoritarian-bureaucratic relations and ideological control were strengthened. A new period of Soviet history, commonly referred to as the era of “stagnation”, was coming. It lasted for about two decades.

From the mid-1960s, the authorities, in response to the emerging dissident movement, began to wage a localized struggle against dissidents – cultural and scientific figures (Y. Daniel, A. Sakharov, A. Sinyavsky, A. Solzhenitsyn, etc.), accusing them of actions that defamed the Soviet state. The anti-religious campaign continued. Its scale was much smaller than in the Khrushchev period, and it was of a targeted nature. Active representatives of religious organizations were persecuted.

Despite the implementation of economic reforms, construction of large enterprises and growth in industrial production, economic growth gradually slowed down, labor productivity decreased, commodity shortages increased, and food imports increased. However, economic sustainability was supported by rising oil prices and increased oil and gas exports, which helped to maintain stability in the welfare of the population and socio-political life.

In the 1970s, the USSR authorities took steps to establish international relations with Western countries and the United States. Trade and strategic arms limitation treaties were signed between Moscow and Washington. In its foreign policy, the USSR began to adhere to the concept of ideological coexistence, which contributed to the warming of Soviet-American relations. Meanwhile, by the end of the 1970s, the end of this period had already come. In 1979, the USSR deployed troops to Afghanistan, which caused a negative reaction of Western countries, provoked a new round of the Cold War and served as a reason for them to boycott the XXII Summer Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980.

In the first half of the 1980s, the government and the General Secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee, Y.V. Andropov and K.U. Chernenko, attempted reforms. They were mainly aimed at streamlining the administrative system, persecuting shady business and reorganizing the school education system. With the ongoing Afghan War, the confrontation between the USSR and Western countries intensified, and the arms race gained momentum. During the same period, relations with China were improving.

*The influence of historical events on the process of creating Soviet feature films of the second half of the 1950s – first half of the 1980s*

I. Ehrenburg's story *The Thaw* (1954) gave its name to the period that came after the Stalin era. The heroes of the story were overwhelmed with feelings of approaching warming in socio-political relations, the coming freedom. These feelings embraced cultural figures and intellectuals, they had faith in the inevitability of change for the better.

The weakening of the ideological press opened up opportunities for creative exploration and the expression of truth. A pleiad of talented filmmakers – former front-line soldiers who had endured all the hardships of war and young VGIK graduates born in the pre-war years – created a new image of Soviet cinema. The epic heroes of Stalinist films gave way to ordinary people overwhelmed by feelings of freedom, romance and justice. Student and worker collectives were transformed from faceless masses of people into a community of individuals united by the spirit of friendship and camaraderie.

One of the key themes of feature cinematography of the late 1950s – early 1960s was the Great Patriotic War. The screen was released many films: *Soldiers* (Russia, 1957), *The Cranes Are Flying* (Russia, 1957), *The House I Live In* (Russia, 1957), *The Ballad of a Soldier* (Russia, 1959), *The Fate of Man* (Russia, 1959), *Peace to the incoming* (Russia, 1961), *Ivanovo's Childhood* (Russia, 1962), *On the Seven Winds* (Russia, 1962), *The Living and the Dead* (Russia, 1964) and others; which expressed the pain of a generation that dreamed of happiness, but by the will of history, got to the front. The authors showed the tragedy of a man facing the catastrophic events of war. The faces of young heroes who left this world before realizing their dreams began to appear more and more often on the movie screen.

With the advent of Khrushchev, a new anti-religious campaign was launched in accordance with the program of building communism in the USSR. A wave of clergy arrests and destruction of churches swept across the country. Compromises with the church, which had taken place in the war and post-war years, were now perceived as a departure from the true Leninist path. One after another, anti-religious pictures were released, exposing various forms of belief, especially sectarianism. They played with situations in which lonely people are lured into sects or the Orthodox Church, deceive gullible parishioners, cooperate with the German occupiers: *Ivanna* (Russia, 1959), *Wonderworker* (Russia, 1960), *Deceived* (Russia, 1961), *Clouds over Borsky* (Russia, 1961), *Sinner* (Russia, 1962), *Confession* (Russia, 1962), *The End of the World* (Russia, 1962) and others.

At the beginning of the Thaw, filmmakers began to turn to the revolutionary ideals of the past, recreating the sacred aura of revolution and civil war on the screen. However, if at the beginning of the “thaw” this period of history was romanticized (*Forty-First*. Russia, 1956), *The Communist*. Russia, 1957), then by its end it began to acquire an increasingly tragic tone. In the anniversary year of 1967, films dedicated to the October Revolution were released. Their authors dared to interpret the main Soviet myth in their own way, depicting it in forms and motifs far removed from ideological canons. This caused a storm of criticism from Soviet film bureaucrats, who banned some of the pictures. The films *Komissar* (Russia, 1967) and *The First Russians* (Russia, 1967) were shelved.

In Panfilov's film *There is no ford in the fire* (Russia, 1967), the events of half a century ago were reinterpreted. Despite the traditional narrative based on the ideas of the victory of the oppressed class and the pursuit of universal happiness, in the movie the revolution in Tatyana Tetkina's eyes appears as violence against all people, both white and red. She confesses that she believes that there will come a time “when people will stop being tortured”.

The “thaw” lasted a little more than ten years. According to researchers' observations, M. Khutsiev's two films became symbols of hope (*Spring on Zarechnaya Street*. Russia, 1956) and disappointment (*July Rain*. Russia, 1966), signifying the beginning and the end of this romantic era. According to A.M. Mahler, “if the first film story testified only to the first timid questions and contradictions of the dominant Soviet worldview, the second one already revealed its complete

hopelessness” (Mahler, 2023: 174).

According to A.V. Fedorov, “the film *We'll live until Monday* (Russia, 1968), no less than M. Khutsiev's masterpiece *July Rain* (Russia, 1966), talentedly marked the crisis (or even the collapse) of “thaw” ideals among the Soviet intelligentsia, which felt the essence of regressive political and socio-cultural trends in the USSR more acutely than others” (Fedorov et al., 2017).

In the epochs of “thaw” and “stagnation” migration of rural population became a serious social problem. Young people left the villages for the cities to enter universities, and the older generation in search of income. This led to the devastation of villages.

Film directors (M. Kalatozov, L. Kulidzhanov, S. Rostotsky, V. Shukshin, L. Shepitko, etc.) made films about the countryside and peasant life. Against the background of industrial subjects (the struggle for the harvest, increasing the number of livestock, land reclamation, etc.), the authors told about moral problems: the relationship between fathers and children, the breakdown of the family, the severing of ties with the native land. They expressed their worries about the disappearance of the peasant world.

In the “village cinema” of the 1960s – 1970s, the authors turned to traditional Russian culture, preserved in a patriarchal, agrarian society. Their heroes were people who were seemingly silly and funny, but sincere, kind and morally pure, and the village appeared as a special religious world that opposed urban civilization.

In the 1970s, a series of films (*Return of Feelings*. Russia, 1979; *Our Debts*. Russia, 1976; *Red viburnum*. Russia, 1973; *Native Village*. Russia, 1979 and others) on the theme of returning to the village were released. The heroes of these films come to realize the wrongness of the path they have chosen, experience a sense of duty to their small homeland. “The call to return to one's roots, to the origins of folk morality can be considered as the main mythologem of village cinema... One of the late-Soviet films made in 1984 was so called – *Prodigal Son* (Russia, 1984)” (Mazur; Gorbachev, 2013: 50).

From the second half of the 1960s to the early 1980s, the intensity of atheist propaganda decreased markedly. In 1971, an unprecedented event occurred that violated all ideological canons of Soviet culture. A. Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (Russia, 1966) was shown on the big screen. The viewer saw the story of a Russian monk-icon painter who waged a spiritual struggle, in humility and silence preserving inner purity in the cruel world around him. Incredible was the ending of this story. “The contrast of the lingering dirty, gray, aggressive agelessness and the pure, peaceful, sublime image of the Divine Trinity in the form of three reverent angels created the effect of a direct sermon...” (Mahler, 2023: 183). There has never been a more overtly religious statement in the history of Soviet cinema. Despite the fact that the number of copies was very modest and distribution was limited mainly to Moscow and Leningrad cinemas, the religious and philosophical theme in cinema struck a powerful chord.

In 1967, the movie *The Commissar* (Russia, 1967) was made, which remained “on the shelf” for 20 years. The main heroine, a convinced communist Vavilova, takes her newborn child to be baptized in the nearest church, which could not but cause perplexity among the censors.

In 1968, M. Kalik's film *To Love* (Russia, 1968) was released. In the movie, random passers-by and archpriest A. Men, an Orthodox missionary, talk about love. Answering the question: “What does it mean to love?”, he says that true love is connected with experiencing the state of eternity and reminds of the relationship in the Kingdom of Heaven. For Soviet censorship, a priest's direct preaching on the big screen was unacceptable. In 1971, the movie was banned from theaters.

In the first half of the 1980s, a landmark event for believing people took place – the Moscow Danilov Monastery was handed over to the Orthodox Church (1983). During this period, only one movie (*At the Ghosts in Captivity*. Russia, 1984) with anti-religious themes was made.

The era of “stagnation” was a period of screen adaptations of works of Russian classical literature: *The Nest of the Nobility*. Russia, 1969; *The Seagull*. Russia, 1970; *Uncle Vanya*. Russia, 1971; *Unfinished Piece for a Mechanical Piano*. Russia, 1977; *A Few Days in the Life of I.I. Oblomov*. Russia, 1979, and others, recreating melancholic images of pre-revolutionary Russia. The frozen time of closed spaces of dilapidated houses and half-abandoned estates recreated the languid atmosphere of noble society. Film historians (Davidenko, 2004; Mahler, 2023, etc.) have repeatedly noted the parallels between the screen images of representatives of noble culture and the Soviet intelligentsia of the 1970s, who had lost faith in their strength and were experiencing the collapse of their hopes and dreams.

*Ideology, worldview of the authors of feature films in the socio-cultural context*

The release of E. Ryazanov's film *Carnival Night* (Russia, 1956) at the dawn of the “thaw” symbolized change in the political climate in the country. Perhaps for the first time on the Soviet cinema screen, the authorities were openly ridiculed, and the characters allowed themselves a familiar attitude towards its legitimate representatives without fear or hesitation. It is no coincidence that the film was shot in the year when Khrushchev read a report on Stalin's cult of personality at the 20th Congress of the CPSU Central Committee.

In G. Chukhrai's film *Clear Sky* (Russia, 1961), the scene where the characters learn of Stalin's death is replaced by shots of a spring ice drift, accompanied by solemn music. In the sky, gray clouds disperse, ice block smelt, and bright sunlight is reflected in the streams. The episode is a metaphorical illustration of the fall of the cult of personality.

With the advent of the “thaw”, the main symbolic images of Stalinist cinema were reinterpreted. The monumentalism and idealization of Stalinist pictures were replaced by the poetics of “documentalism”, which recreates the truth of human feelings and relationships, and a philosophical perception of reality. One of the main signs of the coming freedom for filmmakers expressed in the ability to tell the language of cinema about real life, to show it as it is, in the desire to create an authentic environment, the authenticity of characters, live natural actors.

Not only the experience of the avant-garde cinema of the 1920s, but also the discoveries of Italian neorealism played an important role in the formation of the film language of the 1960s. According to B.V. Reifman, its appropriation became “one of the main “external” reasons for the formation of Soviet post-Stalinist cinema” (Reifman, 2020: 42). Of course, it was “pink neorealism”. The movie screen portrayed an atmosphere of romance and love, the loyalty of friendships, and the general excitement caused by scientific discoveries and achievements in the space industry.

Filmmakers were now interested in the individual inner world of a person tormented by contradictions, experiencing an existential crisis. In the stories unfolding on the screen, they began to show how a personality matures in the collision with a multifaceted and ambiguous world, how, searching for answers to complex questions, it finds support in the form of sacrificial images of heroes and the ideals of the revolution, the Civil War and the Great Patriotic War. For the “sixties” these ideals were the measure of a true and just life.

In the late 1960s, there was a sense of disillusionment with the ideals of the Thaw and the future. Pictures about the spiritual crisis of the Soviet man, depicting the illusion of collective existence, began to appear on the screens more and more often. On the faces of the characters appeared longing and despondency. Now the only psychological support for them is another unhappy person capable of showing sincere and warm feelings.

Despite increasing ideological pressure, filmmakers retained their inner freedom. Some of them in the 1970s managed to say goodbye to ideology altogether and create authorial works characterized by a vivid individual style and metaphysical issues, exploring the role of religious and Christian foundations in the life of an individual and the whole of humanity (A. German, E. Klimov, A. Tarkovsky, L. Shepitko, etc.). Others had to make compromises and shoot pictures in an ideological vein, subtly hinting at the falsity of socialist ideals (V. Abdrashitov, G. Danelia, E. Ryazanov, etc.).

*Worldview of the characters portrayed in Soviet feature films of the second half of the 1950s – first half of the 1980s*

The characters of many feature films of the “thaw” era were young people searching for themselves, falling in love and dreaming, full of optimism and faith in the realization of hopes. They no longer harbored hatred for class enemies, nor did they display ideological fanaticism, as was the case in Stalinist cinema, but as before, they also sought justice in life, sincerity in their relationships with others, and unity in the collective. Their belief in the values of friendship and family, the memory of the war and the ideals of the revolution were their main guidelines in solving moral problems.

Meanwhile, already at the end of the “thaw”, characters appeared who found their happiness in material values and were attracted to Western materialism, something that at the dawn of the Soviet era was considered bourgeoisie. For example, Dima Semitsvetov from the movie *Beware of the Car* (Russia, 1966) and Kostya Batischev from the movie *We'll live until Monday* (Russia, 1968) stood out from other characters with their fashionable clothes.

At the turn of the 1960s-1970s, the “poetic documentary” and the idealist hero believing in a bright future were replaced by the “new conventionality” and the hero experiencing an existential crisis. During this period, two contrasting types of hero emerged. The first type includes the characters of “village cinema”, who are in a state of crisis, but have not lost their purpose and desire to fight for their own happiness. The second type includes characters belonging to the urban culture, withdrawn in themselves, who have lost their values and are disappointed in life.

The first type is represented in the pictures: *Native Village* (Russia, 1979), *Hello and Farewell* (Russia, 1972), *Return of Feelings* (Russia, 1979), *Your Son and Brother* (Russia, 1966), *Strange People* (Russia, 1969), *Stoves-benches* (Russia, 1972), *Redviburnum* (Russia, 1973), and other, raising the theme of contrasting the moral foundations of villagers to the people of urban culture. Their heroes are sympathetic but distrustful, with a keen sense of justice, tormented by a sense of loss of connection with their native land, home and family.

Representatives of the second type include the heroes of the films of V. Abdrashitov (*Word for Defense* (Russia, 1976), *Turn* (Russia, 1978), *Fox Hunt* (Russia, 1980), *Parade of Planets* (Russia, 1984), I. Averbakh (*Monologue* (Russia, 1972), *Alien Letters* (Russia, 1975), *Fantasies of Feryatev* (Russia, 1979), *The Voice* (Russia, 1982), R. Balayan (*Flying in a dream and in reality* (Russia, 1983), G. Daneliya (*Autumn Marathon* (Russia, 1979), *Tears dripped* (Russia, 1982), E. Ryazanov (*Officeromance* (Russia, 1977), *Station for Two* (Russia, 1982), M. Khutsiev (*Afterword* (Russia, 1983), L. Shepitko (*You and Me* (Russia, 1971) and other directors. They do not follow the ideals of collectivism and socialism, but live separate private lives and defend individual interests. And the characters who continue to faithfully serve socialist ideals look strange and ridiculous, such as the brigadier Potapov in the movie *Award* (Russia, 1974) or the chairwoman of the town executive committee Uvarova in the movie *I ask for the word* (Russia, 1975).

*Narrative structure and techniques in Soviet feature films of the second half of the 1950s – first half of the 1980s.*

#### *Place and time of action*

The time of action in the films: the past (mythologized depiction of the events of the Revolution and Civil War; truthful and epic depiction of the Great Patriotic War) and the present. The events depicted take place on the territory of the Soviet Union, in urban or rural areas.

*Characteristic settings and everyday objects:* bright and spacious streets, apartments and houses of towns and villages in the films of the “thaw” epoch are replaced by gloomy and gray streets, dark corridors and rooms in the films of the “stagnation” epoch. An example of this is G. Danelia's films *I'm Walking on Moscow* (Russia, 1963) and *Autumn Marathon* (1979), shot at the peak of the two eras.

There is a noticeable difference between village houses and city apartments. In village houses the conditions are modest and ascetic. They contain the utensils necessary for cultivating the land and caring for livestock. The furnishings of urban apartments have different variations. In some cases, it is characterized by modesty, in others, emphasized refined and flamboyant. The interior of apartments characterizes the individuality of the owner, his desire to follow fashion trends or passion for intellectual leisure.

*Genre modifications.* Cinematography “thaw” and “stagnation” is distinguished by genre diversity. More often there were films shot in the genre of lyrical melodrama and comedy, drama and tragicomedy, less often – in the genre of tragedy, science fiction, philosophical parable, adventure (*Vertical*. Russia, 1967), and horror (*Viy*. Russia, 1967).

*Stereotypical methods of depicting reality:* characters full of optimism and hopes of the “thaw” era are replaced by melancholic characters of the “stagnation” era, disappointed in friendship and love.

#### *Character typology:*

– *social status, profession:* Throughout the period under review, changes in attitudes towards professions and representatives of different social groups took place. For example, while in the second half of the 1950s, movies emphasized the high social and cultural status of the teacher (*Spring on Zarechnaya Street* (Russia, 1956), *The Case was in Penkov* (Russia, 1958), in the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, his authority declined. The image of the policeman, on the contrary, remains constant on the screen. The defenders of law and order look like cultural heroes fighting for justice (*Beware of the Car* (Russia, 1966), *Investigators Lead the Investigation* (Russia, 1971–1989), *Born by Revolution* (Russia, 1974–1977), *The Meeting Place Cannot Be Changed* (Russia, 1979).



Intellectuals gradually cease to be champions of socialist ideas, but turn into marginal representatives of late Soviet society. Villagers, migrating to the city, acquire a certain marginality, only outwardly and superficially mastering urban culture.

– *the character's marital status*: in many “thaw” films, the image of a complete family was dominant, but the image of single mothers whose husbands died at the front was no exception. In the “stagnation” era, the absence of the father and the husband who left the family became commonplace in feature films. Such destructive socio-cultural phenomena as emancipation (in the 1920s it was the direction of Bolshevik class policy), secularization, ideologization and urbanization contributed to the increase in divorce rates in late Soviet times.

– *the appearance, clothing, and personality traits of the characters*.

The characters of “thaw” cinema were young romantics and intellectuals, looking forward to the future with hope, and engaged in solving existential problems, searching for their way of life. They were characterized by courage and tenacity, principle and determination, simplicity and modesty, passion for science and poetry, the desire to find their vocation and willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of “high” ideas.

In the 1970s, they turned into middle-aged intellectuals and workers who had become disillusioned with life, melancholic, and who did not believe in socialist ideals. They did not become insecure and indecisive, “but as if experiencing a certain paralysis of the creative will from a profound rethinking of ... the surrounding reality” (Mahler, 2023: 222).

In feature films of the “stagnation” era, the image of a man lost his masculine character traits, but the image of a strong and businesslike woman building a career appeared. Female, for example, were the roles of the director: *Wings* (Russia, 1966), *Service Romance* (Russia, 1977), *Moscow does not believe in tears* (Russia, 1979), chairman (*Please say a word* (Russia, 1975), master at the factory (*Five Evenings* (Russia, 1978).

In the 1960s-1970s, a series of films depicting heroic images of women were released. The films *Mother's Field* (Russia, 1967), *Zhuravushka* (Russia, 1968), *Varka* (Russia, 1971), *Russkoe Pole* (Russia, 1971), *Stepmother* (Russia, 1973), and *Widows* (Russia, 1976) tell about women's hardships. The authors aspiration “to epitomize the maternal beginning, to create not just certain female types (mother, beloved, village girl), but symbols of the Russian Land is noticeable in them” (Mazur, 2014).

*The model of cultural identity represented in the Soviet cinema of the second half of the 1950s – first half of the 1980s*

The problem of cultural identity in the period under review was gaining relevance. Cinematographers gradually reoriented themselves from the ideological discourse to the cultural one, and increasingly began to refer to folk culture, the peasant world, the memory of pre-revolutionary Russia and noble culture.

The model of cultural identity represented by Soviet cinema of the second half of the 1950s and the first half of the 1980s presented below includes five types of cinematic discourse: interpersonal, artistic-aesthetic, religious-ideological, historical-cultural, and mythological.

*An interpersonal type of cinematic discourse*

In Russian culture, the distinctive features of interpersonal relations are the diminutive and affectionate types of addresses expressing kindness, warmth and tenderness: “brothers”, “darling”, “dove” and others. They are often used by characters in a number of films of the “thaw” and “stagnation” epochs. For example, in *Girls* (Russia, 1961), a canteen visitor thanks Tosya Kislitsina for lunch: “Thank you, daughter”. In *The Fate of Man* (Russia, 1959) Andrei Sokolov addresses the boy Vanyusha, calling him “brother”. In the movie *Seryozha* (Russia, 1960) Korostelev calls his stepson Seryozha: “brother”. In the movie S. Rostotsky *The dawns here are quiet* (Russia, 1972) commander Fedot “sisters” calls anti-aircraft gunners who went with him on a combat mission, and calls himself a brother: “I'm kind of like a brother to you”.

One of the peculiar Russian appeals, practically not found in other cultures, is “native”. It is used by characters in many Soviet feature films of the period under consideration. Foreexample, in G. Chukhrai's film *Forty First* (Russia, 1956), the Red Army soldier Maryutka calls the captured White Guard lieutenant Vadim “native”. In *Girls* (Russia, 1961) Tosya Kislitsyna asks her roommate a question: “Katya, my dear, is it true?”. In G. Panfilov's film *There is no ford in the fire* (1967) Tanya Tetkina calls the dog “dear, you are mine”; doctor Fatey Semyonovich shouts to the fleeing commissar Evstryukov at the front: “stop, my dear”. In the painting by V. Sokolov *Friends and Years* (1965) Lyudmila addresses Vladimir Platov, leaving for the front: “My dear! ... You really are dear!”.

Cinematographers portrayed the characteristic features of interpersonal relations of characters in “village cinema”. Responsive, open and modest villagers are shy and distrustful in their relations with towns people (*Three poplars on the ivy* (Russia, 1968), *Stoves-benches* (Russia, 1972), *Kinship* (Russia, 1981) and others), while they are close to their fellow villagers in a familial way. They share their innermost thoughts with each other and in a flurry of feelings “pour out their souls”, “turn their souls inside out”.

During the “thaw” and “stagnation” periods, the Soviet cinema screen recreated images not only of popular culture, but also of the noble culture that remained in the past – in pre-revolutionary Russia. Cinematographers screened works of Russian classical literature, in which the writers of the XIX century told about the destruction of the upper class, which had lost its greatness and attractiveness, but also described the characteristic features of the high culture of communication of the nobility: restraint, delicacy, courtesy, courtesy, obliging. The positive characters of the feature films based on the works of I.A. Goncharov, I.S. Turgenev, A.P. Chekhov, follow the principle of the unity of word and thought, word and deed. This makes them sincere and honest in conversation with other characters, arrogantly imitating aristocratic manners. Such on the screen were Lavretsky from *The Nest of Nobles* (Russia, 1969), Voynitsky from *Uncle Vanya* (Russia, 1970), Platonov from *The Unfinished Piece for Mechanical Piano* (Russia, 1977), Oblomov from *A Few Days in the Life of I.I. Oblomov* (Russia, 1979).

#### *Artistic and aesthetic type of cinematic discourse*

Stalinist cinema “culturalized” nature, subjugated it to its will, mastered its elements, and gave them a static image. In the 1960s, the situation changed. In the films of A. Tarkovsky, M. Khutsiev, V. Shukshin and other directors, nature gained a voice, which it had been deprived of. The screen made her world dynamic and mobile.

Wildlife, helping and caring for man, is a plot-forming motif of Russian fairy tales, a part of Russian cultural memory. Its image is recreated in S. Bondarchuk's movie *The Fate of Man* (Russia, 1959), where it saves a man. The main character Andrei Sokolov makes an escape from fascist captivity. “Having overcome a great distance, he falls helplessly on a field of ripe oats... The boundless field covers him with its waves, hides him from prying eyes” (Zaitseva, 2017: 37). A little later he is “taken in” by a birch grove, hiding him from the German soldiers.

In L. Kulidzhanov's film *When the Trees Were Big* (Russia, 1961), nature plays a key role in the hero's spiritual rebirth. “Freely spreading meadows, quiet village streets, some untouched beauty - the river, gardens, dusk and dawn – itself seems to heal the calloused soul of a man who finds in all this a sense of his own roots” (Zaitseva, 2017: 84).

In the final scene of N. Mikhalkov's movie *A Few Days in the Life of I.I. Oblomov* (Russia, 1980) little Ilya runs through the tall grass, gradually sinking into the depths of the vast valley.

The images of nature recreated by late Soviet cinematography began to sound dreary and sad notes. The sense of longing rooted in Russian culture, born of the immensity of the Russian expanses and contemplation of fading nature, was transferred by cinematographers to the screen from the landscapes of Russian painters F. Vasilyev, I. Levitan, V. Polenov. Vasilyev, I. Levitan, V. Polenov, I.Repin, A. Savrasov and others. In the images of the noble estate, depicted in the films of A. Konchalovsky: *The Nest of the Nobility* (Russia, 1969); *Uncle Vanya* (Russia, 1971), N. Mikhalkov (*Unfinished Piece for a Mechanical Piano* (Russia, 1977); *A Few Days in the Life of I.I. Oblomov* (Russia, 1979), E. Ryazanov: *Cruel Romance* (Russia, 1984), recreated the space of idyllic measured flow of life, aimlessness and meaninglessness of the characters' pastime. Long shots, panoramic shots of Central Russian autumn landscapes enhanced the feeling of pinching sadness.

#### *Religious-ideological type of cinematic discourse*

During the “thaw” era, filmmakers recreated the sacred aura of the revolution and civil war on the screen and romanticized this period of history. By this time, revolutionary ideals had become the foundation of Soviet man's religious worldview. This was clearly expressed by the authors of *Zastava Ilyicha* (Russia, 1964). Its hero Sergei Zhuravlev searches for the answer to the question “how should one live?” for three hours of screen time, and in the final frames of the movie he utters the words: “nothing is terrible if you are not alone and you have something to believe in...”, after which on the screen the guard comes to Lenin's mausoleum with a marching step, the music of the Internationale is played and the Kremlin chimes are heard. The religious pathos of this scene is obvious – the eternally living symbol of hope for a bright future fills life with meaning.

Already at the end of the “thaw” the characters of feature films began to lose faith in the future communist paradise and stopped finding answers to existential questions within the

framework of secular ideology. At this time, A. Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (Russia, 1966) (the film was released in a small edition in 1971) and M. Kalik's *To Love* (Russia, 1968) (the film was banned in 1971) appeared, in which the authors spoke directly about the role and importance of Orthodox faith in Russian history and human life.

The plot of A. Tarkovsky's picture is based on the story of the spiritual feat of humility and silence of icon painter Andrei Rublev, who managed to preserve his inner purity and during the years of princely feuds, Tatar raids and famine to reveal to the world the icon of the Divine Trinity – a peaceful and sublime image of three reverent angels, bringing light and harmony, uniting and healing the people.

In M. Kalik's movie, orthodox priest A. Men speaks about the Christian understanding of love, the mystery of sex, the great mystery of marriage, and the fact that true love is connected with the experience of the state of eternity, reminiscent of relationships in the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the Brezhnev era, priests, monks, monasteries, icons and crosses began to appear more frequently on the movie screen, and orthodox rituals without anti-religious overtones were shown. The ambivalent relationship between orthodox faith and pagan beliefs that had developed in Russian culture was reflected in the feature films of this period. Episodes in which characters guess and make conspiracies are found, for example, in the films *Russian field* (Russia, 1971), *Shores* (Russia, 1973), *Did you call a doctor?* (Russia, 1974); *Odnoluby* (Russia, 1982), *Who Knocks at My Door* (Russia, 1982) and others.

The authors of feature films of the “stagnation” era began to explore the feelings and attitudes of characters at critical moments in their lives, when they had to turn to God out of hopelessness. For example, the hero of A. Konchalovsky's film *The Nest of Nobles* (Russia, 1969) Lavretsky thanks God for returning from Paris to his “sweet Russia”. At the all-night service he addresses God: “...Lord forgive me. I pray for the forgiveness of my soul, in which there will be no more room for resentment, anger...Thank you for the returned hope”. The hero of V. Shukshin's movie *Redviburnum* (Russia, 1973), an unaccompanied Egor Prokudin lives in a world of God's abandonment, the symbols of which appear in the frame – a flooded church, destroyed and abandoned churches. In one of the episodes after visiting his elderly mother, he, sobbing brokenly, says: “Lord forgive me! Lord, if you can! I can no longer tolerate this torment”. The hero of the picture *Twice Born* (Russia, 1983) Andrei Bulygin – the only surviving sailor from the sunken by the Germans steamship with wounded soldiers. He was left alone in the ice of the White Sea. Exhausted from hunger and cold, losing his last strength, he hides from the pursuit of a German pilot. Once again, falling under his fire, he burs tingly prays to God for help: “Lord, help the unbeliever now. I beg you now. Help, Lord! Do you hear me?”. Miraculously he manages to save himself.

The heroes of A. Tarkovsky's films. Tarkovsky, L. Shepitko, V. Shukshin and other directors, when they find themselves in a state of despair, having lost hope, strive for truth. They have to immerse themselves in reflections on faith and love, sacrifice and forgiveness, humility and asceticism – the key categories of Christian consciousness, which are the ontological foundation of Russian culture.

#### *Historical and cultural type of cinematic discourse*

In the epochs of the “thaw” and “stagnation” in the conditions of devaluation of socialist ideals, destruction of the peasant world, and oblivion of folk culture in urban society, the ideas of national self-consciousness became relevant. They referred to the subjects of the long-standing dispute between Westerners (V.G. Belinsky, A.I. Herzen, I.S. Turgenev, P.Y. Chaadayev and others) and Slavophiles (N.Y. Danilevsky, I.V. Kireyevsky, N.N. Strakhov, A.S. Khomyakov and others), opposing liberal and traditional ideas, progressive and conservative views, material and spiritual values. This traditional for Russian history and culture confrontation of worldview concepts became the subject of cinematography research.

The authors of screen adaptations of works of Russian literature of the 19th century explored phenomena detrimental to Russian culture. For example, A. Konchalovsky in the movie *Uncle Vanya* (Russia, 1970) retold Chekhov's story about how “the characters inhabiting the dilapidated manor house are searching for the strength to resist the destruction and mercantile pragmatism of their metropolitan relatives” (Zaitseva, 2017: 191). At the same time, Uncle Vanya (Voynitsky) himself – an intelligent and decent man “with a delicate and tender soul” (A.P. Chekhov) – does not cease to show humility while serving Professor Serebryakov – a valiant, arrogant, incapable of labor and, in fact, a talentless man.

In the movie *A few days in the life of I.I. Oblomov* (Russia, 1979) Stoltz is a representative of an idle society. He conquers the world with his calculativeness and pragmatism. His spiritual emptiness, overshadowed by external activity, is contrasted with the reflective contemplation of Oblomov, who will never “bowdown to the idol of lies, his soul will always be pure, bright, honest” (I.A. Goncharov).

Voynitsky and Oblomov – characters of different character and outlook – retreat under the onslaught of cynical people who find the meaning of life in acquiring material wealth, achieving position in society, and yet lack the qualities valued in Russian culture – sensitivity, responsiveness, openness and soulfulness. Both characters humble themselves and preserve the inner integrity and nobility of their souls.

Another hero of Brezhnev's cinema was the intellectual who had lost his integrity, suffering from internal contradictions and emptiness – one of the main symbols of the era. Such on the screen appeared history teacher Melnikov in the film *We'll live until Monday* (Russia, 1968), professor Sretensky in *Monologue* (Russia, 1972), the Writer in *Stalker* (Russia, 1979), Poluorlov in *Old New Year* (Russia, 1980), Makarov in *Flights of Dreams and Dreams* (Russia, 1983). They are united by the experience of spiritual crisis, caused by the realization that the new reality has closed the opportunities for the realization of personal potential.

If the intellectuals who once served high ideals have become disoriented at this stage of history because of the impossibility of fulfilling their social and creative functions, the ordinary villager has lost the meaning of life, being torn away from his roots.

The plot of the “village” cinema of the 1960s – 1970s was based on the conflict between the original world of the village and the soulless urban civilization, which was destroying family and kinship relations and weakening ties with the native land. Many characters who found themselves far from their village home lost their naturalness, openness and simplicity, the need to participate in collective labor and the common cause, became arrogant, calculating and selfish. But there were also those who did not let go of their homesickness, who felt responsible to the land that had nurtured them. For example, Stepan Voevodin in the movie *Your Son and Brother* (Russia, 1966), Egor Prokudin in *Redviburnum* (Russia, 1973), Ivan Shalnev in the film *Native Village* (Russia, 1979) and other characters.

A.Konchalovsky's *Sibiriada* (Russia, 1978) and E. Klimov and L. Shepitko's *Farewell* (Russia, 1981) show how the scientific and technological progress coming to the village destroys its traditional way of life, destroys cemeteries – the ancestral memory of the villagers. The spread of technology becomes a devastating phenomenon for the peasant world, undermining the foundations of centuries-old traditions that the Russian people have lived by: sedentary lifestyle, unity with nature, living with a large family in one house, practicing crafts and trades. In this way, the “village cinema” of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras indirectly reflected the idea of soil-bound mode of life, which was formed in the 19th century under the influence of the Slavophiles.

#### *A mythological type of cinematic discourse*

With the onset of the Thaw, the mythologemes of Stalinist cinema (abundance of food and goods, love as a reward for the worthy, sacral power, and others) lost their significance. Cinematographers began to turn more often to the mythological roots of Russian culture. Images of a river, a tree, a house appeared on the movie screen with symbolic meaning.

The image of the river plays a significant role in the dramaturgical basis and in the plot of the films: *The Cranes Are Flying* (Russia, 1957), *The Quiet Don* (Russia, 1957-1958), *Unfinished Piece for a Mechanical Piano* (Russia, 1977), *Red viburnum* (Russia, 1973), *Sibiriada* (Russia, 1978), *Farewell* (Russia, 1981) and others.

M. Kalatozov's *The cranes are flying* (Russia, 1957) begins with an image of the wide Moscow River, which occupies three quarters of the frame, flooded with sunlight. Along the embankment, the lovers Boris and Veronika run along it. They are running towards their bright future. This image reflects the fullness of their feelings and hopes.

*The Quiet Don* (1957-1958) by S. Gerasimov begins with an extended choral performance of the song *The Quiet Don, Our Father!* The Don symbolically expresses the fate of the homeland, the ever-flowing life of the people rooted in one place, the unity of past, present and future. He witnesses the development of the relations of the main characters and expresses their inner state. By the river Grigory confesses his feelings to Aksinya, tells his wife that he does not love her, Aksinya embraces the son of Grigory and the deceased Natalia. Daria Melekhova drowns herself in the Don. Don sees off the Cossacks leaving for war. At the end of the movie on the frozen river

Grigory returns home, throws his rifle, nagan and cartridges into it.

In the final scene of N. Mikhalkov's painting *An Unfinished Piece for a Mechanical Piano* (Russia, 1977), Platonov flees from the manor house and jumps off a cliff into the river. His wife Sashenka rushes to him. Standing in knee-deep water and embracing him, she says: "I love you very much. I love you in every way. The whole world for me is you". Platonov apologizes to her. They then walk away down the river along the shore.

In A. Konchalovsky's *Sibiriada* (Russia, 1978), the lives of generations pass by the river. They go to the city, to war and return home along it. In the movie by E. Klimov and L. Shepitko *Farewell* (Russia, 1981) the river has a metaphysical function. It girdles the village of Matera and hides the inhabitants who did not agree to leave the village before it was flooded.

A tree is a symbol of life and family, of the connection between the worlds of the lower and upper worlds. The image of a tree can be seen in the films *Quiet Don* (Russia, 1957-1958), *Red viburnum* (Russia, 1973), *Farewell* (Russia, 1981) and others.

At the end of the movie *The Quiet Don*, Grigory buries Aksinya, who was killed by a White Guard shot, in a large tree. Under its sprawling crown, she ended her earthly journey and found peace. The camera slowly glides through its bubbling foliage, then moves down to where Grigory is sitting. Behind his back, the wide trunk of the tree is visible, evoking a sense of timelessness and immobility.

In *Red viburnum*, the image of the birch tree is recreated, symbolizing motherhood, female tenderness and beauty. Egor Prokudin, the main character of the movie, addresses the trees. In one episode, approaching a large birch tree, he says: "What Vasilisa? Is it time to give birth?", and in another he gently addresses the trees: "Little ones. Look, they have hidden themselves. What are they? Hidden and silent. My good brides..." He comes up to them: "Hello. Oh, my good brides. Well? How are you? Tired of waiting?. Soon it will be warm". This episode conveys the joy of his return to his native land, to his roots.

In the film *Farewell*, there is an image of an age-old magic tree, symbolizing "human roots", the metaphysical connection between man and his deceased relatives. They tied a rope to it and tried to pull it down with a tractor, but it survived. It was burned, but at the end of the movie it blossomed. After the episode with the burning of the tree, the old woman Daria goes to the cemetery and there talks to her departed ancestors, telling them that she is "pulled by the earth", that "the truth is in memory" and that "he who has no memory has no life". In Russian culture, memory is considered the basis of morality.

The house is the repository of family traditions and ancestral ties. In the films *Solaris* (Russia, 1972) and *Mirror* (Russia, 1974) by A. Tarkovsky, E. Klimov, L. Shepitko *Farewell*, a sacral image of home is created. In the last scene of *Solaris* there is an explicit quotation from Rembrandt's biblical painting *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (c. 1666-1669, Hermitage Museum). Chris Calvin kneels on the threshold of the house, bows his head to his father, who embraces him by the shoulders. According to A.M. Mahler, this scene conveys "a return to a kind of primordial, pure, paradisiacal state, damaged not so much by original sin as by spiritless civilization" (Mahler, 2023: 217).

In *Mirror*, the house is a metaphysical space around which the elements rage: fire (the hayloft burns near the house), air (the gusty wind bends bushes and tree crowns, topples a lamp and a loaf of bread from the table), water (it is raining outside, inside the house water runs down the walls, drops of water fall from the ceiling), earth (the house is surrounded by fertile land on which plants, shrubs, and tall trees grow abundantly). In the movie, the young children live in a whole log house. It begins to crumble along with the destruction of their parents' relationship. One episode features the voice-over of Arseny Tarkovsky reading his own poem *Life, Life*: "Live in the house – and the house will not collapse. I will summon any of the centuries... And your wives at one table, – And one table to great-grandfather and grandson... My immortality is enough for me, That my blood flows from century to century...". In these lines, the house is represented as an embodiment of the mythology of eternity.

In *Farewell*, the house is portrayed as a living thing. Before the villagers' houses are burned down, they wash them, whitewash them, decorate them, stoke the furnace, warm them up so that the house is not cold and empty. They dress the houses like dead people, seeing them off on their last journey.

## 5. Conclusion

The problem of cultural identity in the period under review was gaining relevance. Cinematographers gradually reoriented themselves from the ideological discourse to the cultural one, and increasingly began to refer to folk culture, the peasant world, the memory of pre-revolutionary Russia and noble culture.

The interpersonal relations of characters in Soviet feature films of the “thaw” and “stagnation” are characterized by sincerity and frankness, the attitude towards mutual understanding and mental closeness. They are characterized by diminutive and affectionate appeals expressing kindness, warmth and tenderness: “brothers”, “darling”, “dove”, as well as a peculiar Russian address, which is practically unheard of in other cultures – “native”.

In the screen adaptations of works of Russian classical literature, the characteristic signs of high culture of communication of the nobility were recreated: restraint, delicacy, courtesy, courtesy, obliging.

During the period under review, the Soviet cinema screen reflected and constructed the relationship between man and society in the context of a changing social and cultural situation. The events of the Revolution and the Civil War were losing their former pathos and were increasingly viewed as a national tragedy. The system of socialist ideals was subjected to a critical rethinking. In the second editions, the ideas of national self-consciousness became relevant. In various forms, they were embodied in “village cinema”, in screen adaptations of works by Russian writers of the 19th century, in films about intellectuals experiencing a spiritual crisis, and in films with religious themes.

In the “village cinema” the cross-cutting motif was the opposition between the original world of the village and the soulless urban civilization, which undermines the foundations of centuries-old traditions that the Russian people lived by: soil-bound mode of life, unity with nature, living with a large family in one house, engaging in crafts and trades.

In feature films based on the works of I.A. Goncharov, I.S. Turgenev, A.P. Chekhov, open, sensitive and noble characters try to resist the world of pragmatic and cynical people who find the meaning of life in the acquisition of material wealth and social status.

The hero of feature films of the “stagnation” era is an intellectual who has lost his values and his faith in communist mythology. In the world around him, he feels the instability of social roles, shaky relationships with other people and with reality. This knocks the ground out from under his feet. He loses his main purpose – to serve high ideal and transmit them to society.

In films with religious themes, the authors spoke directly about the role and significance of the Orthodox faith in national history and human life. Their characters, finding themselves in a state of despair, having lost hope, strive for the truth, immerse themselves in reflections on faith and love, sacrifice and forgiveness, humility and asceticism – the key categories of Christian consciousness that act as the ontological foundation of Russian culture.

Nature in the movies of the “thaw” and “stagnation” eras received its voice, which it was deprived of in the Stalinist period. The image of a living nature helping and caring for man was created in the movie *The Fate of Man* (Russia, 1959) by S. Bondarchuk, where it saves a man. In L. Kulidzhanov's film *When the Trees Were Big* (Russia, 1961), nature contributes to the spiritual rebirth of the hero.

In late Soviet cinematography, the images of nature embodied the feelings of despondency and longing, born from the boundlessness of the Russian expanses and contemplation of fading nature, depicted in the landscapes of F. Vasilyev, I. Levitan, V. Polenov, I. Repin, A. Savrasov and others. Vasilyev, I. Levitan, V. Polenov, I. Repin, A. Savrasov and others. Long shots, panoramic shots of Central Russian autumn landscapes increased the feeling of pinching sadness caused by the images of fading noble manor in the films of A. Konchalovsky: *The Nest of the Nobility* (Russia, 1969); *Uncle Vanya* (Russia, 1971), N. Mikhalkov (*An Unfinished Piece for a Mechanical Piano* (Russia, 1977); *A Few Days in the Life of I.I. Oblomov* (Russia, 1979), E. Ryazanov (*Cruel Romance* (Russia, 1984).

Cinematographers began to turn more often to the mythological roots of Russian culture. On the movie screen appeared images of the river as a reflection of the fate of the homeland, the ever-flowing life of the people rooted in one place, the unity of the past, present and future; the tree as a symbol of life and the connection between the worlds of the lower and higher worlds; the house as a symbol of the repository of family traditions and ancestral bond.

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## Media Discourse as a Research and Media Educational Problem: Approaches and Scientific Schools

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### Abstract

The article provides an overview of scientific approaches to interpreting the concept of discourse in order to identify research trends and clarify the interpretation of the concept of “mass media discourse”. By specifying this concept, the authors of the article identify its essential features: scale – presence in all top mass media, large response and coverage in social media, involvement of public opinion leaders (experts) in the topic of discourse; duration – at least a year; thematic versatility – the presence of thematic branches – “subdiscourses”; ideological nature and impact on society – the presence of ideas and the promotion of a certain kind of values that can influence public consciousness.

Attention is focused on the concept of dominant media discourse, approaches that study this phenomenon are systematized. With the development of digital formats and the involvement of a large number of people in online communication, mass media discourses play a decisive role in the formation of society’s values, influence the choice of activity trajectories of the masses and often have a mobilization character. Identification of the dominant mass media discourse with its themes, speech techniques and transmission of values will make it possible to describe the current state of society. In the article, studies of mass media discourse are grouped according to three bases: mass media discourse with reference to the region; mass media discourse as a phenomenon and object of research; mass media discourse of individual events.

The authors of the article propose to connect the theory of media discourse with educational practices: both specialists in the field of media and their audience, comprehending the type of mass media discourse and its components, can analyze the situation in society through the prism of this phenomenon. The material included more than 100 scientific publications in specialized journals and on the websites of scientific schools related to the study of media discourses.

**Keywords:** professional media education, discourse, mass media, mass media discourse, research approaches.

### 1. Introduction

The relevance of the research approaches analysis is related to the fact that media today, in essence, is a social navigator. This fact is confirmed by an increase in media consumption during periods of crisis (such as a pandemic and sanctions), when the bulk of media messages circulate

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around key topics of modern society, touching on the most relevant and contradictory agenda in terms of values.

The work includes an overview of approaches to the study of media discourse aimed at obtaining a general picture of this area of the humanities. Today, the analysis of research approaches, which can be used in teaching practice, is pushed by the increasing competition of media discourses, the demand for the ability of professionals to join the existing one and initiate a new media discourse, scaling their media practices.

## 2. Materials and methods

The main sources for writing this article were, firstly, scientific articles with the keywords “media discourse”, “mass media” (more than 100), as well as the results of applying the project-based learning model in three universities, during which students created their own channels in the online environment.

The comparative method allowed the authors of the article to compare the research results from various media scientific schools and identify the types of these studies.

## 3. Discussion

In modern science, the term “discourse” is applied to different objects and is used with different meanings. Researchers, explaining the essence of the concept of “discourse,” touch on analytical philosophy, stylistics and social linguistics, linguistic anthropology, contextualization theory, cultural studies, sociology and ethnomethodology, which undoubtedly indicates the versatility and breadth of this concept. It is no coincidence that V.I. Karasik argued that “the concept of discourse has become broader than the concept of language” (Karasik, 2002: 189).

The multiplicity of approaches to interpreting the concept of discourse indicates the versatility of this phenomenon. To achieve the goal of our work – to clarify the new term “mass media discourse”, we consider it productive to focus the review on the formal, situational, functional and ideological interpretations of the term. Since the understanding of the term “media discourse” is based directly on the understanding of discourse in general, it is logical to briefly dwell on the history and interpretations of the latter. According to some sources, the term “discourse” was proposed in 1952 by the American scientist Z. Harris, who also introduced the method of discourse analysis in his work (Harris, 1952). Others consider the French scientist E. Benvenisteto be the author of the term. The field of discourse research is rich in theoretical works, but this issue remains relevant to this day and arouses the interest of researchers.

In any case, the birth of the term “discourse” dates back to the 50s of the last century, and the research works of philosophers, linguists, and sociologists are devoted to discourse as a phenomenon. It is enough to mention such famous scientists as Teun A. van Dijk, N.D. Arutyunova, V.I. Karasik, E.S. Kubryakova, M. Foucault, V.E. Chernyavskaya, whose research works focused on the “discourse” category. The formation of discourse and its practical implementation were of interest to such linguists as S.A. Danilova, V.V. Demytyev, A.A. Karamova, O.V. Kosonogova, I.B. Rupert, P. Serio, M. Stubbs, Yu.S. Stepanov et al.

The phenomenon of discourse has been studied by science in a variety of aspects. In the social and human sciences, discourse theory is represented by interdisciplinary philosophical, cultural and linguistic studies.

Thus, “discursive psychology,” which emerged as a separate area, examines speech interaction (Potter, Wetherell, 1987); the study of crisis communication situations determines the creation of “activity-oriented theories of discourse” in American conflictology (Tracy, 1995); within the framework of sociolinguistics, the study of discourse focuses on the analysis of the introduction of socio-cognitive practice into cultural texts (in particular, film texts) that form key categories of human existence (Gee, 2014). In sociolinguistic theories, the functional interpretation involves the analysis of discourse as a way of language functioning in a social context (Harder, 2003; Laclau, 1996; Tracy, 1995).

The European school demonstrates attention to the problems of semantic memory and the development of cognitive models of understanding text and discourse (Van Dijk, Kintsch, 1983). According to the works of Teun A. van Dijk, the sociocultural specificity of texts allows us to consider them as a separate type of linguistic use, and the contextuality of discourse creates the prospect of expanding approaches to the processes of production and perception of texts (Van Dijk, 2001).

Another direction of the European school is associated with the synthesis of political science and linguistics – deconstructivist models of linguistics and criticism of political relations. The result of interdisciplinary synthesis is the formation of a separate direction of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013; Laclau, 1996; Van Dijk, 2006; Wodak, 1996).

For the development of the theory of critical discourse analysis, the works of Shi Xu, a professor at Zhejiang University (ZJU), are significant. In her interpretation, linguistic communication is understood as “the construction of meanings through linguistic symbols,” and the placement of linguistic communication in a cultural context will determine the discourse itself (Shi Xu, 2005). The problem of intercultural communication is called by the researcher one of the main problems of critical discourse analysis, which is associated with the functionality of modern intercultural communication, which “not only does not help to bring together a divided world, but, on the contrary, removes different cultures from each other” (Shi Xu, 2005: 43). According to researchers working within the framework of critical discourse analysis, ideas about the meaning-forming and meaning-transmitting role of linguistic communication should be significantly rethought and can already be considered as key for building intercultural communication (Lee, 2017; Machin, Mayr, 2023).

From the position of formal interpretation in linguistic theory, discourse is considered as a relatively complete (in meaning and structure) speech work of natural oral or written speech (Coulthard, 2014; Schegloff, 1987).

Within the framework of pragmatic theories, the situational interpretation of the term “media discourse” allows us to study the implementation of sociocultural and psychological features of statements. This interpretation is applicable for linguistic (De Saussure, 2007; Segerdahl, 1996), sociological (Chalaby, 1996) and psychological (Potter, Reicher, 1987; Wetherell, 1988) studies.

In philosophical, sociological and political science theories, discourse is considered within the framework of critical approaches as a set of meaning-making rules/requirements for expressing social facts (Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 2006). Analysis of the ideological interpretation of discourse allows us to identify the key elements of the meanings transmission and determine the role of the media context in the meaning formation (Mouffe, 1995). Notable in this regard is the description of discourse proposed by the Swiss researcher P. Serio. He analyzed the political context of Soviet reality through the prism of language and came to the conclusion that discourse is the use of language in a system of ideologically determined restrictions. The content of P. Serio's definition of discourse includes several points that describe the main characteristics: a specific speech utterance; a unit of language larger than a sentence; impact on the recipient in a certain situation; conversation as the most common speech form; statement from the speaker's position; a set of various communicative means actualized in speech (Serio, 1999).

Researchers from Wuhan and Tianjin Universities (China) Yujia Zhai, Jiaqi Yang, Hezhao Zhang, Wei Lu focused their work on understanding public perception of artificial intelligence through media discourse (Zhai et al., 2020). Scientists Amy Sahmeni and Nur Afifa (Indonesia) based on the theory of T.D. Van Dijk conduct a discourse analysis of ways and methods of identifying the true identity of social actors. This work shows how media discourse studies reveal the hidden ideologies of the existence of power (Sahmeni, Afifah, 2019). M. Kopytowska, a researcher from the University of Lodz (Poland) in her work presents a theoretical point of view on discourse in social networks, understood as a product and as a process. The author identifies the paradigm of discourse in social networks, emphasizing both horizontal (industrial) and vertical (social) aspects of digital communication (Kopytowska, 2022).

In this article we would like to focus on a part of the discourse – mass media discourse, which has become the object of research in the humanities mainly in the last two decades and mainly among linguists. Thus, N.N. Boldyrev and T.N. Efimenko, using a cognitive approach, consider the problem of media discourse “in the context of the linguistic interpretation of scientific knowledge in the media” (Boldyrev, Efimenko, 2022: 355). A significant contribution to the study of media discourse was made by the works of E.N. Basovskaya, T.G. Dobrosklonskaya, M.R. Zheltukhina, A.A. Kibrik, N.I. Klushina, A.V. Polonsky, M. Talbot, N. Fraklo and others. In Russia, entire scientific philological schools have emerged that study mass media discourse. However, it should be noted that clarification of the difference between the concepts of “media discourse” and “mass media discourse” could not be found in scientific publications.

It is important to point out the results of work in the study of mass media discourse by the Belgorod media scientific school, which has been holding the International Conference “Discoursology and Media Criticism” since 2006 and has dozens of publications on media criticism and discourse theory. The works of E.A. Kozhemyakin consider two approaches to defining the concept of “media discourse”. According to the first one, media discourse is associated with institutions (branches of government, organizations, other subjects of communication), the second approach proceeds from the fact that it is the mass media that are the basis for the creation of media discourse, which appears as a complex of related institutional discourses (sports, medical, etc.). E.A. Kozhemyakin understands media discourse as “thematically focused, culturally determined speech-thinking activity in the mass media space” (Kozhemyakin, 2010: 16).

On the one hand, media discourse is studied as thematically specific, such as pedagogical, scientific, religious, political, etc. On the other hand, media discourse is interpreted as “any type of discourse implemented in the field of mass communication” prepared by the media (Kozhemyakin, 2010: 16). This point of view is supported by Moscow linguist N.I. Klushina: “the space of media discourse consists of areas of intersection of media and politics (political media discourse), media and science (scientific media discourse), media and law (legal media discourse), media and religion (religious media discourse) and etc.” (Klushina, 2014: 68).

The study of mass media discourse is also carried out on the basis of the St. Petersburg School of Media Linguistics and the publications of the International Scientific Journal “Media Linguistics”, established in 2014 by St. Petersburg State University (indexed in Scopus). The magazine contains more than ten articles with the word “media discourse” in the title. Special mention should be made of the publications by L.R. Duskaeva, the scientific editor of the journal, who considers the communicative framework of media solidarity with its addressee as a resource for the development, scaling of media discourse and its influence on society. In particular, we are talking about speech etiquette as a linguistic tool for the self-organization of online communities (Duskaeva, Ivanova, 2020: 16-18).

In turn, the Ural School of Media Discourse Analysis headed by E.V. Chepkina (Chepkina, Lemeseva, 2017), Ural Federal University explores the conflict media discourse to find the identifications of Russians in journalistic discourse using a text-generating system. The basis for the emerging theory was the works of French and Russian structuralists and post-structuralists (R. Barthes, Y. Kristeva, Y. Lotman, B. Uspensky, etc.). The theory of discourse of this school was directly influenced by the works of F. Guattari, J. Deleuze, P. Serio, M. Foucault, etc. The works of this scientific school are united by an interest in non-functional discourses (journalism, advertising, politics, memories), reliance on post-classical, post-structuralist concepts of language, text, discourse. The principle of organizing discursive identity in first-person speech was studied by L.V. Enina, who belongs to this school (Enina, 2016).

Speaking about publications representing thematic discourses in the mass media that influence the society, it is necessary to mention the review made by the authors of the National Research University “Higher School of Economics”. However, this review concerns research done by American scientists on the material of English-language network media for 2021, and it identifies the dominant discourses of racism, the COVID-19 pandemic, feminism and the representation of women (Vazhenina et al., 2022). It is interesting that the authors of this review, speaking about dominant media discourses, do not define dominant mass media discourse and its differences from non-dominant one. There are no survey studies of dominant mass media discourses based on Russian-language media resources, however, there are some works related to individual mass media discourses that have the characteristics of a dominant one. For example, environmental mass media discourse, which can be called dominant due to its duration, scale and great influence on the transformation of values, especially of young people (Kaminskaya et al., 2019).

Systematization of the research paradigm of mass media discourse and the identification of the dominant mass media discourse as a phenomenon seems promising not only for the scientific community, but also for the practice of media education in the conditions of mediatization and digitalization of reality. Thus, Nikolay Khilko and Nina Genova, considering the development of competencies in the context of student training, note: “Basic competencies come to the cognitive component of media literacy” (Khilko, Genova, 2023: 425). In the works of A. Fedorov, the discourses of media education and media criticism in the domestic educational process are closely studied (Fedorov et al., 2017) and the concept of means of attracting and retaining the attention of the audience is developed in detail (Fedorov, 2015).

#### 4. Results

Thus, the listed main directions of this research prove the interdisciplinarity of discourse as a subject of scientific analysis.

Based on the studies that mention the concept of “dominant media discourse,” the authors of the article identify the following properties of dominant mass media discourse as a phenomenon:

1. Scale – presence in all top mass media, large response and coverage in social media and involvement of public opinion leaders (experts) in the topic of discourse;
2. Duration – at least a year;
3. Thematic versatility – the presence of thematic branches – “subdiscourses”;
4. Ideological nature and influence on society – the presence of ideas and the promotion of a certain kind of values that can influence public consciousness.

Institutional discourses that are implemented by institutions through the media (for example, judicial media discourse) are least often considered in Russian philological science due to the fact that they are aimed at a narrow target audience. Most studies are focused on thematic discourses that are born at the intersection of the media efforts of many social actors, involving more and more new adherents, reflecting social trends and value meanings of modern Russian society.

Research on mass media discourse and mass media discourse can be grouped on three grounds:

1. Mass media discourse with reference to the region ([Gizdatov 2015](#); [Polyakova, 2021](#); [Pushkareva, 2017](#));
2. Mass media discourse as a phenomenon and object of research ([Alefirenko, 2016](#); [Ivchenkov, 2018](#); [Terskikh, 2009](#));
3. Mass media discourse of individual events ([Bushev, 2019](#)).

Since media is broadly interpreted by most researchers not only as a channel of mass communication, but also as a channel of interpersonal communication, it is appropriate here to clarify the definition of mass media discourse and distinguish between two terms – “media discourse” and “mass media discourse”. Obviously, the latter will be closely connected with the broader concept of “media discourse,” which, in the context of this study, we define by referring to M.R. Zheltukhina. She understands media discourse as “verbal or nonverbal, oral or written text in combination with pragmatic, sociocultural, psychological and other factors expressed by the mass media, taken in the event aspect, representing an action participating in sociocultural interaction and reflecting the mechanism of consciousness of communicants” ([Zheltukhina, 2016: 293](#)).

At the same time, most researchers focus their attention precisely on mass media discourse as the central, most significant part of media discourse, considering, following T.G. Dobrosklonskaya that important directions of its research today are approaches formed within the framework of cognitive linguistics ([Dobrosklonskaya, 2014: 185](#)). It is important to note that T.G. Dobrosklonskaya, highlighting mass media discourse as an object of scientific description, does not define this concept. We propose to understand mass media discourse as verbal and non-verbal, thematically focused speech and mental activity carried out in the space of mass media and reflecting the mechanisms of communicants’ awareness of the subject of the mass media message.

Mass media discourse is closely connected with the values of society, with political, economic and other spheres. Considering it as a holistic entity associated with various fields of activity, we classify it as an interinstitutional phenomenon.

Mass media discourses postulate certain values that are supported/not supported by target audiences: the scale of discourses, their distribution and impact on society are associated with discussions about values and assessments of phenomena. The formation of society’s values occurs with the direct participation of the mass media. Today it is an indisputable fact, which stimulated discussions in the academic environment and among practicing journalists about the mission of a journalist in this process and even the emergence in the 21st century of a new research branch in the theory of journalism – the axiology of journalism, which considers “journalism as a source and retransmitter of the values of society in all their subject-semantic diversity, as well as journalism itself as a social value” ([Sidorov, 2016: 14](#)).

The devaluation of the previous value system in the 1990s and the uncertainty of the new one stimulated the study of mass media discourse in the context of the value paradigm. The epochal break in Russia was characterized by value uncertainty and disorientation of a large part of the population, and the main result of this period was axiological pluralism, the emergence of several axiological paradigms and increasing their distance from each other.

Not only humanities, but also Russian journalistic practice faced the challenge of formulating value meanings. Today, power structures are also striving to formulate values that are important for preserving the stability and integrity of the country. Thus, according to the Presidential Decree (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 809), traditional Russian spiritual and moral values include, first of all, life, dignity, human rights and freedoms, patriotism, citizenship, service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its fate, high moral ideals, strong family, creative work, priority of the spiritual over the material, humanism, mercy, justice, collectivism, mutual assistance and mutual respect, historical memory and continuity of generations, unity of the peoples of Russia. The document emphasizes that traditional Russian spiritual and moral values unite our multinational and multi-religious country. Mass media discourse transmits and shapes values. The transmission of values in mass media discourse often occurs not directly, but through the interpretation of events and the creation of images, many of which have an archetypal basis (Zvereva, Shesterina, 2022). Images allow us “to form the national-cultural specificity of discourse” (Boldyrev, Dubrovskaya, 2015: 14).

The materials for identifying the values transmitted by mass media discourses are, first of all, journalistic texts. Thus, V.V. Antropova, who belongs to the Chelyabinsk scientific school of media research, through concept analysis, identified three value models reflected in the leading media of the last decade, which are associated with a certain type of media addressee (Antropova, 2021).

High-quality press, according to the results of research by V.V. Antropova, demonstrates a commitment to the innovative-reflexive model, in the center of which is the image of a “reflective innovator.” This type of addressee as an “active rationalist intellectual” correlates with the “innovative-conservative” model of the press, while the mass press forms a “conformal consumer” model, creating a “mentally mobile value consciousness” (Antropova, 2021: 38).

However, with regard to the study of values in mass media discourses, as a rule, social media material is outside the scope of research attention, although it is through network technologies that media discourses have a great influence on society. Likewise, A.V. Baychik, developing the ideas of the St. Petersburg axiological school of media research, in her dissertation presented the mass media space as a space of value conflict (Baichik, 2022). The focus of A.V. Baychik’s attention is on the value conflict associated with the political confrontation between various forces and movements. At the same time, the dissertation deals primarily with registered media.

The functioning of the mass media is comprehensively shown in the works of structural functionalism (Luhmann, 2005). The features of the information society, generated by the total influence of the media and the trajectory of the civic activity formation in the information age, are covered by Manuel Castells, who sees the principle of networks in the organization of society itself, in which today each subject is interconnected with others (Castells, 2000: 62-63). Digital communications play a leading role in coordinating the actions of subjects. At the same time, although digital technologies have decentralized information flows, they can be managed to scale social processes. M. Castells explains the entire transformation of social processes through the transformation of communicative practices, “since it is through communication that human consciousness interacts with his social and natural environment. This process of communication occurs in accordance with the structure, culture, organization and technology of communication in a given society” (Castells, 2016: 20-21). In the concept of M. Castells, the strength of power correlates with its ability to control communication and thus influence public consciousness, be it state power or the power of various organizations.

It is these circumstances that make the study of media discourses important for media educational practice: it is necessary not only to teach students to get involved in the media process, but also to comprehend it in its entirety in the context of social processes.

## 5. Conclusion

To summarize the above, it should be noted that Russian philological science has developed various approaches to the study of mass media discourses that reflect the mental state of Russian society, since mass media communication is a space in which not only events are reflected, but also their meanings, contexts and interpretations.

One of the promising approaches, reflecting the social trends of recent years, is the approach from the point of view of studying the values broadcast in the mass media. This approach should take into account communication theories that allow us to reveal the specifics of technologies

affecting society. Comprehensive studies of the dominant mass media discourses in Russia today seem to be a prospect not only for modern Russian humanities, but also for media education.

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## Transformation of Russian Women's Media Consumption: from Magazines to Blogs

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### Abstract

For a long time in Russia, women's glossy magazines have had a significant impact on the socialization of women, shaping their lifestyle and gender identity. They not only met the needs of women, but also defined them.

The study examines and evaluates the changing trends in the behavior of media consumers in the digital age. The main focus is on analyzing the reasons why young women prefer websites and blogs to traditional magazines. Because of this we need some changes in media educational activities.

The article tests the hypothesis that nowadays modern women's magazines, whose models were created abroad, do not take into account the real interests of the local audience, which affects the media consumption of such press by young women. Also the critical thinking skills of young women were checked.

This article will examine the change in young women's attitudes towards gender-oriented periodicals and mass media, and the transformation of their priorities in choosing women's magazines and websites. Methods of media consumption are changing, but the level of media literacy is still low – the young women prefer the entertainment content and some of them think that such information is important. Creating media literacy courses and course about women's press (it's studied by journalism students) we need to pay attention to this.

**Keywords:** media consumption, gender-oriented magazines, glossy magazines, women's media, media literacy.

### 1. Introduction

Today the term “media consumption” is widely used in the context of describing the characteristics of media process and media audience. This term usually means a list of media (mass media, media communications) used by an individual or a group of people in course of reading, watching, listening. It is also related to the concept of media literacy because the tasks of media literacy are the transformation of media consumption into an active and critical process, helping people better understand commercial and other types of manipulation, as well as helping people understand the role of the media and civic, collaborative media in building views on reality.

It should be noted that the identification of audience interests in the process of building a typological model of mass media is an established practice in the periodical editor's activities. Even

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in press system before Russian revolution in 1917 magazines and newspapers were classified: for children, youth, family reading, for women, students, etc. The Party-Soviet press structure has the differentiation by territorial criterion; there were media in national languages; for children, adolescents and youth; media with specialization in science, technology, and professional environment. Considerable attention was paid to the women's press in the Soviet period. There were published central and republican magazines, as well as publications of autonomous republics (Takayangi, 2018; Utiuzh, 2018). In the post-Soviet period the volume of women's press increased (Chermenskaya, 2006; Gudova, Rakipova, 2010), men's magazines were opened (Belskij, 2015): so, there was a big interest in gender-oriented press. Nowadays publishers continue to develop the practice of publishing gender-oriented media products (Ovshinskaya, 2013; Rymareva, 2021; Sivrikova, 2016).

Despite the existing demand for gender-oriented media and mass media, it is necessary to note changes in the consumption of such types of media. For example, the circulation *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestyanka* magazines, popular in Soviet Union, decreased significantly in 1990s; Russian-language versions of international women's periodicals have spread in the Russian media market. Foreign researchers attributed the popularity of women's magazines to the desire of Russian women to look beautiful, surround themselves with beauty, strive to have an ideal figure and focus on American models (Goscilo, 2000). Then the model of a glossy women's printed magazine, popular in the post-Soviet period, was replaced by online media addressed to women (e-magazines, websites, portals, blog platforms and social networks communities). The audience's choice of women's media is shaped by the socio-political, economic, cultural, and technical characteristics of modern society.

It is necessary to reconsider the role of gender magazines in a woman's life, because of globalization, modern Russian young girls are so-called "digital natives". This term was introduced in 2001 and means people who grew up in a digital environment (Prensky, 2001; Thomas, 2011).

The changing society determines the need to study the peculiarities of media consumption of a gender audience, which is relevant in the light of improving the effectiveness of journalists, marketers, publishers working in the segment of women's media and mass media and media literacy education specialists working with students.

## 2. Materials and methods

The authors conducted the study using the following methods: review of scientific literature, observation, survey, questionnaire, description, comparison.

The results of study are based in a sociological survey (questionnaire). Chronological framework of study: from 2016 to 2024. Characteristics of respondents involved in the sociological study: young women aged 18 to 22 years old, living in Rostov-on-Don, students of Southern Federal University, Rostov State Transport University, Don Industrial and Technical College named of B. N. Slyusar. The questionnaire survey was conducted in person, in the presence of researchers.

In May 2016, 438 young women were interviewed by questionnaire; 324 – in March–May 2021 (COVID-19 period); and 300 – in September–October 2023 (a period of great changes in the Russian media market because of political reasons).

## 3. Discussion

Scientists analyzing modern media consumption focus on gender, age, territorial, professional and other characteristics of the audience (Kohanaya, 2023; Luchinkina et al., 2022; Shrum, 2009; Vugina, 2017; Zelentsov, 2015; Zvereva, 2018).

New (digital) technologies affect changes in media consumption: "*the quantum of media consumption among individualities is adding as new technologies are created*" (John, 2021).

Media consumption affect the way people use of media when understanding and monitoring how the media work, how they communicate and how they represent everyday life (Spinelli, 2021).

Changes in media consumption are also influenced by developing of media literacy. Researchers around the world use student surveys to understand the transformation of media consumption and their media literacy (Djumanova, 2022; Velásquez et al., 2017). Media literacy allows people to decipher hidden messages, biases and false messages in media content, which allows them to make informed decisions, challenge social norms and actively choose channels for

obtaining information. Moreover, media literacy gives people the tools to navigate complex media landscapes, resist manipulation and promote social justice (Orfanidou, Panagiotou 2023).

Ideology, views, mental representations, behavioral patterns of individuals are formed in the social system (Berger, Luckmann, 1966). Formation of gender socialization (Komarovskiy 1950; Parsons, Bales, 1955), gender identity, gender relations (Goffman, 1976) also occurs on a social level and is the result of social interaction.

Mass media reflects gender ideology and disseminates popular gender concepts and behaviors. Women's media and mass media are a popular type of media due to the effective implementation of its main task – to reflect and maintain gender norms and standards of audience behavior (Smeyukha, 2012). Women's magazines are a kind of construct of gender identities, the authors S.K. Cardoso and V. Cardoso consider the type of women's periodicals as a kind of gender technology (Cardoso, 2020).

At the same time, women's magazines do not always have a positive effect on women, for example, women's fashion magazines negatively affect the psychological health and woman's body dissatisfaction (Ozbek et al., 2023; Swiatkowski, 2016).

However, if women's magazines published in the last century could be considered as part of struggle for the women's political and economic rights, then the modern women's press is apolitical, they are focused on an audience entertaining. *“Gender-focused research reveals that women readers obtain a plethora of pleasures though the act of reading/consuming women's magazines and this is one of the reasons that they repeatedly revisit this particular media genre”*, – so defines the main purpose of women's magazines A. Alexiou (Alexiou, 2020). Women's press does not emphasize the female problems. *“Magazines do not present the common problems of women in a political manner. Moreover, if the problems of womanhood are mentioned in some columns of the magazine, the problems of some women are showed with personification and individualization without political implications or views about the women's issues”*, – M. Furat and O.A. Sonmez wrote (Furat, Sonmez, 2013). Women express displeasure that sexualizing media representation is commonplace across a number of gender-oriented magazines (Graff et al., 2013). Women's magazines can form such a phenomenon as medicalization, when the ordinary elements in a woman's life (menstruation, childbirth, menopause) are perceived as diseases. This contributes to the development of the pharmaceutical industry, but also to the formation of anxiety among women (Can et al., 2023).

A type of women's magazine focused on positioning the canons of female beauty, expanding consumer socialization (Korte, 2015; Stevens, Maciaran, 2005), as well as in unifying the reading interests of the audience grew in popularity due to media globalization and cultural ideals transformation (Andrews, Carter, 2020; Al-Jarf, 2023). As Seliverstova said, *“the 21st century is characterized by the development of a new type of society in which its main part holds the material consumption to be the meaning of life”* (Seliverstova, 2020).

Different authors (Luo, 2008; Nampothiri et al., 2023) says that the typological models of international women's magazines do not take into account the national, cultural, economic interests of the audience, as the result some women are not satisfied with the content of the popular women's press. They don't find interesting topics in it, and therefore refuse to read women's magazines.

Young women receive information from social networks, which, like women's magazines, shape beauty standards and influence women's perception of themselves. However, at the same time there are feminist resources and activist bloggers who promote self-acceptance and body positivity in Internet (Caldeira, 2024; Kushwaha, 2024). The thematic diversity attracts a female audience to websites and social networks.

All this suggests that young women are trying to read and analyze images and implicit messages in all types of media content, and on media literacy education courses we can provide platforms for debate on gender issues.

#### 4. Results

The segment of Russian mass women's magazines is mostly represented by the localizations of popular international publications. In 2016, the rating of 20 monthly magazines by audience per issue included the following women's magazines: “Cosmopolitan” (3.8 million people), “Burda” (2 million), “Glamour” (1.3 million) (Rossijskaya periodicheskaya..., 2017). In 2020 The statistics have hardly changed: “Cosmopolitan” (3.2 million people), “Burda” (2.1 million), “Glamour”

(1.8 million) (Rossijskaya periodicheskaya..., 2021). In 2022, there was a transformation caused by changes in the international politics. The number of women's magazines decreased, and their total circulation fell by 24 % to 24.6 million copies. Some of magazines changed their brands. At the same time the websites audience was increasing. For example, in September 2023, "Cosmopolitan" magazine (the Russian version was named The "Voice") had an audience more than 5 million, while "Harper's Bazar" (published in Russia under the name "The Symbol") had an audience of about 1 million (Mediascope, 2023).

At this time social networks are a popular source of information for young women, as was indicated by 80 % of respondents (for comparison websites were chosen by 67 %, television – 32 %, newspapers and magazines – 12 %, radio – 4 %). In comparison with the data obtained during the study in 2021, the priority of these information resources remained: then 70 % of respondents indicated social networks as the main source of information, 54 % – websites, 2 1% - television, radio – 11 %, 9 % – newspapers and magazines.

In the media space, young women are interested in the following women's topics: fashion (68 %, according to the study in 2023, and 50 % in 2021), appearance care (73 % and 46 %), cooking (58 % and 30 %), relationships (47 % and 38 %), needlework (14 % and 21 %). It should be noted that the interest of the female youth audience in needlework is falling. In addition, during the 2023 study, young women were asked to indicate topics that interest them (in addition to women's ones): 40 % chose the topic of sports, 35 % chose politics, as well as topics of tourism, investment, vocational training and technical innovation.

Respondents most often find information on women's topics of interest: on social networks (87 % of respondents in 2023 and 80 % in 2021), on websites (75 % and 59 %), in television programs (34 % and 15 %), newspapers and magazines (9 % and 5 %).

The majority of respondents (58 %) in 2023 have a positive attitude towards women's media (magazines, websites and social networks groups). In 2021, only 33 % of respondents indicated that they were interested in women's publications. And in 2016, 46 % responded that they read women's media and use media resources addressed to a female audience.

Responses to the question "Do you visit women's groups on social media" were different: in 2023 and in 2016 25 % of young women gave a positive answer, in 2021 – only 15 % said that they visit such groups. At the same time a significant part of respondents don't remember the names of these groups (63 % in 2023 and 46 % in 2021).

Majority of young women do not demonstrate social activity in them, but 15 % of respondents said that they leave comments under texts, participate in the discussion in 2023 (for comparison – 17 % in 2021 and 14 % in 2016). The interviewees criticize the information or leave approving comments.

Printed women's magazines were read by 20 % of respondents in 2023, 23 % – in 2021 and 26 % in 2014.

To the question: "Why don't you read printed women's magazines?" the answers in 2023 were different: 59 % do not read the paper press (in 2021 this figure was equal to 42 %), 14 % indicated that they do not buy women's printed periodicals because of its high cost, compared to 12 % in 2021 and 20 % in 2016. And 12 % of young women do not buy printed women's magazines since this type of publication does not contain interesting and necessary information for them (in 2021 – 9 %, in 2016 – 37 %).

The question: "What names of women's magazines (websites) do you know?" caused difficulties for the audience in 2023. The respondents' answers were distributed as follows (magazines titles' translated): "Vogue" (37 %), "Elle" (23 %), "Cosmopolitan" (15 %), "Elle Girl" (5 %), "Lisa" (4 %), "Harper's Bazaar" (2 %), "Good Advice" (2 %), "Glamour" (2 %), "The Voice" (2 %), "I'm Buying" (2 %), "Caravan" (2 %), "Marie Claire" (1 %), "Shape" (1 %), "Women's Day" (1 %), "Working Woman" (1 %). It should be noted that for the period of the study in September–October 2023 the magazines "Vogue", "Elle", "Elle Girl", "Glamour" were not published in Russia (their activities were suspended in the Russian Federation in 2022), "Shape" (has not been published in Russia since 2014 due to changes in the economic situation in the media market), and Russian magazine publishers Cosmopolitan and Harper's Bazaar rebroadcast them in 2022, after which the publications began to be published under the names "The Voice" and "The Symbol".

The survey showed that young women do not read regional, national and confessional women's publications. For example, they do not read Orthodox women's magazines Slavyanka or

gender-oriented Muslim magazines *Nana* (published in the Chechen Republic), *The Woman of Dagestan* (published in Dagestan). Regional women magazines such *Moskvichka* (Moscow) and *Rostovchanka* (Rostov-on-Don), *GL* (Samara) are not remembered too.

The main reasons for choosing women's publications (magazines, websites) have not changed during the study period: respondents read women's media, because they contain information of an entertainment nature (43 % of respondents in the 2023 study believe so, 21 % – in 2021, 51 % – in 2016), these publications introduce with information from the fashion world, which is important for a gender audience of this age looking for their own style (41 % in 2023, 25 % in 2021, and 66 % in 2016) (see [Table 1](#)). Didactic aspect of publications attracts little audience: only 8 % of respondents like the fact that the mass media teach what a modern woman should be like in 2023, 15 % – in 2021, and 16 % – in 2016.

**Table 1.** The responses to the question: “Why do you choose to read women’s magazines, websites?”

№	Answers	Respondents (%)		
		2023	2021	2016
1	They contain information of an entertaining nature	43	21	51
2	They provide fashion information	41	25	66
3	They provide information about celebrities	35	20	33
4	They give problem solving advice	23	13	17
5	They help to choose my image and get closer to it	15	8	19
6	They teach me to be a modern girl	8	15	16
7	They publish information on housekeeping (cooking, needlework, design and decoration)	21	6	29

Respondents prefer women’s websites of multi-thematic nature (websites dedicated to entertainment information, covering the lives of celebrities, writing about fashion, style, women’s health, traveling, etc.): in 2023, 69 % of young women indicated this. In 2021 and 2016, culinary sites were in the first place in popularity among young women (30 % and 49 %), multi-thematic websites were in second place (25 % and 43 %). The parenting and crafts websites are the least popular among respondents (see [Table 2](#)).

**Table 2.** The responses to the question: “What women websites are you interested in?”

№	Answers	Respondents (%)		
		2023	2021	2016
1	Multi-thematic	60	25	43
2	Parenting	10	6	7
3	Culinary	39	30	49
4	Crafts	8	9	16
5	Fashion	21	18	39

Studies of foreign women's magazines have shown that a decrease in audience interest in reading popular women's magazines occurs due to their inconsistency with readers' interests and expectations. Our research has revealed the narrowness of the functional orientation of this media type. So to the question about the women's media role the respondents answered as follows (see Table 3): they help to get important information, develop interests and help to form your own style. And, according to the young women, these publications are not focused on helping the audience in the psychological sphere, the professional segment and everyday life.

**Table 3.** The answers to the question: “What role do women’s media and mass media play in young woman life?”

№	Answers	Respondents (%)		
		2023	2021	2016
1	Help with important information	43	30	67
2	Develop interests	49	25	52
3	Help with a style	48	33	61
4	Help to find a life partner	12	9	8
5	Help with personal, family problems	22	12	14
6	Help to organize your household	9	19	14
7	Help in career	7	4	4

To the question (2023): “Which women's magazines do you read regularly?” the respondents gave the following answers: “I don't read magazines, sometimes I open them to look at a horoscope or read jokes. I am looking for other information on websites”, “I do not regularly read women's magazines, I try to find interesting information on the Internet”, “There are no certain preferences, I am looking for a topic that interests me on the Internet”, etc.

The question: “Which bloggers do you subscribe to?”, on the contrary, did not cause any difficulties for the respondents. The following bloggers were named in the responses: Alexander Bulkin (autoblogger, author of the Bulkin channel with an audience of 4.7 million on YouTube) (6 %), Booster (blogger, streamer, author of entertainment videos, Booster channel with an audience of 3.6 million on YouTube) (5 %), Alexander Zubarev (blogger, streamer, Zubarev channel with an audience of 3 million on YouTube) (4 %), Nastya Ivleeva (blogger, TV presenter) (4 %), Karina Kasparyants (author of a blog about style, makeup, travel) (3 %), Dmitry Maslennikov (video blogger, musician, TV presenter, author of the Dima Maslennikov channel with an audience of 18 million on YouTube, which hosts videos in an entertainment format, extreme videos, ghost hunting) (3 %), Maria Tarasova (journalist, blogger, author of videos about women's health, beauty, style) (3 %), Gosha Kartsev (stylist, blogger, TV presenter) (3 %), Oleg Gaas (actor) (1 %), Katya Klap (video blogger, makes videos in genres: sketch, conversational videos, musical parodies, unpacking goods, travel, author of The Kate Clapp channel with an audience of more than 7 million on YouTube) (1 %), Dmitry Kuplinov (blogger, streamer, the owner of the Kuplinov Play channel with an audience of 16.8 million subscribers on YouTube and more than 800 thousand on Telegram) (1 %), Nikolay Sobolev (video blogger, writer, singer, creator of the SOBOLEV channel about public events with an audience of 4.9 million subscribers on YouTube) (1 %), Masha Zoom (blogger, shoots videos about unpacking goods, humorous videos, author of the channel Masha Zoom with an audience of more than 4 million on YouTube) (1 %), etc. 5 % replied that they did not subscribe to bloggers. 37 % of the respondents did not answer this question (2023). The expansion of the blogosphere and the identification of a wide thematic spectrum in it provide a significant choice of personalized media channels; at the same time, most of the media resources that young women choose are presented in an entertainment format.

## 5. Conclusion

Popular glossy magazines remain the predominant segment of Russian women's magazine periodicals. However, the audience of the women's print press continues to decline due to the emergence of new media channels and the differentiation of readers' interests.

Gender-oriented magazines (in this case, women's publications) describe popular gender concepts of behavior, reflect changes in society concerning the interests of a gender audience and its lifestyle. Thus, the conducted research showed that the main reason why the youth female audience turns to reading women's publications is to be informed about the lifestyle, as a result of which young women are interested in multi-thematic gender-oriented magazines. The leisure time of the female youth audience has been transformed, which explains the decrease in its interest in crafts and, as a result, in this topic in the media. The average age of childbearing has increased (this trend is becoming global) – and parenting magazines addressed to mothers have become less popular.

Young women are unaware of the existence of special (religious, regional) women's magazines, which raise serious gender issues. Moreover, the youth audience may not remember the names of the sites they visit, which is a feature of the modern media process. The modern media consumption of young people is characterized by: hours spent in the Internet environment, the predominance of entertainment video content and the rejection of the use of traditional media.

The study shows that women are tired of stereotypes in traditional women's magazines. However the changes in media consumption are not related to the growth media literacy. Answers to questions about the functionality of women's media show that some of respondents can identify the concepts of “entertainment nature” and “important” information (this is confirmed by the answers from [Table 1](#) and [Table 3](#)).

Developing media literacy courses for female students of Russian universities, it is necessary to pay attention to the analysis of gender-based media content.

Analyzing the media texts of women's magazines and watching bloggers' videos will help develop critical thinking. We can suggest: indentifying the essence of the message, separating gender stereotypes from the message, searching commercial information or manipulation elements in texts and videos.

The media literacy course should include practical exercises that will help distinguish important problem-solving information from entertaining and memorable information. It is necessary to include explanations of the functions of journalism and the Internet environment: informational, educational, communicative, cultural, educational, recreational (entertainment), and so on. So, the students will know different content channels (specialized women magazines, blogs about gender problems). One lesson can be devoted to the analysis of various women's media and the functions they perform. The lesson will help young women to understand the sources of important information.

Also, in media literacy lessons, it is necessary to explain why it is necessary to remember the source of information. Young women should understand that the skill of identifying the source of information helps to verify content and assume the purpose of its creation. We recommend to include a task with reports about popular bloggers in the media literacy course for students. Students may be asked to talk about the topics of bloggers' materials, about the promotion of commercial information by bloggers, about techniques for attracting audience attention, and so on.

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## Digital Literacy on Beauty Information: A Case Study on Autbase Twitter @ohmybeautybank

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### Abstract

This research aims to determine digital literacy among followers of the @ohmybeautybank account regarding beauty information. This research is a case study research with a qualitative approach. The selection of informants was carried out using a purposive sampling technique. Data was collected by interviewing informants who were followers of the @ohmybeautybank account with eight informants. The study results show that the digital literacy of followers of the @ohmybeautybank account tends to refer to the digital literacy of Paul Gilster and Japelidi. Four of the eight informants tended to Paul Gilster's digital literacy, and four others to Japelidi's digital literacy. In Paul Gilster's digital literacy, four informants carried out all literacy activities, namely searching the internet, guiding hypertext directions, evaluating information content, and compiling knowledge. Meanwhile, in Japelidi literacy, nine digital literacy activities, namely accessing, selecting, understanding, analyzing, verifying, evaluating, distributing, producing, and participating, were carried out by four other informants. One Japelidi digital literacy activity not carried out by the informant's involved collaboration. The results of this study indicate that the level of digital literacy among social media users about beauty information needs to be improved. This is important to help them understand, evaluate, and use information critically, especially considering the large amount of information circulating on social media.

**Keywords:** digital literacy, social media, Twitter, @ohmybeautybank, Beauty information.

### 1. Introduction

Social media plays an important role in human life. With social media, someone can communicate and interact with others and get information quickly (Sawyer, 2011). Various information circulates on social media, including information about beauty @ohmybeautybank, based on Twitter, is where people can interact and search for beauty information. The @ohmybeautybank account is an auto-base account on Twitter that focuses on beauty care, cosmetics, and personal care. It includes skincare, makeup, body care, nail care, fashion, perfumery, healthcare, and lifestyle products. This account joined Twitter in May 2018, and as of March 2023, the @ohmybeautybank account had 1,405,160 followers and 1,667,228 posts (Accessed on March 29, 2023). The @ohmybeautybank account regularly updates its tweet page with the latest beauty information, including experiences and reviews from para its users. This account aims to provide audiences a place to exchange and share information about beauty.

Based on the Table 1 data, it can be seen that the Twitter auto base account @ohmybeautybank has the highest number of followers and number of tweets compared to other beauty autobase accounts. It shows that the @ohmybeautybank account attracts more attention and

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is chosen by many audiences to fulfill their beauty information needs. Apart from that, @ohmybeautybank followers are very active in sending comments and responding to various tweets containing questions, reviews, and recommendations regarding beauty products to increase their knowledge and need for the latest information about beauty.

**Table 1.** Beauty Autobase on Twitter

No	Account name	Number of Followers	Number of Posts
1	@ohmybeautybank	1,405,161 followers	1,667,228 Tweets
2	@beauthingy	196,068 followers	449,571 Tweets
3	@womanfeeds_id	193,235 followers	378,744 Tweets
4	@itsbeautyfess	29,683 followers	54,295 Tweets

Source: Beauty Autobase on Twitter

This research raises digital literacy as an object of study to explore more deeply the digital literacy possessed by followers @ohmybeautybank account, which is the subject of this research. Based on a pre-survey conducted with followers of the @ohmybeautybank account via Google form, it was found that they had difficulty distinguishing between correct and trustworthy information. Apart from that, the large amount of beauty product promotional content not for personal use makes followers of the @ohmybeautybank account feel doubtful about the information available, whether the content creator uses the product or is content taken from other people and exaggerated. Therefore, good digital literacy is needed to understand and select information that suits your needs. Moreover, suppose you want to consume beauty products. In that case, good literacy is required to minimize product use errors, which can negatively affect skin health, and to achieve the effectiveness and efficiency of the products used (Ekaputri et al., 2020).

Quoting from the Yellow Ribbon website, A video has circulated stating that the chemicals in sunscreen can cause cancer. It has given rise to debate among social media users, including doctors, beauty observers, and the public. The chemical that is said to cause cancer is oxybenzone (Pita Kuning, 2022).

However, the statement in the video is not true. According to the FDA (Food and Drug Administration – United States Food and Drug Administration), the oxybenzone content in sunscreen is considered safe to use. The FDA has approved using oxybenzone in sunscreen since 1978 (Mirsky et al., 2018). Currently, no significant evidence suggests that sunscreen chemicals can cause cancer. As long as the sunscreen product is listed in BPOM and has a distribution permit, the product is safe to use (Pita Kuning, 2022). Using sunscreen can reduce the risk of skin cancer and pre-cancer. Sunscreen can also help prevent premature aging, such as age spots and wrinkles (Richard, 2022).

Based on the statement above, research on digital beauty literacy is important, considering that many people, especially women, look for information online, one of which is through social media. Everyone needs to instill digital literacy within themselves to achieve the truth of information. With digital literacy, people can avoid false information or hoaxes (Sabrina, 2019). Various details on beauty circulate online. According to the 2019 Zap Beauty Index market research, before buying beauty products, 73.2 % of women first look for information online in the form of product reviews or reviews (ZAP..., 2019).

One of the digital platforms used to search for information is social media. Apart from being a place to interact, social media can now be used to get information about beauty (Hassan et al., 2021). This phenomenon becomes interesting when social media is used to obtain beauty information for its users. Moreover, beauty is a complex thing to discuss, not just about using a product to beautify and care for oneself but also regarding health, scientific, social, and economic aspects (Ekaputri et al., 2020).

Beauty products must be followed by adequate information to make their use more effective and reduce the negative impact of incorrect product use. There are various risks from using beauty products, such as poor product content, incompatibility with the skin, product authenticity, permission from BPOM, and halal certification from MUI (Ekaputri et al., 2020). With good digital literacy, a person will be more critical when reading product information, product reviews, halal, and product validity to make wise decisions about purchasing and using beauty products (Handriana et al., 2020).

Digital literacy is an important ability for everyone to have. Moreover, now more information dissemination occurs in digital media (Andriushchenko et al., 2020). According to Paul Gilster, digital literacy is the ability to understand and use information in various forms and sources accessed via computer devices (Nasrullah et al., 2017). Digital literacy has many benefits for individuals. With digital literacy, a person will have a creative and critical mindset and outlook, not easily influenced by provocative issues, and become a victim of false information (hoaxes) (Nasrullah et al., 2017).

Research on digital beauty literacy was carried out in 2022 by Amanda Lestari. This research aims to determine the literacy of female beauty information content among Instagram Female Daily followers. The research results revealed that the informants understood digital literacy well and utilized digital media effectively. This research also explains the core competencies of digital literacy and the form of messages on the Female Daily Instagram account (Lestari, 2022).

Other research was conducted by Sarah Derma Ekaputri, Cut Meutia Karolina, and Nisa N. Abdullah in 2020. This research aims to determine beauty information literacy among Female Daily Network users. The research results explain that beauty information literacy among users is in the high category, with a value of 75.95 %. Users can organize, search, manage, and use the information they get effectively and efficiently (Ekaputri et al., 2020).

This research complements previous studies. It is important to do because many people, especially women, are looking for information online. Then how is digital literacy regarding beauty information for followers of the @ohmybeautybank account? Therefore, this research aims to determine the digital literacy of Twitter followers @ohmybeautybank regarding beauty information.

## 2. Materials and methods

### a. Digital Literacy

Paul Gilster first introduced the concept of digital literacy in his "Digital Literacy" book in 1997. Gilster explained that digital literacy is the ability to understand and utilize information from various sources accessed via computer devices (Nasrullah et al., 2017).

Paul Gilster divides digital literacy skills into four competencies that a person needs to have (Gilster, 1997):

1) Searching on the Internet (Internet Searching) is the ability to search on the internet using a search engine (search engine) and carry out various activities. This competency includes searching the internet using a search engine and carrying out multiple activities.

2) Guide the Direction of Hypertext (Hypertextual Navigation). These competencies are understanding hypertext and hyperlinks and how they work, understanding the difference between reading a textbook and browsing on the internet, understanding how the web works, including bandwidth, HTTP, HTML, and URL, and understanding the characteristics of web pages.

3) Information Content Evaluation (Content Evaluation), is the ability to evaluate information by thinking critically. Information evaluation competencies include understanding the appearance of the website visited, tracing the source and author of information further, evaluating web addresses by understanding the various forms of domains for each institution or a particular country, the ability to analyze web pages, and understanding general questions in discussion groups.

4) Preparation of Knowledge (Knowledge Assembly) organizes previously obtained information by collecting and evaluating facts and opinions without prejudice. This competency consists of several components, namely, the ability to search for information via the internet, the ability to receive notifications of the latest news by joining and subscribing to news in newsgroups, mailing lists, or other discussion groups that discuss certain topics according to needs or problems, the ability to verify information obtained in internet with real-world sources.

Meanwhile, the Digital Literacy Activist Network (Japelidi) formulated ten digital literacies as a framework for developing guidelines for writing the Japelidi digital literacy series in 2018 (Monggillo et al., 2021):

- 1) Accessing, is competence to obtain information using digital media.
- 2) Selecting, is competence in choosing and sorting information obtained from various sources and considered useful for users.
- 3) Understanding, is competence in understanding previously selected information.
- 4) Analyze, is analyze information by looking at the advantages and disadvantages of information.
- 5) Verifying, is cross-confirming with similar information.

- 6) Evaluate, competency to consider risks before disseminating information.
- 7) Distributing, is competence to disseminate information by considering who will access the information.
- 8) Producing, is competence in compiling new information that is clear, accurate, and pays attention to ethics.
- 9) Participation, is competence plays an active role in sharing good and ethical information through social media and other online communication activities.
- 10) Collaboration, is competence to take the initiative and disseminate accurate, honest, and ethical information by collaborating with other stakeholders.

*b. Information*

In everyday terms, information is anything someone communicates through spoken language, newspapers, videos, etc. Information can be defined as data that is given context and meaning (Long et al., 2016).

According to Law Number 14 Year 2008 about Openness of Public Information, states that information is information, statement, or idea, as well as assigns that contain values, meanings, data, and facts along with explanations that can be seen, heard, and read which are presented in various packages and forms by developments in information and communication technology both electronic and non-electronic (Ministry of Communication and Information, 2008). Based on the definitions above, information can be defined as a statement, idea, or information containing data, values, and facts processed in various forms that can be used in decision-making.

Information circulating has various types, forms, and levels. When information can help readers, then the information is considered useful. Sutanta stated that there are five benefits of information, namely increasing knowledge, reducing uncertainty in information users, reducing the risk of failure, reducing unnecessary diversity so that it will produce more focused decisions, and providing rules, measures, standards, and decisions to determine achievements and targets, as well as goals (Rusdiana, Irfan, 2014). Thus, information will help someone make decisions to achieve goals and objectives that have been more defined and well-based in information obtained.

*c. Beauty*

Beauty has a very close relationship with women, and women become a dream for everyone. With this method, every woman expects herself to be beautiful. A beautiful face is important for every woman because it can increase self-confidence. However, beauty is not always associated with physique but also within oneself (inner beauty). Even though it cannot be avoided, beauty is always associated with a woman's physique (Satria, Junaedi, 2022).

In the Dictionary Big Language Indonesia, Beautiful is an adjective meaning beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, which refers to a woman's face. Beautiful can also be interpreted as something beautiful. According to Synnott, beauty is happiness, truth, goodness, and positive characteristics, so beauty is not always seen from the face or physical; it is also seen through the nature and character of women (Saputra et al., 2018). In contrast to Synnott, according to Kasiyan (2008), women are said to be beautiful not only based on the beauty of their faces but also with white, smooth, and tight skin, as well as a body shape that emphasizes the shape of the body, such as the chest and hips and everything related to the organs female body (Syahrana et al., 2022). In this case, Kasiyan sees beauty as being described by a person's physical form and ignoring inner beauty.

*d. Beauty Information*

Information is information, statements, or ideas containing data, values, and facts that are processed in various forms that can be used for decision-making. Meanwhile, beauty comes from the word pretty, an adjective that means beautiful, beautiful, and beautiful, which refers to the face or can be interpreted as something beautiful. Beauty information is various information, statements, and ideas about beauty. In this case, what is meant is how to make someone look lovely—for example, using beauty products such as makeup, skincare, etc. Beauty information can be in the form of beauty and fashion tips, product quality, price of a beauty product, benefits of beauty products, how to use beauty products, and so on.

This research is a type of case study research with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research aims to understand phenomena in a social context naturally by prioritizing the communication interaction process between the researcher and the phenomenon being studied (Herdiansyah, 2019). Case study research is a study that explores a problem in detail by collecting in-depth data and including various sources of information. This research uses a case study type of research to understand in depth the digital literacy carried out by followers of the

@ohmybeautybank account. In addition, a qualitative approach was chosen to explain and compare different aspects of the digital literacy of Twitter followers @ohmybeautybank regarding beauty information on the internet.

The selection of informants in this research used a purposive sampling technique, namely a sampling technique for data sources with certain considerations. In this research, informants were selected based on the criteria: Active followers of the @ohmybeautybank account, aged 18-25 years, willing to be interviewed, and actively looking for beauty information for at least the last three months (March until May 2023). Based on these criteria, eight informants who were followers of the @ohmybeautybank account were obtained.

The data collection techniques used in this research were in-depth interviews and a literature review of literature such as books, articles, the internet, and other relevant information that supported the research. Data analysis was carried out using the qualitative research data analysis model by Miles and Huberman: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. In research, it is necessary to test the validity of the data, namely triangulation and source triangulation (Sugiyono, 2019).

### 3. Discussion

Digital literacy is understanding and using information in various forms and sources accessed via computer devices (Nasrullah et al., 2017). Everyone needs to have digital literacy to search for, select, use, and disseminate information that suits their needs and avoid false information or hoaxes. One of the pieces of information spread on digital media is beauty information. Various information is spread on the internet, starting from reviews of beauty products, recommendations for beauty products, and so on.

Based on the research results and findings, it can be seen that the digital literacy of the informants is in line with the digital literacy of Paul Gilster and Japelidi.

#### a. Paul Gilster

##### 1) Search on the Internet

Information search activities on the internet for all informants were carried out using social media searches. However, three informants also used the help of the search engine, namely Google. Informants used various keywords, including beauty products, skin types, tips, reviews, and recommendations. Activities carried out by informants related to beauty information on the internet include reading beauty information and viewing photos and videos about explanations and comparisons of beauty products. One informant also stated that he follows beauty communities on social media. Based on these various explanations, the informants' information search was in line with the digital literacy competencies presented by Paul Gilster, namely searching on the internet. It is because the eight informants carried out searches on the internet using search engines and carried out various online activities (Gilster, 1997).

##### 2) Guide Hypertext Directions

In this study, the eight informants understood how the link worked. They know that the link will take them to more specific information. In this case, the link will take them to a place to purchase beauty products. This place has a complete description and review of a beauty product.

The statement above is based on the hypertext guidelines expressed by Paul Gilster. Hypertext navigation is one of the abilities that users must have when searching for information on the internet. Hypertext can make it easier for users to understand information on the internet because users will be guided through hyperlink facilities in the information content. With links, readers will be taken to more specific information (Gilster, 1997).

It shows that digital literacy equipped with hyperlink facilities on the internet will make it easier for users to search and find information effectively and efficiently. Thus, users who can use and understand hypertext and hyperlinks well will find it easier to obtain the information they need (Ashari, Idris, 2019).

##### 3) Information Content Evaluation

Two informants stated that they evaluated information by sorting the information and not completely swallowing the information they received. Meanwhile, the other six informants conducted an in-depth search for information regarding the product they would buy, including benefits, how to use it, ingredients suitable for their skin, product brand, and so on. Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that the evaluation of the information content of the eight informants is in line with digital literacy by Paul Gilster. Evaluation of information content is a person's ability to think critically and provide an assessment of the information obtained (Gilster, 1997).

It is proven by the critical thinking abilities of the eight informants who did not immediately accept the existing information at face value. However, they carried out further analysis and identification, looking for more information regarding the effects, how to use a product, and the suitability of a beauty product for their skin type (Sukwika, 2022). Information on the internet can help them think critically before buying beauty products they will consume later.

By reading a lot and studying existing information resources, a person can be more careful in evaluating information. They can also spot weaknesses or biases in the information. Critical thinking is very important for dealing with various problems in public and personal life (Cynthia, Sihotang, 2023). In this case, this refers to purchasing beauty products that suit your skin's needs.

#### 4) Knowledge Compilation

The final digital literacy proposed by Paul Gilster is the construction of knowledge. In compiling knowledge, informants search for information on the internet by utilizing Google and social media using keywords that suit their needs. Apart from that, informants held discussions with peers directly to disseminate information. By having discussions, there will be an exchange of information. Three informants carried out this stage. Meanwhile, apart from discussing directly, one of the other informants also conducted discussions through discussion forums on the internet. This statement is in line with Paul Gilster's digital literacy competency, namely the ability to search for information via the internet and join discussion groups (Gilster, 1997).

Based on the various explanations above, it can be concluded that four informants carried out all stages of Paul Gilster's digital literacy. Meanwhile, the other four informants did not use all of Paul Gilster's digital literacy.

#### b. Japelidi

##### 1) Access

All informants accessed information using digital devices in the form of cellphones and laptops as well as digital media, namely Google and social media. Based on the results of the interviews, all informants used social media to obtain information. However, three informants also used Google to search for further details. This statement aligns with Japelidi's digital literacy, namely, access to the competency to obtain information using digital media (Monggilo et al., 2021). The use of digital media cannot be separated from the inherent ability of every person who actively uses the internet and cell phones to easily use and access various information available on digital media (Anggia et al., 2022).

##### 2) Selecting

Based on the results of the interviews, all informants selected and sorted the information they obtained from various sources. Information is selected in multiple ways, for example, by looking at responses from other readers, such as the number of people who view the information. Supportive comments, then selecting information by looking at several criteria such as who the author is when the information was posted, how many people gave it responses, and comparing several pieces of information, then choosing the one closest to your needs. Apart from that, informants also compare information from previously obtained information to see the advantages and disadvantages of product information and verify information with other people who have used the product.

The explanation above is by Japelidi's research indicators in information selection, namely selecting information according to needs, ignoring information that does not suit needs, and deleting information that is not appropriate (Kurnia, Wijayanto, 2020). In this case, informants determine various criteria for selecting information and compare the information they get.

##### 3) Understand

Based on the results of the interviews, the five informants understood the information they received. They know information related to how to use beauty products, product benefits, product composition, and ingredients that need to be avoided and used. Other informants understand information in terms of presentation because information on social media is usually presented in short, written form to be easily understood. Meanwhile, one informant stated that he did not understand beauty information because several terms were difficult to understand.

Understanding information is part of digital literacy. Understanding information leads to interpreting messages in various forms, whether written, photos, or videos, understanding the symbols used, and responding to them in digital media (Rianto, Sukmawati, 2021). In this case, the informant understands various information found on the internet in written form, even though some terms are difficult to understand.



## 4) Analyze

Based on the interview results, the informant carried out an analysis by looking at the advantages and disadvantages of information about the product to be searched for and by looking at the positive responses or comments from the information. If the information has many negative reactions, it will not be searched further. Good analytical skills will make readers safer when looking for information in digital media because readers will be accustomed to distinguishing between quality information and information that is better ignored (Amihardja et al., 2022).

## 5) Verifying

Based on interviews with informants, one of the informants carried out verification by checking information with other people, whether they were relatives or influencers. Meanwhile, two other informants verified by comparing similar pieces of information. This statement is in line with Japelidi's digital literacy, namely verifying. Verifying means cross-confirming with similar information (Monggillo et al., 2021). Verification can be done by comparing the information received and the information available in trusted news media and determining reliable sources of information. Verification will eliminate doubts about information (Amihardja et al., 2022).

## 6) Evaluate

Based on the interview results, the informant evaluated by selecting review information with the same skin type, not swallowing the information at face value but needing to identify further and compare the information. Assessing this information includes analysis and selection and interpreting and evaluating the relationship of the information found to the problem at hand. In considering information, grouping and organizing the information found is done to determine which information is the best and most accurate. Evaluation activities are carried out to find appropriate information that can truly be used as a problem solver and is relevant to users' information needs (Ayuni et al., 2022).

## 7) Distribute

Based on the interview results, an informant disseminates his information by sharing his experiences about a product and providing comments. Meanwhile, the other informants, namely three other informants, spread information by posting beauty information on their social media accounts through text, photos, and videos. The above statement is based on Japelidi's research indicators. Distribution is divided into three, namely disseminating information according to the target message, adapting the message to the media application, and disseminating information according to the nature of the message (Kurnia, Wijayanto, 2020). It means that the informant disseminates information to his followers on social media (message target), adapts the message by creating content according to social media regulations, and disseminates information according to the nature of the message.

## 8) Produce

Producing means compiling new information that is clear, accurate, and pays attention to ethics (Monggillo et al., 2021). Based on the data and findings, it was found that three informants created beauty information content on social media. One informant stated that he posted information in text on his personal Twitter account. Meanwhile, two other informants created beauty information content in the form of photos and product review videos on their individual Instagram accounts. The statement of data and findings follows activities in the production process, including creating messages in written form on digital media, creating messages in the form of photos/images on digital media, and creating videos on digital media (Amihardja et al., 2022).

## 9) Participate

Participating means sharing good and ethical information via social media (Monggillo et al., 2021). In this case, it was found that four informants actively participated in sharing beauty information via social media. In this case, the informant actively provides information and advice on social media by sharing experiences and creating content on social media (Monggilo et al., 2021).

## 10) Collaborate

Based on the results of the interviews, there were no informants who collaborated with stakeholders to disseminate information. Information they only share privately. Meanwhile, in Japelidi digital literacy, collaborating means collaborating with stakeholders in disseminating information (Monggillo et al., 2021).

Based on the Japelidi digital literacy above, it can be concluded that of the eight informants, only four people tended to Japelidi digital literacy even though not all stages of literacy were followed. Of all the stages, the four informants did not follow the collaboration stage.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion in the research entitled "Digital Literacy Regarding Beauty Information", it can be concluded that the informant's digital literacy tends to be Paul Gilster's and Japelidi's digital literacy. Four of the eight informants tended to Paul Gilster's digital literacy. Meanwhile, four other people tended to Japelidi digital literacy even though not all literacy activities were carried out.

On Paul Gilster's digital literacy, All of Paul Gilster's digital literacy activities were carried out by the four informants, namely searching on the internet using social media and Google, guiding hypertextual directions where informants understand how links work, evaluating information content, namely by thinking critically to select and evaluate information and organize it – knowledge by having discussions with peers.

Meanwhile, four other people tend towards digital literacy in Japelidi, although not all of their activities are carried out. The activities carried out by informants are accessing, selecting, understanding, analyzing, verifying, evaluating, distributing, producing, and participating – meanwhile, the activity they did not do in Japelidi's digital literacy activities involved collaboration.

The advice is that there is much beauty information on the internet. Therefore, internet users must be more careful in selecting and using information to avoid false information or hoaxes and to minimize errors in the use of products to be consumed. Then, for further research, it is hoped that we will dig deeper into digital literacy in other digital media. Because information on digital media will continue to develop, everyone's digital literacy will also be affected.

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