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## KVN: Students' View on the Game

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### Abstract

*KVN* is the most long-lasting humor program on national TV. Review of the academic studies show that there are different approaches to assessing the role of *KVN* in agenda-setting and forming political opinions in Russia, but most scholars consider the youth to be the game's target audience. The research goal is to find out if *KVN* is popular with young people in the Russian Federation. The article summarizes the results of the online survey conducted in April–May 2023 during which 200 students from Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod and Lobachevski State University of Nizhny Novgorod (aged 19–25) answered the questions on their attitude to the game, regularity and the way they watch it. The young people named their favorite teams, comedians, and sketches. The results prove that though respondents are aware what *KVN* is, the show is of no interest to more than a half of them. Those, who watch the game, do it mostly via the Internet, prefer wordplay, situation, and abstract humor. Teams and comedians who played in seasons 2013–2016 are named as favorites, possibly because of their frequent appearance on TV and social media. Students would like to see changes in the game's format and content.

**Keywords:** *KVN*, comedy show, TV game, humor, First channel, young audience, media.

### 1. Introduction

Russian television humor programs entertain, educate, form viewers' attitudes and opinions on different issues. Bounded to national audiences, they are a part of national mentality and culture, a valuable source of information about politics, business, lifestyle, opinion leaders, and topical problems. *KVN*, *Klub Veselyh i nahodchivykh* (*The Club of Cheerful and Smart or The Club of Merry and Witty*) differ in format from numerous Russian comedy shows. It debuted on the USSR First state TV channel on November 8, 1961, as a contest of students' teams which competed in prepared home sketches and improvised jokes. It turned out to be a long-lasting project and is still on the air at prime time. For several decades its participants were not professional actors, but amateur young men who presented collective, social reactions to the main drive" and "action" in the game (McLuhan, 1994).

The prime-time game gained the status of the highest league. Its host has been A. Maslyakov. The day-time premier league was launched in 2003 for less experienced teams who compete to win and move to the upper level. A. Maslyakov, Jr has become its emcee. Since 2016 cable *KVN-TV* channel has been running games from different seasons 24/7. The game was popular with TV-viewers for many decades, but in the early 2000s new TNT comedy programs emerged, the most popular among them were *Comedy Club* (started on TNT channel in 2005), *Uralskie pelmeni*

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(*The Ural dumplings*, debuted on STS channel in 2009) and later Stand-up shows. They attracted young viewers and started picking up *KVN*'s audience.

For several decades people from different age groups and social strata watched *KVN*, but the latest data of Russian Public Opinion Research Center prove that the young generation has less interest in the game than in *Comedy Club*, and the viewers of the game are 35-40-year-olds (Shutki..., 2021). Teams produce good jokes that spread virally and become winged phrases, but it is under question if young people are enthusiastic about the game.

The goal of the research is to find out to what extent *KVN* is popular among Russian students, what *KVN*'s teams and comedians they consider to be worth watching, and what type of humor attracts them. It is of interest if the show helps the Russian youth broaden their knowledge of internal and external politics, daily issues.

## 2. Materials and methods

In April–May 2023, 200 full-time and part-time students whose majors are journalism or public relations and advertising, from Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod and Lobachevski State University of Nizhny Novgorod (aged 19-25) took part in an online survey that helped to reveal their attitude to *KVN*, find out the most popular in their opinion teams, players, and the most hilarious sketches.

The research is based on analysis of *KVN* archives from its official web site, video materials from YouTube platform as well as academic, mass media publications on *KVN* and rating agencies' data.

## 3. Discussion

Valuable sources from which one can get the information about the project's first years, creative processes, internal conflicts, and problems are books written by *KVN*'s founders, who shared their memories and vision of the game's future (Akselrod et al., 1974; Masliakov, 2017), and former editors and players, who tried to explain the program's concept and present a classification of its main humor devices (Marfin, Chivourin, 2008; Hotnog, 2015). Those publications are of interest to *KVN* fans as well as academicians who examine the Soviet and Russian laugh culture.

There have been different approaches to studying *KVN*. Scholars analyzed it as a part of amateur movement, a factor of upbringing and socialization of the youth (Kovalyov, 2004; Manukyan, 2022; Ostromoukhova, 2011; Rubekina, 2015), characterized it as a phenomenon of national mass culture and an integrated part of Russian TV history (Buklans, 2010). Russian researchers, who moved to the West, criticized the game for being an instrument of the Soviet, later Russian, state-approved political satire (Semenenko, 2018, 2021), "controlled game" (Garey, 2020: 2) but felt nostalgic for its hilarious, energetic buzzing. Critics assume that as young people play *KVN* the viewers should be their age, but they might be under a delusion. The audience of mainstream TV channels consists of numerous age groups with "social, cultural, and political perspectives and beliefs, which are often very different or even conflicting" (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2020: 238).

In 2017, Latvian analytics in a report for NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, composed on a request of Latvian Ministry of Defense, characterized *KVN* as "a fundamental part of the eco-system of Russian humor (in Russian culture)" and "ready-to-act tool of strategic political communication" which helps the Kremlin to promote their geopolitical interests in media sphere all over the world (Ozoliņa et al., 2017: 96-121). The authors analyzed sketches of team "Parapaparum" (Moscow State Institute of International Relations) which showed, in their opinion, the US politicians as stupid and poorly educated guys who believed in American superiority and underestimated Russia. The report surprised *KVN* management and players who denied the accusations in being political spin-doctors (Akimov et al., 2017; Duhanova, 2017). O.I. Pimenova et al. share the opinion of the NATO StratCom report and consider that political humor in *KVN* is edited and censored to meet the goals and needs of the RF state propaganda broadcasted on TV federal channels (Pimenova et al., 2017: 218). But there are those who think that *KVN*'s humor is sincere, and the players criticize many aspects of Russian politics, economics, and daily life (Evans, 2016: 183-215).

The US comedy shows broaden viewers knowledge on politics and influence the electorate choices (Arkhangelskaya, 2021; Baumgartner, 2021; Droog et al., 2020; Ödmark, 2021), but *KVN* has never seriously challenged the Soviet or Russian political elites or played an important role in

agenda-setting and forming opinions. For that reason, the conclusions of the Latvian scholars seem exaggerated.

There is an opinion that *KVN* is an alternative way to help people get rid of negative emotions (Barashkov, 2018): most entertainment shows have that function.

We all witness that though “television is still the main source of information for most Russians, ... its audience is gradually declining” (Fedorov et al., 2022: 6), and it concerns the young generation. In 2016 Russian Public Opinion Research Center found out that, though *KVN* was the first in the rating of TV humor shows, the respondents aged 18-24 preferred *Comedy Club* (74 %) or *Stand up* (51 %) (Shutki..., 2021). The results of the survey prove that the youth has lost interest in *KVN*, chooses different television formats. It should be considered that “the competition with the Internet resource, which is getting stronger, can lead to the loss of positions” (Yefanov, Pugachev, 2023) of TV projects. For that reason, *KVN*'s key audience might be older than expected.

On September 2021, TNT channel launched a new humor show *Igra (The Game)* in which former *KVN* players competed for 30 mln rubles. The format was different from that of *KVN*: in the first episodes the participants had a chance to present their sketches for 15 minutes, jokes were bolder and more challenging than in *KVN*, sometimes they contained bathroom humor and foul language. *Igra* had high ratings from the start (Komedinyoye..., 2021), but soon was closed despite its popularity. The director general of the First channel K. Ernst expressed a thought that the concept of TNT's new project was stolen (Ernst..., 2021). *KVN* management disliked the new show in which their alumni took part, but it is not clear what the real reasons of cancelling *Igra* were.

Nevertheless, *KVN* remains popular in Russia. The question is whether it has lost the young audience.

#### 4. Results

In April-May 2023, 200 students, whose majors are journalism, public relations and advertising, from Linguistics University of Nizhny Novgorod and Lobachevski State University of Nizhny Novgorod took part in the local online survey and filled in the questionnaire. 96 % of respondents know *KVN* and have watched the game at least once starting at the age of 5 (4 %), 6 (12 %), 7 (15 %), 8 (14 %), 10 (12 %), 12 (8 %), 13 (4 %), 14 (5 %). Those who began watching the game at pre-school and primary school periods confessed that were doing it with the family, and parents influenced their choice.

It was surprising to know that more than a half of the respondents have not watched the program for more than three years.

**Table 1.** Respondents' answers to the question “How often do you watch *KVN*?”

How often do you watch <i>KVN</i> ?	%
I have not watched <i>KVN</i> for more than 3 years	52
Once in two or three months	18
Once in 6 months	13
Once a year	10.2
Once a month	5.5
Regularly. Try not to miss the game	1.3

The results prove that most students have no interest in the game. Thus, people aged 18-25 cannot be considered *KVN*'s target audience.

The survey revealed that most students prefer *YouTube* to television.

**Table 2.** Respondents' answers to the question “How do you watch *KVN*?”

How do you watch <i>KVN</i> ?	%
TV	9.82
YouTube	58.78
<i>KVN</i> channel	5.88
Recommended episodes on social media	25.52

Students who watch *KVN* on the First or special cable *KVN* channels often do it with their parents or grandparents. Television is not popular with young people, and there is a generation gap between the media viewers of different ages.

In comments the respondents wrote that they see less *KVN* collections or episodes in social media. As networks adapt the content to the users' interests, it is possible that those students who do not come across *KVN* videos, while browsing the Internet, demonstrated consumer behavior that made robots recommend them different forms of entertainment. We might also assume that *KVN*'s SMM specialists do not work effectively.

98 people who have watched *KVN* once a year or more agreed to share their opinions on what teams and comedians they find the best.

**Table 3.** Respondents' answers to the question: "What *KVN* teams do you consider to be the best?" (an open question, students' choice, more than one answer was possible)

What team/s is the best, in your opinion?	%
<i>Kamyzyaki</i>	26,46
<i>Gorod "Pyatigorsk"</i>	15.68
<i>Asia Mix</i>	15.68
<i>Soyuz</i>	13.72
<i>DALS, Detektivnoye agentstvo Lunnyi svet (Moonlight detective agency)</i>	8,82
<i>Plushki</i>	6.86
<i>Russkaya doroga</i>	6.86
<i>RUDN (Peoples' Friendship University of Russia)</i>	5.88
<i>Raisy</i>	4.9
<i>Dr. House</i>	4.9
<i>Rosy</i>	3.92
<i>Prikaz 390</i>	1.84
No preferences	42.14

Respondents mostly named the teams that became champions and stopped playing *KVN* in the period 2013–2016 but later appeared episodically in jubilee or alumni games. The leading players have continued their careers on TV in different comedy shows on TNT, STS channels or taken part in Russian movies, television series or have become popular video bloggers. The team that finished *KVN*'s career in 2022 is a Belorussian team *Dr. House*. Among their favorites Nizhny Novgorod students mentioned *Rosy*, team from their city they live and study.

As for the best *KVN* comedians, students have chosen those they saw in *KVN* not long ago as well as those who they could have watched in *KVN* only in childhood or middle school (A. Musagaliev, D. Dorokhov, G. Martirosyan, O. Kortunkova, A. Garaev), but the celebrity status, participation in popular shows, frequent appearances on federal channels as well as on video platforms determined the choice.

**Table 4.** Respondents' answers to the question: "Who is your favorite *KVN* player?" (an open question, students' choice, more than one answer was possible)

"Who is your favorite <i>KVN</i> player?"	%
A. Musagaliev ( <i>Kamyzyaki</i> )	18.62
O. Kartunkova ( <i>Gorod "Pyatigorsk"</i> )	18.62
A. Garaev ( <i>Soyuz</i> )	12.74
D. Dorokhov ( <i>Kamyzyaki</i> )	11.76
E. Kesarov ( <i>Asia Mix</i> )	5.88
Ph. Voronin ( <i>DALS, Detektivnoye agentstvo Lunnyi svet</i> )	4.9
B. Lisevsky ( <i>Plushki</i> )	4.9
G. Martirosyan ( <i>New Armenians</i> )	2.94
P. Netzky ( <i>Prikaz 390</i> )	1,84
M. Razumkov ( <i>Astana, KZ</i> )	1,84
M. Karin ( <i>Rosy</i> )	1,84

<b>“Who is your favorite KVN player?”</b>	<b>%</b>
Like all KVN players who are <i>Comedy Club</i> residents	7.84
No preferences	42.14

Respondents, who have watched KVN, were asked what sketches they find most hilarious and memorable. Nobody recalled satirical parodies, political performances, or gags. That reaffirms the assumption that students are becoming more apolitical, rely on social media opinion leaders in their media consumption (Badalyan, Gavrov, 2021). Students voted for abstract, Monty Python type, or situation humor as well criticism of the youth’s cultural degradation accompanied by popular soundtracks.

**Table 5.** Respondents' answers to the question: “What KVN sketches/jokes do you remember find the funniest?” (an open question, students’ choice, more than one answer was possible)

<b>What KVN sketches / jokes do you remember find the funniest (name of the sketch, team, date)?</b>	<b>%</b>
U gub tvoih konfetnyi, konfetnyi vkus (Your lips have got a candy’s taste), <i>DALS, Detektivnoye agentstvo Lunnyi svet</i> , Belgorod. Oct. 26, 2014 ( <a href="#">KVN DALS, 2014</a> )	10.78
V detskom sadu (In a kindergarten), <i>Gorod “Pyatigorsk”</i> , Pyatigorsk. Dec. 28.2012 ( <a href="#">KVN Gorod Pyatigorsk, 2012</a> )	8.82
Gadya Petrovich Khrenova, <i>Utomlennye Solntzem</i> , Sochi. Aug. 27, 2005 ( <a href="#">KVN Galusyan i Revva, 2005</a> )	6.86
Pushkin, Te samye, <i>Stavropol’</i> . Sep. 24, 2022 ( <a href="#">KVN. Te samye, 2022</a> )	6.86
Skorokhod zdayet ekzamen po anatomii (Skorokhod takes exam on anatomy), <i>Triod I Diod</i> , Smolensk. Dec. 28.2012 ( <a href="#">KVN Skorokhod..., 2012</a> )	4.9
Tanetz vsplyuvayutzhikh pelmenei (The dance of the floating dumplings). <i>Rosy</i> , Nizhny Novgorod. Feb. 25, 2022 ( <a href="#">KVN. Tanetz..., 2022</a> )	1.84
Kolobok v postanovke Viktuyka (Kolobok staged by Viktuyk), <i>Sbornaya St. Peterburga</i> , St. Peterburg. Dec. 23, 1999 ( <a href="#">Shedevr KVN..., 1999</a> )	0.98
All sketches of <i>Asia Mix</i> (Kyrgyzstan)	4.9
No answer	66.64

The top favorite is a musical performance of a team, which consisted of two players, and could neither sing nor play any instruments but the group found the way out: they incorporated sophisticated remarks into a parody on a senseless hit, and that made the audience laugh. Sketch “In a kindergarten” reminded the students about problems they came across in childhood and ‘horrid girls’ they could have met. Seven students enjoyed wordplay and situation humor in “Gadya Petrovich Khrenova”. That type of laugh culture one could find in *Comedy Club*.

Episodes which highlighted poor knowledge of Russian literature, history, and biology (“Pushkin” and “Skorokhod takes exam on anatomy”) seemed funny to respondents who felt they were smarter than the characters of the performances and knew well Pushkin’s biography as well as his basic creative works. The mix of classical literature from school curriculum with rap music and topical issues amused the viewers. Abstract humor in “The dance of the floating dumplings” appealed to two respondents, and one has recalled a 1999 parody on extravagant theatre director Roman Viktyuk: the archive sketch, the student could have found only on the Internet.

102 students explained why they do not watch the game: the main reasons were – no TV-set at home (51.3 %), have got tired of the format (17.9 %) or “stupid humor” (9 %). That group prefers *Standup* comedy, show *Improvisations* (TNT channel), *Improvisators* (STS channel), and provocative vlogs (e.g. “Plushki”).

The results support the idea expressed by A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya that “students need to be empowered to critically negotiate meanings, engage with the problems of misrepresentations and underrepresentations, and produce their own alternative media” (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323). There should be changes in KVN to make it more up to the young viewers expectations.

## 5. Conclusion

KVN has become the most long-lasting humor program in the RF. Launched in the USSR in 1961, as a contest of students’ amateur teams, it has transformed into a commercial project and is

broadcasted at prime time on the First federal channel. With the archives on its official site, video materials on different platforms and social media, the program episodes are available to viewers any time. Cable KVN channel is another option of consuming the program's content.

The answers to the questionnaire, in which 200 students of two Nizhny Novgorod universities took part, have proven that the assumption that the game's target audience are young people might be wrong as more than half of the respondents have no interest in the program. The segment of those who watch the game on a regular basis is small.

Respondents appreciate wordplay, situation, and abstract humor and ignore political themes. Thus, we may conclude that KVN does not influence electorate preferences and behavior of the youth.

The teams and performers that students named as their favorites were active in KVN in the period 2013–2016. Most of the comedians, that respondents marked as their best, have been taking part in popular comedy shows or movies. Students choose opinion leaders and celebrities when asked who they like most.

Students prefer consuming entertainment content on the Internet, mostly on YouTube. That is why the communication channel with the youth should involve social networks. In that context improving and promoting video platform Retube seems to be a vital and challenging problem. The young generation requires new formats of Russian laugh culture.

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## Theoretical Concepts of Film Studies in *Cinema Art* Journal: XXI Century

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### Abstract

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the editors of *Cinema Art* apparently realized that the attempts to transform the magazine into a socio-political one, made at the end of the "perestroika" era and in the 1990s, had not yielded the expected dividends. As a result, the journal returned to the format of a cinematic publication. Hence the increase in the number of theoretical articles on cinema, which in the 21st century averaged eighteen a year.

Daniil Dondurey (1947–2017), who directed *Cinema Art* until 2017, maintained the journal's course towards a sociological understanding of the media process, while attracting leading authors in the field. The film critic Anton Dolin, who replaced him in the second half of 2017, on the one hand re-emphasized political accents and also strengthened passages in the journal texts that opposed the authorities, and on the other hand began to pay much more attention to the genres of mass culture in film.

Our analysis of the concepts of film studies (in the context of the socio-cultural, historical, political situation, etc.) in the journal *Cinema Art* in the 21st century has shown that the theoretical works on cinematic topics in this period can be divided into the following types

- Articles, discussions devoted to the analysis of the theoretical heritage of the classics and the history of Soviet cinema (A. Fomenko, N. Izvolov, N. Kleiman, O. Kovalov, E. Maisel, E. Margolit, A. Medvedev, N. Sputnitskaya, V. Shmyrov, A. Shpagin, A. Shcherbenok and others);

- Articles attempting to understand the film process from a theoretical point of view (O. Aronson, D. Golyenko-Wolfson, E. Maisel, L. Manovich, etc.);

- articles devoted to the sociological and cultural problems of cinema, television, and film distribution (O. Berezin, K. Bogoslovskaya, D. Dondurey, D. Golyenko-Wolfson, E. Maisel, I. Poluekhtova, K. Razlogov, V. Zvereva, etc.); at the same time, the analysis of the phenomenon of the Internet and virtual reality has become a new theoretical trend of the journal.

- theoretical articles on foreign cinema (A. Artyukh, D. Komm, N. Tsyrukun, etc.).

In general, *Cinema Art* in the 21st century, as in the 1990s, offered new interpretations of the history of Soviet and world cinema and tried to find theoretical approaches to the current film process.

**Keywords:** *Cinema Art* journal, film studies, film criticism, theoretical concepts, cinema, film, movie, cinematography, Russia, cinematic art.

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## 1. Introduction

This article focuses on the analysis of theoretical concepts of film studies in the journal *Cinema Art* in the 21st century, when its chief editors were Daniil Dondurey (1947–2017) and Anton Dolin.

Table 1 presents statistical data reflecting the changes (from 2001 to 2022) in the organizations whose organ was the journal, its circulation, its periodicity; the names of the journal's chief editors and the time intervals of their leading work in the publication, the number of articles on film theory for each year of the journal's publication are also indicated.

**Table 1.** *Cinema Art* journal in the 21st century: statistical data

Year of issue of the journal	The organization whose body the journal was (founders/publishers)	Journal circulation (in thousand copies)	Periodicity of the journal (number of issues per year)	Chief Editor journal	Number of articles on film theory
2001	Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, Cinematography Service, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	28
2002	Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, Cinematography Service, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	19
2003	Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, Cinematography Service, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	29
2004	Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, Cinematography Service (No. 1-5), Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation (No. 6-12), Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	13
2005	Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	16
2006	Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	14

Year of issue of the journal	The organization whose body the journal was (founders/publishers)	Journal circulation (in thousand copies)	Periodicity of the journal (number of issues per year)	Chief Editor journal	Number of articles on film theory
2007	Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	11
2008	Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation (No. 1-5), Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (No. 6-12), Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	13
2009	Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, Union of Cinematographers of Russia, Editorial Board of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal	*	12	D. Dondurey	19
2010	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	18
2011	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	17
2012	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	27
2013	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	16
2014	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	14
2015	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	16
2016	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	12	D. Dondurey	11
2017	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	*	8	D. Dondurey (No. 1-3), A. Dolin (No. 4-8)	10
2018	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	2.7-3.0	12 **	A. Dolin	23
2019	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	3.0	12**	A. Dolin	34

Year of issue of the journal	The organization whose body the journal was (founders/publishers)	Journal circulation (in thousand copies)	Periodicity of the journal (number of issues per year)	Chief Editor journal	Number of articles on film theory
2020	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	1.5-4.0	12**	A. Dolin	14
2021	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	3.0	12**	A. Dolin	30
2022	Non-commercial partnership "Editorial office of the <i>Cinema Art</i> journal"	1.0-3.0	12**	A. Dolin (No. 1-2), S. Dedinsky (No. 3-12)	22

Notes:

\* From 2001 to 2017, the circulation of *Cinema Art* was not mentioned in the mastheads of the issues. According to data found on the Internet, the journal's circulation from 2001 to 2017 was around two to three thousand copies, which is even lower than in the 1930s and 1940s.

\*\* For one year, from 2018 to 2022, *Cinema Art* was actually published six times a year, as all issues were double issues.

Until 10 May 2017, the film sociologist D. Dondurey (1947-2017) was the editor-in-chief of *Cinema Art*. Then (until spring 2022) the film critic A. Dolin took over the post of editor-in-chief.

## 2. Materials and methods

The methodology of the research consists of the main philosophical provisions on the connection, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and social in knowledge; scientific, cinematological, socio-cultural, cultural, hermeneutic, semiotic approaches proposed in the works of leading scientists (Aristarco, 1951; Aronson, 2003; Aronson, 2007; Bakhtin, 1996; Bazin, 1971; Bessonov, 2012; Bibler, 1990; Casetti, 1999; Demin, 1966; Eco, 1975; Eco, 1976; Gledhill, Williams, 2000; Hess, 1997; Hill, Gibson, 1998; Khrenov, 2006; Khrenov, 2011; Kuleshov, 1987; Lotman, 1973; Lotman, 1992; Lotman, 1994; Mast, Cohen, 1985; Metz, 1974; Razlogov, 1984; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007 and others).

The project is based on the content approach to research (identification of the content of the process under study, considering the totality of its elements, the interaction between them, their nature, appeal to facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical conclusions, etc.), on the historical approach – consideration of the specific and historical development of the declared topic of the project.

*Research methods:* complex content analysis, comparative interdisciplinary analysis; theoretical research methods: classification, comparison, analogy, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization, theoretical analysis and synthesis, generalization; empirical research methods: collection of information related to the project topic, comparative-historical and hermeneutical methods.

## 3. Discussion and results

### *History of Soviet and Russian Cinematography*

D. Dondurey (1947–2017), editor-in-chief of *Cinema Art*, dramatically expanded the range of sociological material of the journal in the 21st century. Another thematic field of the journal was the publication of materials on foreign cinema (reviews, reports on international film festivals, creative portraits of actors and directors, etc.). From year to year, the editorial line of *Cinema Art* became more and more oppositional to the Russian authorities, especially against the background of the Ukrainian events (from 2014).

Against this background, articles on the history of Soviet and Russian cinema occupied a rather modest place in the magazine.

In the 21st century, *Cinema Art* continued to rethink the history of Soviet cinema.

A number of articles were devoted to the films of the "Silver Age" (Grashchenkova, 2007), Alexander Drankov (Pozdnyakov, 2008), the colors in the era of silent cinema (Izvolov, 2001), early Soviet animation (Sputnitskaya, 2021), the work of Sergei Eisenstein (Fomenko, 2018; Kleiman, 2011), DzigaVertov (Izvolov, 2019; Izvolov, 2022; Kovalov, 2008; Medvedev, 2017; Shcherbenok, 2009; Shcherbenok, 2012), Lev Kuleshov (Kovalov, 2009), Mark Donskoy (Margolit, 2010), AalexanderPtushko (Sputnitskaya, 2015), Marlen Khutsiev (Kovalov, 2008), the image of America on the Soviet screen (Kovalov, 2003), the revolutionary Leninist theme in Soviet cinema (Maisel, 2017; Shmyrov, 2017), the influence of Soviet cinema on the world film process (Razlogov, 2006), etc.

In particular, Alexei Medvedev (1969–2023) noted that D. Vertov's film *Man with a Movie Camera* is the highest point of conflict between intention and reality, between the author and the viewer, between the autonomy of film language and the orientation towards understanding, between the visual and the verbal. "But let's not forget the socio-political side of this conflict. ... Vertov himself called *The Man with the Movie Camera* an 'impossible possibility', initially recognizing the utopian nature of his intention to purify film speech from literary impurities. It is a utopia, but it is a utopia that has been realized, at least once. Further, there will be only compromises, but *The Man with the Movie Camera* has forever established the possibility of a different approach, a different path" (Medvedev, 2017: 123).

And A. Shcherbenok believed that Vertov's theoretical legacy can be imagined as a set of justifications for the particularities of the film thing. Vertov's claim to its exceptional revolutionary character is based on the documentary nature of the film thing. If a feature film can be both progressive and reactionary, the film thing is progressive only because it directly reflects reality, and reality is on the side of the proletariat. Vertov's specific innovations – the hidden camera, mass amateur filming, synchronized sound, ideological and poetic editing of newsreel footage, reflection on the characteristics of a movie camera and film language within the film – have long been widely used by Soviet/Russian and world documentary film, having developed, among other things, under direct influence. However, apart from the historical context of their origin, these documentary filmmakers are confronted with a completely different, non-dialectical understanding of reality.

It is enough to read an interview with almost any modern documentary filmmaker, especially a Russian one, to see an insoluble conflict between the passionate desire to show "life by surprise" and the bitter realization of the fundamental impossibility of doing so, the dependence of the final product on the director's design. The same tension underlies Vertov's theory, but for Vertov it is not a tragic horizon that ultimately renders documentary cinema meaningless as a project opposed to fiction. For Vertov, the antinomic duality of the filmic thing is not a verdict on cinema's ability to reflect real life, but a powerful source of intellectual energy.

Comparing the theoretical approaches of S. Eisenstein and D. Vertov, A. Shcherbenok reminded the readers. Shcherbenok reminded the readers of *Cinema Art* that while Eisenstein, in his program theory of the montage of attractions, allowed "the weaving into the montage of whole" images "and a coherent plot intrigue", even "not as something self-sufficient and all-determining, but as a powerful attraction consciously chosen for a given purpose", Vertov completely rejected it as an unacceptable vestige of literature and art, "a terrible poison of habit" poisoning the "organism of cinematography". Vertov contrasted traditional cinema, based on the adaptation of literary conventions to the screen, with cinema that took life by surprise – he shot without sets or actors, showing real people going about their daily business. At the same time, Vertov's aesthetic is directly opposed to passive representation. Vertov's films of the 1920s, especially his famous *The Man with the Movie Camera* (1929), are characterized by abstract montage dynamics, accelerated, slow-motion and reverse filming, and other formal devices that reflect the specifics of the cinematographic "camera" – a set of technical means – from the film camera to the editing suite and the projector. The apparatus, which Vertov referred to with the metaphor of the "cinema eye", also becomes one of the main objects of the image. At the same time, since the view of the "cinema eye" is conceptualized by the director as fundamentally different from that of the human eye, Vertov's cinema depicts the everyday world from a non-human point of view, from the perspective of a machine (Shcherbenok, 2009: 107).

With a thorough frame-by-frame analysis of Vertov's films *The Man with the Movie Camera* and *Lullaby*, film critic and director O. Kovalov arrived at a scientific hypothesis about the influence of Joyce's *Ulysses* on the poetics of these famous and still unresolved films: *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) by DzigaVertov. Even externally, it has so many points in common with the general design of *Ulysses* that it is curious why this most obvious "similarity" has not been noticed

by researchers, especially since it immediately had a reputation for being incredibly innovative. This inexplicable blindness is probably due to the fact that readers and viewers traditionally live in different reservations and their circles of artistic impressions simply do not overlap. Vertov's film seems to meet these expectations perfectly: the author uses Joyce's experience rationally, as a "bourgeois specialist" in production: he takes from him "useful things" – techniques and equipment – and resolutely cuts off "spiritual decay" – we do not and cannot have it (Kovalov, 2008: 73-74).

In his article on S. Eisenstein's theory of montage, A. Fomenko also emphasized that in the late 1920s and 1930s, processes were taking place in Soviet art that, although not in conflict with the official line, were not the result of directives issued from above and could not be reduced to their obedient implementation. There was room for artistic experimentation (even if it ran counter to the principles of the classical avant-garde) and its conceptualization. One of the results of this conceptualization is the theory of "deductive montage". Leaving aside the particular political aims that Eisenstein allegedly had in mind, his article contains one of the most convincing and articulate theories of the image in the history of aesthetic thought. By undertaking to rehabilitate montage, Eisenstein transcends the level of the task at hand and defines this strategy as the universal basis of any artistic practice, rooted in the functioning of human consciousness itself: in other words, contrary to his initial modest remark, he concludes that montage is everything (Fomenko, 2018: 195).

When analyzing the history of Soviet cinema, E. Margolit wrote that if we try to determine the key symbol that most fully expresses the phenomenon of Soviet cinema, then first of all a child can claim this role. The explanation lies in the very nature of screen reality – the image of a completely renewed ideal world. This symbol is common in Soviet culture, it is enough to remember it: Nikolai Zabolotsky's "baby world" from *The Feast of Agriculture*, Mayakovsky's "teenage country", Platonov's children.

However, the modifications of the symbol of the child are extremely diverse (and we are not only talking about the actual images of children, but much more broadly – about the prevalence of the childish principle in the character, regardless of his age), the appearance of the child as a central character in cinema is always associated with moments of (one way or another) liberalization of the Soviet regime, while for the cinema of Stalin's time it is the ideal embodiment of a citizen of the new state, wholly devoted to the motherland and the father-leader as the central figures of the narrative (Margolit, 2002: 76).

E. Margolit was convinced that the hyperbolic stability of both the political system and its artistic model of those years was in fact based on a direct denial of historical time, which was directly reflected in the policies of the pre-war Stalinist state. In this context, eternal youth is transformed into a child's consciousness, arrested in one of the stages of its development, in modern terminology – "juvenile consciousness" (Margolit, 2002: 82).

E. Maisel rightly pointed out that the transformation of Lenin (and the revolutionary in general) from a hero to a thinking – and therefore tragic – figure, which took place in the early 1960s, signaled a new stage in the "humanization" of the leader of the world proletariat. From the hero of epics (as well as of folklore and urban legends), a genius of thought and the possessor of an inflexible will, leading the party and humanity along paths known only to himself towards the final goal, Lenin was gradually transformed in the 1960s into a private individual, a solitary man, a citizen of the world, a left-wing intellectual. This Lenin, who continued to direct the moods of the masses, already treated "useful and necessary" violence with a certain distance, not to say selectively and squeamishly. The contemplativeness, capriciousness, and dandyism of qualities previously unnoticed and unlikely in this guise have mutated in some biographies into endearing character traits. This Lenin often hesitates and makes hard decisions; he dreams of distracting himself from the nightmare around him and reminds the strongmen, Dzerzhinsky and Stalin, that there is no need to cut because people are not shards (Maisel, 2017: 111-112).

On a similar theme, V. Shmyrov emphasized that Mikhail Shatrov, the main inspirer and co-author of films, performances and television series about Lenin in the 1960s and 1970s (including his best film, *The Sixth of July*), through the mouth of the leader of the world proletariat and his comrades-in-arms, tried to teach the playwright a lot about modern society, even to substantiate and explain the need to liberalize the political system. But does this mean that the new mythology, which was created in opposition to and in confrontation with the old mythology, could once and for all take the place of historical truth, or at any rate prevent progress towards this truth already in a new time, unencumbered by yesterday's conventions and restrictions? (Shmyrov, 2017: 87).



In his analysis of Soviet films about the Great Patriotic War, A. Shpagin concluded that M. Chiaureli's *The Fall of Berlin* was the culmination of the myth. One could boldly say that a new religion crystallized on a single territory: the religion of the just war, the religion of the new world. And there's no need for revolutions anymore – that's it, the world revolution has taken place – if not in the whole world, then in a considerable part of it (Shpagin, 2005: 66). And in the era of the 'buried' Soviet filmmakers, paradoxically, they unconsciously sought a social ideal in the war. Cinematographers of the mid-1950s, emerging from Stalin's hell, turned to this theme in the hope of finding a foothold. The war in their films was a source of true light – it rallied the nation in a great and just impulse. People united to dispel the darkness that followed and to find light in this struggle – was this not the main dream of the revolution and, in general, the dominant feature of socialism? And it is absolutely clear that they were sincere, because they were fighting a terrible evil – fascism. Their actions were guided by something higher – it led to victory (Shpagin, 2005: 66). But in the 1970s, as A. Shpagin rightly noted, the military theme on the screen took a form convenient for everyone: it turned into an adventure genre (Shpagin, 2005: 83).

Recalling the period of the Thaw, O. Kovalov stressed that the split with power, reflected and expressed in M. Khutsiev's *Zastava Ilyicha (I'm 20 Years Old)*, was not along social, but moral categories: not "Sovietism – anti-Sovietism", but "idealism – cynicism". It was this division of society into romantics and cynics, believers and non-believers that made those in power more vulnerable than if it had been a traditional social critique (Kovalov, 2008: 66).

Analyzing T. Lioznova's famous TV series *Seventeen Moments of Spring* (1973), M. Adamovich compared the protagonist of *Moments...* – with the popular super-agent of Western spy novels and films James Bond, arguing that Bond-Stirlitz, like Osiris, is reborn with each new series and is capable of endless rebirth. Because it is just a function whose indices can be changed and changed again. In this sense, both super-agents have good reason to claim the status of hero in the ancient sense of the word. Three dozen books, two dozen Bond films add nothing and do not develop Fleming's character. Throughout the twelve episodes of Lioznova's film, despite the outward claim to be psychological, the character of the Soviet intelligence officer remains static, fixed – at the level of the dossier read in the first series. All series (or books) are not a deepening of the character, but an illustration of the declared characteristic. The super-task of the hero function is something like the task of the knight George: to overcome the evil of the world in the form of fascism, communism, terrorism and every other "ism". In other words, all such series are based on political, national and racial issues and contain a gigantic ideological potential. Obviously, the very structure of the myth, based on binary oppositions, is ideal for ideological propaganda, especially for creating the image of the enemy. Isn't that why the Bond saga is as successful today as it was almost fifty years ago (Adamovich, 2002: 78-79).

Y. Bogomolov (1937–2023) published a kind of brief history of Soviet cinema in the pages of *Cinema Art*. Turning to the post-Soviet history of national cinematography, he noted with insightful bitterness that a new utopia has emerged in these times. The world is once again in danger of toppling over into irrational idealism. If it hasn't already overturned and fallen. Only now it will be based not on cinematic mythology, but on propagandistic television, aided by a trolley-active Internet. As in the Soviet past, the superstructure will be the economy. Patriotic rhetoric and demagogic geopolitics will be the tools for manipulating public opinion. Why "will" or "will be"? This possible future is already partly our present. The hypothetical utopia is becoming a counter-utopia before our very eyes. But no longer in an artistic form, but in the mode of the online (Bogomolov, 2016: 113).

#### *Theoretical film studies concepts*

Theoretical articles on cinematography in the traditional sense of this type of text in the *Cinema Art* journal in the XXI century are, unfortunately, few and far between. Gone are the arguments about film language, editing, etc. that were so familiar in the 20th century. Instead, articles of a culturological nature have come to the fore.

For example, the culturologist M. Kurtov published a detailed article on the phenomenon of boredom in the cinema. Paradoxically (and, in our opinion, not very convincingly), he tried to make the readers of the magazine understand that even entertaining cinema does not eliminate boredom, since it is inherent in the very conditions of cinema. Such films only alleviate boredom by organizing affective participation: the spectator feels entertained as a result of a change of mood (a transition, according to Heidegger, from the second to the first type of boredom) but remains imperceptibly bored. The boredom that drives people to the cinema only takes milder forms there.

It is cured by films that deliberately deepen it. It is paradoxical that the machine, which is a source of boredom, seeks to eliminate it. It can only eliminate boredom by secretly subjugating the spectator. Cinema is the first cultural and social phenomenon whose ontological basis was boredom. Therefore, to the extent that boredom is the "hidden purpose" of modernity, cinema has a kind of privilege over other arts in revealing this purpose (Kurtov, 2009: 90-91).

Z. Abdullayeva proved to be much more radical in her theoretical messages, arguing that in cinema fatigue – in the form of hysterical outbursts or nervousness, not always ecstatic – forms a thin red line that pierces the beginning of the zero years. "Left" and "right", avant-garde art and conservative art, poor and bourgeois, feature films and documentaries – all of this ceased to be not only intelligible, but meaningful. Oppositions no longer work; they remain rhetorical figures of speech that explain little in either social or artistic life. And – they do not take away where it is worth thinking, practising. Reality itself is so strange and false that mythological images become more spontaneous and authentic. And even truthful. Certain mythologies absorb a kind of reality. Including a way of documenting reality, which is falsified not only on television, but also in the author's – figurative – "real cinema". And which perhaps explores the combination of art (born during the editing process) with non-art (Abdullaeva, 2006: 51, 53).

Reflecting on the problems of the art of cinema in the 21st century, S. Sivy believes that at a time when the expansion of mass culture into the protected areas of intellectual cinema is clearly observed, the author is forced to seek a compromise between entertainment and aesthetics. This is the only strategy for the survival of art in the conditions of market globalization. Money has become in modern conditions a much more significant obstacle to independent or experimental cinema than, say, censorship (Sivy, 2006: 73).

In this context, I. Sukmanov bitterly noted that in the 21st century the watershed between distribution and festival cinema is becoming more and more fatal. Now he sees less a clash of tastes than a generation gap. Adolescent passions boil in multiplexes. The nature of human action is translated into the language of comics. Fantasies replace reality. Life as such, in all its manifestations, is lived out on the big screen, and with it, the spectator who has absorbed this experience of life, is banished from the halls. In recent film realism, the marginal world is still the main object of attention. And not only because in this environment a person is constantly in a borderline situation, subject to strong passions and more natural than ever. He is a representative of another society, which for most viewers is terra incognita. And when reality appears on the screen in its ugliest form, the viewer's interest is motivated by the possibility of living an experience that he does not have. We want to know another existence that we have safely avoided or are afraid to experience. Under the influence of emotional stress, we shed our complexes and fears of hostile vital elements. The more authentic the environment, the more fully we perceive it and soberly evaluate it (Sukmanov, 2013: 85, 89-90).

I. Sukmanov drew attention to another cinematic trend of the new era: the mixing of playful and non-playful spaces in cinema is another step towards the cherished dream of cinematographic art to embrace the world and see it objectively. If each type of cinema is incapable of accomplishing this task, perhaps they can come closer to the ideal by joining forces. The desire for an unattainable cinematic truth is still one of the main tasks of art. In post-documentary and post-fiction cinema, this problem is solved by a head-on collision of the opposites of fact and fiction: if one lies, the other acts against it. In this case, the author tries to take the position of an observer. And when the disoriented public asks about morality, they are more likely to be told that "modern art only asks questions but does not give an answer". In their search for objectivity, modern authors prefer to distance themselves from the image and at the same time hypnotize it, so as not to lose sight of it, without being distracted by any side effects. Real sounds instead of music, a mobile handheld camera that follows the characters and extends the action instead of the "American" montage, natural people instead of honoured artists: the realist's arsenal, which has almost become a cliché. The deadly unemotional space, the vacuum that remains between the image and the viewer, is like a psychological attack. It is it that infuriates the audience, makes them fidget, worry – no less than genre gadgets (Sukmanov, 2013: 90).

K. Fokina, in her article, turned to a topic that is rare for the *Cinema Art* journal – brand transformation in cinema (Fokina, 2007: 72-77), recalling that, in the most general terms, a brand is a well-known trademark that has a name (title), a logo (visual image) and specific attributive characteristics (properties, qualities, the use of "branded" products). The way a brand is presented in the market is called its positioning. Depending on the scope, price category and functional

advantages of the product, a specific, fairly broad group of its consumers is formed, called the brand's target group. For the interaction of the brand and its target group, for its promotion on the market, it is common to use various types of symbols – specially organized audiovisual elements, which are designed only to identify products of a certain brand in a series of similar products. As "promotional" elements, legends (beautiful stories about the origin and development of a brand), which form the basis of advertising and information activities, are widely used (Fokina, 2007: 73).

As for the "branded" film, K. Fokina believes that its name is primarily associated with the emotions received before, during and after watching it, with what was written about it, what was said about it, with the legends surrounding it, with the main storyline of the script, with those techniques and imaginative solutions that made it bright and original, with its creators and performers, with those slogans that "left the people" from the screen (Fokina, 2007: 77).

The philosopher and art critic B. Groys devoted his article to the theory of modern "auteur" (cinema) art, which, according to him, is not only open to rationally thinking citizens, but is also post-Fucaudian and post-Deleuzian in the sense that it does not forget madness and childishness. In short, it seeks to integrate into its sphere what ordinary society cannot and will not integrate. In this sense, art is not elitist, opposing itself to a wider sociality, but even more social than the society around it. Such super-sociality leads to a rupture between the artist or thinker and his environment. But this rupture is not caused by elitism, but precisely by the fact that the artist's sociality is more radical than the sociality surrounding him (Groys, 2012: 132).

As far as mass cinema is concerned, B. Groys is convinced that while European cinema is mainly concerned with "the human, too human", mainstream Hollywood is gradually concentrating more and more on metaphysical issues. He is interested in gods, demons, aliens from outer space and thinking machines. The heroes of these films are haunted by the question of who or what is hidden beneath the surface of the visible world. In this way, Hollywood is moving towards the thematization - and at the same time radicalization – of the traditional critique of the film industry. As you know, this criticism accuses the film industry of offering us a seductive illusion, a beautiful production whose purpose is to mask, hide, deny a repulsive reality. Many of the latest Hollywood films, however, claim the opposite. There is no longer a cinematic "beautiful illusion", and the everyday "real" world appears in them as a kind of dramatization. Consequently, Hollywood responds to the suspicion of aesthetic manipulation by reactivating a much older and deeper metaphysical suspicion, according to which the whole world around us may turn out to be a film shot in some otherworldly Meta Hollywood. In this case, any Hollywood film would be more "truthful" than any reality, because reality usually reveals neither its artificiality, its madness, nor its underbelly. On the contrary, the latest Hollywood cinema, by thematizing its methods, offers a new metaphysics that interprets the act of creation as a studio production. And in this respect, Hollywood cinema is far superior to the majority of contemporary culture. After all, the question of whether Hollywood is right or wrong in its metaphysical project is not so important compared to the fact that the subject here is once again the other side of the world (Groys, 2005: 77).

Based on this kind of reasoning, B. Groys finally came to a very sharp and even outrageous conclusion for the traditional theory of cinematography, namely that all attempts by theorists to describe artistic practice as part of reality appear unsatisfactory, no matter how interesting and original they may be. This applies both to Bourdieu's sociology of art and to systems theory (the two most fashionable, programmatically anti-metaphysical sociological theories today) (Groys, 2005: 86).

No less paradoxical were the conclusions of E. Maisel, who studied the phenomenon of "cinema and religion". According to E. Maisel, religious cinema is free from faith, but expresses what happens to it and around it, where it happens (Meisel, 2012: 112).

The philosopher and film critic O. Aronson decided to examine the problem of violence on the screen from a theoretical point of view, believing that this question is itself dictated by the spirit of *imitatio*, in which violence is already present as a certain politics of images. For this political, the manifestation of aggression is only one of the many affective manifestations of life... The forces of politics depend on aggression and violence, which are constantly fed. Mimesis here has a dual character: on the one hand, "violence is inescapable", there is even a certain need for it, and therefore images of suffering bodies cannot be completely excluded; on the other hand, they are constantly endowed with negative characteristics, demonized, condemned (Aronson, 2003).

At the same time, we can probably agree that the borderline between positive and negative violence on the screen is extremely blurred, floating. It is controlled by dominant values (ideology), politics, morality. This boundary is the theatrical stage on which the performance unfolds, telling us through the technologies of identification and the politics of the image: look, this is your experience. And we're watching. And we agree and are practically certain that the experience is really 'mine', that it belongs to 'my' body. In this way, sensuality becomes hostage to politics, in which images of suffering bodies act as a substitute for desires and experiences that are not controlled by the authorities. These images not only represent violence, demonstrate its danger and threat, but also divert attention, locate violence in the realm of natural aggressiveness, and hide the violence that emanates from the political and social order itself, in the form of "desired prohibitions" and sometimes "sweet restrictions". When a tear wells up in the viewer's eye at the next standard twist in a melodramatic plot, or when a child's smile in a yogurt advert elicits programmed tenderness, we are present to the same politics of images that control and shape our sensuality, which is no less violent than the negative images of aggression it produces (Aronson, 2003: 86-88).

Continuing the theme of screen violence, the culturologist E. Baraban wrote that in Russian cinema about the war of recent decades, emotional and ethical messages are legitimized by positions of pragmatic individualism, and the bearers of a sense of patriotism are individuals who are not united and not united in the unity propagated by the Soviet reading of the war. The models for reworking the Soviet war discourse in post-Soviet films are different.

These are aesthetic eclecticism against a background of anachronistic ideology, the inversion of the ideology and aesthetics of Soviet war films, the construction of plot elements in the fantasy genre, and the use of stylistic and genre elements of Soviet war history to revise the key tropes of the Soviet idea of war. An analysis of the ways in which new films model the Soviet past helps to recognize the disappearance of the previously unified perception and reproduction of war, and the fact that nostalgia for the Soviet past actually occupies a rather limited place as a fact of post-Soviet culture (Baraban, 2012: 83).

Reflecting on the ethics and aesthetics of war on the screen, D. Golyenko-Wolfson (1969–2023) emphasized that the recognition and legalization of the gestures of humanitarian intervention made by the superpowers significantly modified the system of humanistic principles that determined both the theory of war and the practice of military operations. Traditional military humanism was based on the idea of civil society expressed in the Hegelian philosophy of history and the corresponding idea of the sovereignty of the individual. The ultimate goal of military conflict, whether driven by territorial claims or religious zeal, liberation or conquest, was to uphold the norms of national sovereignty and the standards of human autonomy. The fact that the movement towards this "sacred" goal was accompanied by the assertion of the demonic will of the commander or the absolute dominance of the ruler always introduced into the rhetoric of military humanism the effect of a contradictory duality. ... Today, war does not mean the clash of (more or less) equal armies, but the clash of the military machine of a developed superpower with detachments of rebels from economically backward regions that are disproportionately strong. The doctrine of humanitarian intervention became the dominant military strategy during the bombing of Yugoslavia. But military experts began to propagate it as early as the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Iron Curtain, when the world became unipolar. ... The war was transformed from a real event into a media show broadcast via satellite networks (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2004: 100-103).

Thus, both in cinema and in reality, in the ideology and tactics of modern warfare, a significant detail has undergone a metamorphosis: the factor of protection (by the constitution or the UN charters) has now disappeared. Now, potentially, any state found guilty of wrongdoing before the world community can be subjected to a preventive military strike or an act of retaliation. ... The question of humanism appears as an indispensable core of many documentary or fictional depictions of war. For better or worse, their authors have to soften and rationalize the absurdity and chaos that characterize the real, aesthetically unadorned course of war. The structure of the battle narrative – and the diegesis of a military action film – is based on a precisely calculated contraction (or termination) of two levels: a highly symbolic level of militaristic rhetoric and a non-symbolic level where horror and suffering are unalienable, and the individual is nothing more than cannon fodder. The director's interpretation and evaluation of war is subject to an unstable balance found by the author between the pathos of war, its symbolic, and the madness of war, its real...

In military dramas, physiology and naturalism are paradoxically either almost excluded or significantly muted, but ideology literally eats away at not only the heroized replica characters, but also their physical plasticity. The configuration of the military experience in the genre of the military thriller is given by one or another ratio of two inseparable plans – the heroism and madness of war, its symbolic and real; the same correspondence predetermines the model of humanism that prevails in a certain historical period (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2004: 103-104).

Referring to the influence of mass media in general, D. Golyenko-Wolfson writes that the ultra-fast growth of telecommunication technologies contributes to the fact that humanistic views become relative, appropriated by television, advertising or political PR, and begin to be reshaped to suit market interests. ... Perhaps the era of information-computer wars, in which the regularity of attacks and the number of "victims" can be watched with intrigue from the comfort of a television chair or by buying a game console for a personal computer, would have dragged on for a long time. Had it not been for the NATO bombings in Yugoslavia on 11 September, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and much more... Suddenly, the war did not seem funny and comical, but a serious, too serious "event" that pointed to the personal responsibility of each and every one of us. It suddenly ceased to be a monstrous anomaly, relegated to the cultural periphery, and instead claimed to be an everyday norm, given the cynical "name" of an anti-terrorist operation and spreading everywhere (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2004: 106-107).

As part of the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of serials, A. Korolev reminded the readers of the Journal that the appearance of Mexican serials has given rise to a new phenomenon of existence - the soft addiction to soap operas. Millions of housewives live from one series to another... What does this violent passion mean? It's about not living your own life. We want to live there! Do not beg in the nooks and crannies of your ordinary destiny, do not get lost in an aging body, but always live your fate without yourself, outside your own destiny, in a young body, in the space of radiant love... A virtual monster of otherness begins to emerge from the depths of the universe to devour humans. Another century of genetics or techno genetics – and a human being will be able to live life at the level of a chip connected to virtual reality. And I assure you, there is no inhumanity and dehumanization in this evolution of society. A person will have the opportunity to choose from several options of being. The first is life within the fate of others... The second option is the real destiny in real time. This destiny will be chosen by a few, those saints who will create programmed happiness for the sleeping billions. ... But still the third way is the most probable – a mixture of two forms of being – real and imaginary. A symbiosis of the possible and the impossible (Korolev, 2001: 47).

The sociologist K. Bogoslovskaya devoted her theoretical article to the topic of the relationship between serials and the audience (Bogoslovskaya, 2007: 93-103).

Here she quite sensibly emphasized that the main metaphor characterizing the many ways in which the modern viewer perceives serials can be recognized as their existence as an alternative to the empirical world. It is precisely in this way – and primarily in this way – that regular viewers begin to live in 'soap operas', and this is confirmed by years of focus group data. And this is not only true of serials: a television program is largely perceived as an endless series, the main feature of which is to "switch reality" from everyday life to television. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the case of serials: many viewers describe soap operas as their "second family", in the world of prime time, the fate of the heroes is not limited to romantic relationships, but includes a wider context – it is the fate of friends who are deeply indifferent to you... Paradoxically, with the introduction of "unreal", mystical, fairy-tale content into the plots of series, there are few magical stories in the literal sense on Russian television. Serial 'fairy tales' are not based on fantasy, but on real, sometimes quasi-documentary material, and this corresponds to the conscious and unconscious desires of the audience (Bogoslovskaya, 2007: 93).

At the same time, we agree that serials do not shine with a variety of mythological eternal plots. Out of the huge spectrum, three meta-plots are most often used: "Cinderella" (a heroine who, after great suffering, finally finds happiness in the person of a handsome prince...), "Robin Hood" (a hero who restores social justice by "expropriating" illicit wealth), "Rich they cry too" (proof that the powerful of this world also have problems, extinguishing envy and, as a result, social aggression) (Bogoslovskaya, 2007: 103).

On the basis of many years of sociological research, K. Bogoslovskaya comes to the conclusion that in order to be successful for the masses, the world of serials must, first of all, have a "general television quality": a clear and transparent plot, strong intrigue, vivid characters, good

acting... Secondly, and this is not so obvious, the world of serials captures the feelings and thoughts of the audience when it speaks in an understandable, transparent language about human destiny in terms of its ultimate categories – life, death, love. They are important and recognizable to people regardless of the specific time and space in which the series is set. They can be described in terms of Jung's classic archetypes: "hero" and "shadow", "anima" and "animus". Directly translated into the language of the plot, this is the relationship between hero and anti-hero, between man and woman... The presence of these qualities in the world of the series is a necessary but not sufficient condition for its success. Above the plot of the series there is a "superstructure": the ideals and values to which its characters aspire and which the serial world as a whole follows. This superstructure organizes what are commonly referred to as the show's basic messages, since they answer questions about why the show's characters live, what they do, and how life works in general. In the case of linking these two worlds – the series and the viewer – it is the superstructure that becomes the foundation of success (Bogoslovskaya, 2007: 94-95).

We share the opinion of K. Bogoslovskaya, who is convinced that the outlines of a successful serial world, its ideals and values, should correspond to the content of the collective ideas in which the majority of viewers live, to those "myths" that the audience consciously – and more often unconsciously – shares. These collective ideas do not tell us what the world really is, but what it dreams of, what it should be. In other words, they outline the constructions of a fairy tale that will embody, on recognizable material, the hidden expectations of the audience. This is how the "mythological quality" of the series is created, which determines whether it becomes an event or goes unnoticed despite its high "television quality". ... The basic metaphors of a successful series must be in line with the cultural and social currents that dominate society at the time. At the same time, however, they do not correspond directly, but in such a way that the viewer sitting in front of the television remains in a space of symbolic security – he personally, his image of the world, his values, his identity at the time of watching should not be threatened by anything (Bogoslovskaya, 2007: 95).

The last factor is very important, because the appearance in the series of a striking reality or the actualization of too painful topics of our time immediately affects its popularity... The viewer does not want to be reminded of his defenselessness, the proximity of death and other existential problems. The worlds of the series are designed to extinguish this fundamental anxiety, not to fuel it. The bitter truth, which exposes illusions, is not needed by the viewers of the series. ... However, the complete exclusion of those parts of reality that evoke strong associations and arouse basic fears from the serial worlds does not work either - the series lose their relevance, and the audience already talks about them with disappointment... For the series to be successful, it must correspond exactly to the most public ideas that were relevant at that moment, but at the same time did not arouse basic anxiety (Bogoslovskaya, 2007: 97).

However, in the 1990s, the *Cinema Art* journal liked to write about serials. In fact, the analysis of the phenomenon of the Internet and virtual reality has become a new theoretical trend of the journal in the 21st century.

It is characteristic that the very title of the article by the media researcher L. Manovich – "YouTube and the Future of Film Theory" – was a kind of challenge to the previous ideas about film studies.

L. Manovich wrote that the presence of "big data" is very important for the study of cinema as an art form. The word "cinema" here means not only studio cinema, but also videos produced by bloggers, music videos, educational videos, advertisements, etc. What unites all these products (with an understandable difference) is the use of the parameters and resources of cinema – that is, what we call cinematic language. The emergence of social media in the 2000s, as well as the gradual digitalization of the works of the past, has caused a real revolution in the study of culture. ... The second common feature of this new paradigm is the use of statistical methods. ... The statistical theory of cinema was proposed by David Bordwell in the 1980s of the last century. He proposed to describe the language of classical Hollywood not as a set of rules, formulas or recipes, but as statistical regularities. ... This very interesting idea has not been further developed in film studies. But now that the statistical approach has become standard in the study of culture through the analysis of "big data", such a theory looks quite attractive... If we are interested in studying the artistic languages of cinema in its current manifestations (including all kinds of genres and forms of what is so prevalent on YouTube), we now have truly unique opportunities to do so. ... The presence of billions of video clips and films on the web means that we are potentially seeing

not just one cinematic language, but many different dialects, their differences and all the variety of forms of these languages. Unlike natural languages, which are rapidly diminishing in number on the planet, in the world of media we are seeing a constant expansion and emergence of new dialects and hybrids. And there is probably no other platform that presents such a variety as YouTube. This video hosting site can be likened to a giant metropolis populated by people who speak many hundreds of languages that influence each other. But if changes in natural languages can take centuries, decades or years, modern media languages can change much faster. This rate of change gives us all the more reason to study them and better understand the dimensions of human creativity. This includes how it is affected by globalization, the development of media technology, access to the cultural heritage of the past and the infinite number of works of the present, the use of machine learning for search and recommendation, and many other factors that determine the specificity of our cinematic civilization (Manovich, 2021: 12-13).

Thus, L. Manovich's theoretical approach and prognosis not only contradicted all previous ideas about "classical" film studies as a science that primarily studies the theory and history of the artistic peaks of cinematography, but also pushed aside "newer" (including – local) theoretical approaches to the science of cinema related to semiotics, gender, Freudianism, etc. (Manovich, 2021: 12-13).

As if continuing L. Manovich's reflections, the film critic V. Lyashchenko argues that YouTube has become a platform for film studies with a million viewers (Lyashchenko, 2021: 32-35), because wordy or wordless, suggestive or chewy video essays combine the analytical with the sensual. They explain, they fascinate, they immerse, they assimilate what they talk about, that is, they become metacinema. And in this capacity, they are in demand by millions of viewers... It is unlikely that all these viewers will go on to make their own films, but the material from the film schools, presented in this way, captivates them. Which, by the way, makes the distributors of festival, copyright, independent, etc. cinema think of these people as their potential customers... The video essay is not a substitute for film criticism, there is no such task, but it significantly enriches the perception on both sides of the YouTube window. Both the person who sits down at the digital editing table to dissect another director's technique and the person who waits for the release of another video with such a dissection make the conversation about cinema more meaningful (Lyashchenko, 2021: 35).

In this connection, however, O. Aronson drew the attention of the readers of the magazine to the negative aspects of watching video files on YouTube, since a reasonable question arises: what should we associate more with cinema today: films – works that make its history, or replicated bad copies, films deformed by special programs, censored, shredded into fragments, and reassembled in numerous video reviews? (Aronson, 2021: 16).

At the same time, in the modern audiovisual sphere (including the Internet), there is no "internal censor" (i.e., one's own morality) that can prohibit the author from using this or that means of expression. Morality never belongs to the subject, but every "I" is included in the world of others, in which the forces of morality operate together with others (economic, erotic, etc.), structuring the "I" as a subject. But even if we accept the existence of an "internal censor", it is still not clear how it can forbid something to another? In any case, the introduction of an "internal censor" implies the totalization of ethical principles, the recognition of certain values as unshakable, universal, divine (Aronson, 2001: 81).

Reflecting on a similar issue, L. Uzarashvili recalled that with the fact that YouTube doesn't produce content like TV or film studios gives the impression that it doesn't control or participate in shaping the content of its platform. ... On the one hand, it is clear that the myth of YouTube's unconditional progressiveness is largely based on a democratic ideology that is embedded in the company's positioning as a platform with the slogan "broadcast yourself". Despite this promise, the platform's algorithms work in the opposite direction, discriminating against non-selling content and prioritizing conforming blogs that can, or already do, earn from advertising. On the other hand, as a result of the less lucrative and more meticulous work of individuals, alternative content bubbles are indeed popping up on YouTube to create a more democratic and progressive future. This is the merit of the people, not the technologies themselves, which resist such practices rather than support them (Uzarashvili, 2021: 42, 44).

D. Golyenko-Wolfson (1969–2023) focused on the negative characteristics of the Internet, stressing that in the age of high technology it is the electronic media that become generators of groundless panic and superstitious fear. Networks. The role of the infernal machine that spreads

evil, not for selfish or moral motives, but according to its own infernal whims that cannot be deciphered. Anxiety becomes the psychotic tuning fork of modern man, who has seen on Internet a reservoir of the mysterious, the cruel and the uncontrollable, but has not found a way to contain this mysteriousness and adapt it to his own advantage. Any attempt to give scientific explanations to this mysterious, to apply an ethical scale to it, or to put it into a moral framework, and to call the virtual to consciousness, is ridiculous and doomed to failure from the start – this is what modern cinema diagnoses (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2003: 96).

Film expert M. Terakopyan believes that the digital image changes our sense of the necessary connection between the camera and non-film reality. The presence of both is no longer absolutely necessary. Now it's much easier to 'photograph' what you can't see. Computer technology converts the image into pixels that can be easily transformed, processed, altered. The line between animation (which creates images where there were none before) and editing (which deals with the rearrangement of fragments of events that occurred in front of the camera) is blurred. When the artist is able to easily manipulate the digital image, either as a whole or frame by frame, the film becomes a series of drawings. The ability to draw by hand on digitized images is a very serious change in the status of cinema, paradoxically returning the "art of the moving image" to its origins (Terakopyan, 2007: 71).

E. Maisel's theoretical article "The Mirror Stage: VR and Cinema" focused on the phenomenon of virtual reality (Maisel, 2019: 169-182).

In it, E. Maisel writes that although this technology has entered the life of a person of the XXI century, virtual films or art objects have not become a public cultural event... Cinematography is not afraid of VR and is ready to eat it with all the giblets, but there is one small detail, the ability of the viewer to somehow participate in the action of the picture. Undoubtedly, in terms of its significance, such a transformation, if it occurs, will not yield to the problem of sound, nor even to digitalization, because we are talking about a change in the basic and still untouchable pattern of consumption: from a viewing session, watching a film becomes an active search session. On the one hand, this innovation guarantees the demand for a normal 'observational' cinema (just as painting and photography survived with the advent of cinema and television), on the other hand, this transition itself will radically change the functions not only of the viewer, but also of the image, and possibly in general the whole image system of what we now call cinema (Maisel, 2019: 181-182).

The same E. Maisel further noted that the modern "video mass" is increasingly turning to the subject of more and more minorities that were previously ignored or misrepresented on the screen, such as homosexuals, queer audiences, colour and ethnic minorities, representatives of post-colonial societies, and further down to people with one or another disability. This process is not yet complete, its logic and pathos are far from exhausted, but at the beginning of the 2000s of our century it is reaching a kind of climax in the rediscovery of our animal neighbours on the planet, with their subjectivity, with their time, with their expressive silence, long abandoned by a man who knew the necessity of work and with it the bitterness of alienation (Maisel, 2020: 101).

As far as theoretical approaches to Russian cinema are concerned, M. Lipovetsky, in the pages of *Cinema Art*, argued, in full accordance with the "Western critical view" of Russia, that today's culture is trying to get rid of the Soviet legacy, understood as a failure into archaic savagery, and return to modernity. But, firstly, there is nowhere to take modernity except from the Soviet experience. Secondly, these attempts are superimposed on postmodern trends coming both from their own aesthetic underground and from the wide-open doors to the West – to postmodern Europe. If the postmodern consciousness offers a constant problematization and deconstruction of the norms and absolutes of its culture – also from the point of view of other consciousnesses – then, for example, a pronounced nostalgia for empire and imperial greatness, characteristic not only of the older but also of the younger generation of filmmakers, could not but stand in the way of, say, postcolonial discourse. It seems that it should naturally accompany the collapse of the empire, but it does not, because it is not accompanied – at least in Russian culture – by a critical reflection on the colonizing role of this very culture; on the contrary, it is Russia and the Russians who are always offended and suppressed in the mass consciousness and in the most popular works' (Lipovetsky, 2003: 79-80).

Within the framework of the same theme of theoretical understanding of the processes in post-Soviet cinema, E. Maisel quite rightly noted that in recent Russian cinema, as a reaction to these socio-historical traumas, post-topic moods are clearly distinguished, and sometimes even a complete reduction of the utopian dimension in general – to the extent that it is possible...



So, in general, young Russian cinema is post-topic. If there is a utopian motif in it – as a hope for the best, as a hero's search for himself, as a belief in certain forms of self-realization – it is usually escape. Modern heroes believe in escape: from society, from the metropolis, from degraded urban (that is, simply public) relations (Maisel, 2010: 35).

Despite all this, according to E. Maisel, in the Russian cinema of the first two post-Soviet decades there were no images of many hot, painful topics, and this is also a syndrome of a post-topic state of mind. In particular, we almost never make films about the value of freedom, either individual or public. The latent apology of liberalism can only be found in retrospective films about the thawed perestroika reality, that is, about the last three decades of the USSR, when the "West" symbolized for our relaxed compatriots such blessings that are scarce in their world, such as freedom of speech, style, lifestyle, purchasing and travelling... There is no honest socialist cinema in the sense of some Ken Loach... The rejection of many current issues by young authors, the emphasis on "non-principle" and the flight from clear semantic accents are the result of the rigidity of our general post-shock state. All these gaps are the result of a huge public disappointment, the extent of which we have yet to grasp (Maisel, 2010: 35, 39).

The articles by K. Razlogov (Razlogov, 2002: 83-92) and N. Sirivlya (Sirivlya, 2001: 69-76) were devoted to the attempt of post-Soviet cinema to reflect on the screen the glamorous life of the so-called "new Russians", which had minimal contact with the everyday life of ordinary Russian citizens. In this regard, I. Mantsov believed that Russian filmmakers "need only look carefully at the social reality of their country and reflect it on the cinema and television screen to the best of their ability and talent. Everyone. No formal frills, no such genius required. Just an honest look. Not into the abyss of my subconscious (which, by the way, is absolutely predictable, like the subconscious of almost everyone, or like modern Russian cinema), but into the abyss of everyday reality. I promise you that the selectors of the largest Western festivals will immediately reach out to you, the national audience, and even to cunning producers with great financial resources. Because the truth always costs more. More than anything else. Unfortunately, this point of view is still unpopular in Russia" (Mantsov, 2002: 73).

Interesting in this regard is the article by the ethnologist E. Romanova, devoted to the study of the mythopoetic chronotope of Yakut visuality (Romanova, 2021: 38-45) in the context of its reflection of the real world. In particular, E. Romanov wrote that the agia of Yakut language, the fragility and fluidity of time, the permeability of profane and sacred boundaries, the flow of spaces and symbols, the appeal to the culture of memory, ontological symmetry as the organization of the world, plurality of choice, co-creation: these components of the traditional Yakut mentality set a new visual program of aesthetic experiences. Understanding the author's imaginary landscapes and the transformation of reality reveals the film language of Yakut cinema as a phenomenon of co-spatiality. Its sign system demonstrates a spatial perspective, and the transcendent quality of the mutual flow of space and time, characteristic of archaic traditions, creates a special mythopoetic language of visual narrative. One of the key visual techniques of Yakut auteur cinema is a metaphorical model for describing the hero's inner world through landscape topoi. The directors' appeal to spatial archetypes has an internal logic and refers to the traditions of national culture. The experience of spatial visualization in Sakha culture can be described as a kind of media archaeology. The visual method of superimposing one cultural layer on another, where the past breaks through the new, becomes for Yakut cinema a window into the modern world film process (Romanova, 2021: 44-45).

#### *Discussions about the problems of cinema and society*

Never before has there been so many discussions in the *Cinema Art* journal as in the first two decades of the 21st century. To a large extent, they were devoted to socio-political problems, however, to no lesser extent – cinema problems.

For example, during the discussion "Film distribution: mission (im)possible?" (Kinoprokat..., 2002: 5-18), D. Dondurey (1947–2017), editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art* journal, recalled that in our country the production economy exists in complete isolation from the distribution economy. Russian producers realize all their economic interests at the stage of film creation. It's like making shoes you don't wear and sausages you don't eat. Multiple premieres in several cinemas cannot recoup real production costs. There are only a few known cases of Russian films paying off... So, our production exists in abnormal conditions, but there are good cinemas, there are more and more audiences, and rental incomes are growing... Since 1988, filmmakers have been saying: the problem is that, by adopting a new model of cinema, we have missed out on the distribution,

we have handed it over to "foreign" hands, to the local authorities. Now it is clear that this was the only right decision. Today, rental is already "recovering" and production is on the verge of a complete collapse (Kinoprokat..., 2002: 6).

During another discussion, D. Dondurey noted that in this situation he saw three customers who were quite powerful, both in terms of quantity and in terms of authority and economics. The most influential of these is the commercial cinema audience, mostly American... This audience doubles almost every year, represents the main contingent of theatrical distribution, and feeds our entire film industry. ... The second segment of the audience is those post-Soviet people who live mainly in memories of the past, who explicitly or indirectly hate the very principles of present life. They concentrate on cinema, which can be called commerce in the old sense. They do not go to cinemas, old or new, but sit in front of their televisions and watch series that are indistinguishable from each other. They love Soviet cinema, of course... But the cinema designed for such an audience has no future either in the cinema or on video, because its content, in encoded "versions of reality", can only live on television. Finally, the third part of the audience is made up of professionals and film lovers who can perceive auteur cinema and who place all their expectations on it. Of course, there are not many of these audiences, but they are very influential because, through the institution of criticism, they hold the evaluation of modern cinema in their hands. Their representatives sit on the juries of all the European film festivals and make the weather there. One of the fundamental, strategic problems of modern Russian cinema is that these audiences practically do not touch each other. Each lives its own life and looks at the world and the functions of cinema in its own way. It turns out that our cinematography today literally appeals to three different nations, even though these people live in one country and speak the same language (I..., 2004: 5-6).

Similar positions were expressed by D. Dondurey in the discussion "The Code is Unknown" (Cod..., 2004: 99-108), adding that in Russia there is an incredible boom in TV series, which make up 20 percent of all broadcasts, and together with feature films, documentaries, and animation, they make up 54 percent of all film broadcasts. It's not so easy to kick ER (Emergency Room) or Sex and the City off the TV screen, to "put up" the world's best TV shows from our prime time, but it has happened: Russian TV shows won (Cod..., 2004).

Film critic V. Fomin argued with D. Dondurey: "I was struck by the wording of the discussion: 'The code is unknown'. And it is famous! This is the code of the Russian artistic tradition, which, in spite of official ideological pressure, found its way into our national cinema, albeit in a limited, truncated form. And our whole cinema was based on it. With the beginning of perestroika, we lost this code. The system of artistic values that dominates our cinema today is something imitatively cosmopolitan. The system of values that was alien to us, that led us into a blind alley, is not only not disappearing, on the contrary, it has been adopted by the majority of young Russian filmmakers" (Fomin, 2004: 101).

By 2005, the situation in film distribution began to change with the appearance of several Russian box office hits. And in 2005, the *Cinema Art* journal reflected these changes in its pages with a discussion on blockbusters (Blockbuster..., 2005: 6-23).

At the beginning of the discussion, D. Dondurey rightly noted that a year and a half ago there were no films in Russia that could be called blockbusters: films with big budgets, stars, special effects, full-scale advertising, films that could compete with Hollywood products at our box offices. With the arrival of the *Night Watch*, a new era began... As a result, in just one-year Russian cinema tripled its presence at the annual Russian box office. And if in 2003 the fees were no more than 5 percent, in 2004 our films were already earning 15-16 percent, and these are serious figures. If in 1997 our cinema market was estimated at 8 million dollars, in 2005 the fees were at least 370 million. The rate of growth in this industry over six years is so great that even the oil and gas industry has not seen anything like it. But although Russian cinema has made progress thanks to a few blockbusters and has increased its presence on the screens, it has still done little to impress the Americans, who continue to receive up to 80 percent of all box-office receipts in our country (Blockbuster..., 2005: 6-7).

Y. Bogomolov (1937–2023) drew attention in his speech to the problems of film globalization and the role of cinematic mass culture in Russian society: "It seems to me that our cinematography will indeed have a very difficult, difficult, contradictory path ahead of it. After all, what makes the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century different from previous eras? In the past, high culture and its genres were visible, they were representative, and low culture existed and developed in

the fields of mass high culture. It existed, it developed, but it was treated condescendingly. Now there has been a castling, which consists in the fact that mass culture has, strangely enough, become the center of all culture, and authorial culture exists on its periphery" (Bogomolov, 2005: 20).

During a discussion entitled "In Search of Meaning: New Patriotism" (V..., 2006: 5-25), D. Dondurey noted the paradoxical situation that had developed in Russia by the beginning of the 21st century: the population of our country perceives the processes of renewal as unjust, wrong, unbearable. As a result, the understanding of what is happening is totally inadequate to what is happening in reality itself. People who have been in the market for many years have a very negative perception of private property (there are many sociological studies on this subject). Entrepreneurs are portrayed – on television, in the imagination, and therefore in life itself – exclusively as bandits. This is confirmed by more than two thousand episodes filmed in the last three years, in most of the nine hundred films made since 1991. Intellectuals and artists have offered virtually no productive models to help their compatriots adapt to a new life. In the minds of the people, a whole worldview system has grown up, according to which work, creativity and activity are not values (V..., 2006: 7). On the other hand, according to D. Dondurey, it seems strange that in Russia in the 21st century patriotism is mainly associated with war and sports, to the detriment of a peaceful understanding of patriotism in a vast and complex peaceful life (V..., 2006).

The film critic and culturologist K. Razlogov (1946–2021) drew attention to the fact that the possibilities of the state and artists to influence the processes of real cultural life are minimal, since we are really talking about some unconscious forces and impulses (Jung called it the "collective unconscious"), which sooner or later lead to the same results, despite the fact that all participants of the socio-cultural action seem to want to lead society towards something completely different. It seems that some stable structures of the psyche are reproduced in the structures of social relations. No matter how hard we try to break them up and make them turn the other way, we fail. They can only be washed away, buried, sometimes even blown up, but after decades a remake is built again, just as it was (V..., 2006).

The film expert D. Komm wrote in this connection that at the beginning of the 21st century on Russian television almost all the more or less sane political scientists disappeared, and in their place figures like Leontiev and Dugin took over, tirelessly singing a song about how "the enemies burned their own huts"... Individual journalists who mistakenly believed that their duty was not to spread patriotism but reliable information were driven out of the profession. Naturally, filmmakers could not remain aloof from these titanic efforts. Moreover, love for one's homeland is not a cheap affair, and the budgets allocated to it are so large that it would be a sin not to control them. The result was the revival of the good old military-patriotic cinema, which was hastily consigned to the archives (Komm, 2006: 113).

In this respect, however, the opinion of the film critic M. Turovskaya (1924-2019), expressed in an earlier discussion in the pages of *Cinema Art*, seemed very reasonable: "The task of our cinema is not to create some kind of ideological project. I do not believe in such ideological projects, I do not believe that with the help of television, the media, etc., one can present an ideological project to the people. I believe that this ideological project can only take root if it corresponds at least to some extent to the expectations of the masses. You can add something to it, you can reject something, but if the ideology does not meet people's expectations, they will not accept it. ... I think that if our cinematography were to describe everyday reality, and we are living in an amazing reality, in a transitional period, – that would be its invaluable contribution to the creation of our mythology, ideology, etc. But our real everyday life remains uncovered, it is not described on the screen. The screen basically expresses itself" (Turovskaya, 2001: 169).

In a discussion of violence in cinema (Ves..., 2003: 5-22), film critic and director O. Kovalov recalled that there was simply no crueler and more naturalistic cinema than Soviet cinema in the 1920s – 'bourgeois censorship' would not have allowed a hundredth of the atrocities depicted in Russian films about the revolution to be shown. German censors made banknotes in the film *Battleship Potemkin* (Ves..., 2003: 11-12).

Turning to the present, O. Kovalov stressed that the rivers of blood in today's genre cinema are not at all surprising: it has always supplied the market not only with dreams, but also with "cutting, slashing, stabbing" and "terrible stories". Today it is the same kind of booth, a mixture of fairground attraction and computer game. This machine operates according to the laws that have always been laid down for it. It does not change its nature because the notorious new technologies have entered the world of farce. It makes little difference if a papier-mâché head flies off the

shoulders of a character or if a mass of bodies writhes on the screen as laser beams cut through them. From such spectacles one falls into an addiction similar to that of a drug: the first shock becomes numb, the user waits for a stronger injection, and this process is endless" (Kovalov, 2003: 14). However, in the "auteur genre", the cinema of aesthetes and refined intellectuals, the sophisticated consciousness, teasing and provoking, will indulge in aesthetic games with violence: it will give rise to its most bizarre forms or provocatively exchange good and evil. This is the realm of salon violence. "And here our humanistic views come into paradoxical conflict with the aesthetic sense. We admit that the famous scene from Hitchcock's Psycho, in which the female body writhes under the blows of a madman's knife, gives us aesthetic pleasure... Simply put, we enjoy looking at it" (Kovalov, 2003: 14).

One of the most notable discussions in the pages of *Cinema Art* of the 21st Century was entitled "The End of Arthouse?" (Konets..., 2005: 16-29), in which film critic A. Shpagin argued that arthouse today is the direction in art that used to be called "avant-garde". Avant-garde (and now art-house) is a kind of split form (usually with a very complex structure, or even without it): a deliberately confusing language, a cascade of coded and strangely combined images, often something artificially slowed down, boring, developing according to the whims of the author, who openly deceives the audience with his originality and mystery. In any avant-garde work, the moment of provocation plays an important role: a confrontation with the usual myth and the destruction of hardened clichés of perception.

And film critic A. Plakhov emphasized that there is a movie with a high concentration of the author's principle, and there is a movie with a minimal concentration... At one time they liked to talk about elitist (festival) and mass cinema. But even this is not the most accurate opposition, it is more accurate to define it as high-budget and low-budget cinema, high-paying and low-paying cinema... In the same way that Soviet ideologists spoke of "diffusion of ideological and commercial cinema in the West"... Today, after postmodern expansion, everything is mixed up in the Oblonsky house, including art house with the mainstream. The new aesthetic centaur – art mainstream – is actually not so new and is a compromise product suitable for display in more halls... The mainstream also includes many taboos and reservations of modern culture, such as pornography (Konets..., 2005: 7-8).

#### *On the problems of film criticism and film studies*

In 2001, the *Cinema Art* journal celebrated its 70th anniversary. In this regard, a number of materials devoted to the history of the journal were posted on its pages. Film critic and culturologist M. Turovskaya (1924–2019) wrote about the *Cinema Art* of the 1930s (Turovskaya, 2001: 15-18), film historian V. Fomin wrote about the journal in the 1940s (Fomin, 2001: 19-22), film critic and culturologist N. Zorkaya (1924–2006) – about the journal periods of the 1950s and 1970s (Zorkaya, 2001: 23-25; 31-35), film historian E. Margolit – about the 1960s (Margolit, 2001: 26-30), journalist and writer T. Moskvina (1958–2022) – about the 1980s (Moskvina, 2001: 36-39), writer and film critic D. Bykov – about the 1990s (Bykov, 2001: 40-43). The history of the different periods of the *Cinema Art* journal was touched upon in the articles by film critics Y. Bogomolov (1937–2023) (Bogomolov, 2001: 5-7), A. Zorky (1935–2006) (Zorky, 2001: 8-10), V. Kichin (Kichin, 2001: 11-13), A. Medvedev (1938–2022) (Medvedev, 2001: 14-16), N. Sumenov (1938–2014) (Sumenov, 2001: 18-20), P. Shepotinnik (Shepotinnik, 2001: 20-22), K. Shcherbakov (Shcherbakov, 2001: 23-24), R. Yurenev (1912–2002) (Yurenev, 2001: 25-29). Due to their specificity, these articles were analyzed and cited by us earlier (Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, 2022), so here we only note that all these texts were small in volume and written in a rather free style of an essay.

But, as before, the most heated discussions in the *Cinema Art* journal were about the problems of film criticism and film studies.

One of the most heated discussions in the journal on this topic was called "Criticism as PR" (Kritika..., 2003: 13-29).

Here, the film critic N. Zarkhi (1946-2017) drew attention to the mutation of criticism, the disappearance of still relevant genres, the loss of almost the main components of our profession, its ontological properties. Traditional critical methodology, case-based analysis, critical intrigue and individual style are increasingly giving way to the power of public relations, designed to present a film or a name as a tidbit and promote it to the consumer. Pressure, a snappy word, a biting, slogan-like and actually meaningless phrase imprinted in the brain – all these techniques

turn into criticism, and concepts such as depth, for example, become almost a curse (*Kritika...*, 2003: 13).

The writer and film critic D. Bykov was not so categorical: "I have nothing against honest PR. We all do it one way or another, and certainly people who are interested in technology are convinced that every word I say here is PR for me, and not an attempt to understand the subject. I have nothing against that approach. From a certain point of view it is. The problem is that most of the time our critic is not doing PR for the product, but for himself. He tries to show what words he knows, what festivals he has been to recently, what parties he has been to... If there is such a PR for oneself, one's party or one's generation, it is not only not very meaningful, it is simply dishonest in relation to the image one is writing about. Because it is necessary to see it, the image, and not you. That is how it seems to me. And the tasks of critics, as opposed to PR people, I think there have always been two, and Blok formulated them in Pushkin's speech. One, of course, is to help the artist understand himself, and the second is not to call art what is not art. And these tasks, in my opinion, will always be relevant" (*Kritika...*, 2003: 14).

Film critic V. Matizen recalled that "there is no such thing as a completely independent critic, but we must strive for it. Every critic is dependent on certain aesthetic concepts. And not only from them... The dependence of the critic on friendship with filmmakers is a reality. Andrei Plakhov wrote well about this with reference to Truffaut's criticism. And he came to the same conclusion: it is better to be a traitor who has lunch with the director today and criticizes his new film tomorrow, than a true friend who praises his unsuccessful work. ... Of course, no one has the right to forbid a person to combine the role of critic with the role of film critic, journalist, advertising PR specialist, and even with the role of screenwriter or director. But there is such a thing as a critical reputation, which is not easy to gain and can be lost overnight" (*Kritika...*, 2003: 16).

The philosopher and film critic O. Aronson agreed that most of the people we call critics out of inertia will, to one degree or another, serve the interests of some kind of capital: cinematographic, production, festival, whatever - that is obvious. Moreover, they will all be called (and call themselves) critics, and we have to come to terms with that somehow... So, even though all these critics will exist under the name of critics, the question remains of the professional position of the critic, of the critical position and the critical statement that does not belong to this service of the interests of capital. ... If independent professional criticism is possible today, then it implies, in a certain imperative order, the suspension of judgement from the point of view of taste. ... The professionalism of the critic turns out to be closely linked to his ability to maintain a certain social moment in his statement, considering a certain impossibility of trusting the primary impulse of sensuality. Today there are practically no professional critics in this sense... Criticism is necessary. It is always PR, but PR in the literal sense of the word, that is, public relations, because it establishes, in one way or another, a link with society. ... So, a critic is someone who, first of all, forms a kind of community around himself. This community may be arbitrarily small, but it listens to him because it knows that it agrees or disagrees with the critic's statement, that it has the possibility of thinking and feeling. It is this kind of socially significant statement that is important in criticism (*Kritika...*, 2003: 18-19).

V. Shmyrov noted that in Russia of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, film criticism in its former form is probably no longer needed in large newspaper pages... On the other hand, another, new critic has not appeared. After all, look at the boom that television is experiencing, how many series are being shown. And, it seems, people are switching channels and writing about it. This is also a reality that should be of interest to critics and readers. But the profession of the columnist, the television critic, who would describe the state of the art of telecinema, is unfortunately simply absent today. There doesn't even seem to be a need for this specialization. Moreover, the very formulation of such a task will be perceived as deeply offensive by the majority of those present. And here we are faced with a paradoxical phenomenon: the fewer people can see the film; the more critics write about it. ... Today, the life of criticism continues on the Internet. It is carried out by very different people, whose names we do not always know and whose language is very specific. But this is what makes film criticism a real thing, in demand. This is film criticism that focuses more on aesthetics and technology than on ideology or "general civic principles". And this, it seems to me, is the guarantee that today not everything is so hopeless (*Kritika...*, 2003: 19-20). Thus, V. Shmyrov concluded that Russian professional film critics are far from readers who like to read about cinema, that is, they have absolutely nothing to do with the public to whom they should represent our film process.

Film expert A. Artyukh drew attention to the fact that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in contrast to the situation in Russia twenty years ago, the film process is assessed by critics as much more complex, branched and multidimensional. Due to their specialization, critics are forced to rely on the knowledge of their colleagues on issues that they themselves do not have time to study due to the unprecedented multidimensionality of the film process. The first thing we have gained in the current market situation is an understanding of the need to study and analyze the audience, which is the consumer of film products. Critics, along with distributors and creators, began to bear serious responsibility for how films are perceived by the audience, how high the degree of trust of the viewer is ([Kritika..., 2003: 27-28](#)).

But I. Mantsov, in fact, ignoring the main target of film criticism – the public, believed that for the film critic is the guardian of the hearth, the person who controls the real film process, and only in the second, third place is the writer. A film critic works directly with filmmakers: directors, producers, scriptwriters, officials of the Ministry of Culture. The real task of the film critic is: sometimes by cunning, sometimes by rudeness, sometimes by flattery, sometimes by Aesopian speeches, as they say, to "breed" practising filmmakers and officials into actions, plots, style, form and content that seem optimal to him (the film critic) ... Under the guise of "film critics" in Russia there are "scientists" and "writers". Well-trained scientists are not concerned with the construction of cinematography, with the process of filming, but with individual written discourse. They are interested in the smoothness of the presentation, the logical chain, the writing as such. Our film writers compete. They write to show each other their training. Unconsciously, but no less aggressively, they imitate "scientific" discourse and play clever. There is a competition between the subjects of written university culture, which parasites on cinema, which these subjects often despise ([Mantsov, 2002: 5-6](#)).

Unlike I. Mantsov, film critic D. Komm believed that the main audience for film criticism was not directors, producers, and officials, but the general population, which had not lost interest in cinema. "The previous generation of film fans and film clubs," wrote D. Komm, "had mixed feelings of envy and reverence for the critic, because he (according to their ideas) was admitted to the inner sanctum: he went to special screenings, went to foreign festivals, could see the classics and even communicate with them... For the older generation of filmgoers, who gleaned their information from Polish and Bulgarian magazines, the critic was about the same as for the rest of the citizens, the shopkeeper who could pull carefully hidden imported goods from under the counter...". Then, at the beginning of the 1990s, when a flood of foreign films arrived, the critic turned out to be even more in demand, because people wanted to be guided by this flow" ([Komm, 2005: 15](#)).

However, as D. Komm rightly continues, by the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a completely new type of cinephile had emerged in Russia. Modern cinephiles are young, independent people who have grown up without a lack of both cinema and information about it, who speak foreign languages, travel abroad and actively use the Internet. This is a demanding, not at all superficial audience, which has already decided on its tastes and preferences and does not tolerate stupidity in critical texts... And for these young people, the authority of film criticism is unfortunately extremely low... Meanwhile, we are discrediting ourselves in the eyes of thinking young people, and criticism is being actively squeezed out of the media on the pretext that, as they say, "the people are not interested in your fabrications". It turns out that people only need to know the budgets of films, the novels of stars... Maybe most viewers don't really need film criticism (although no one has proven this), but even if they do, we are now losing an interested minority, which is sad ([Komm, 2005: 15-16](#)).

However, film critic A. Artyukh reminds D. Komm that such tendencies are not unique to Russia: "According to FIPRESCI general secretary Klaus Eder, criticism in the West is also beginning to lose its former positions in the press". And in Russia, "it is not that the older generation of critics is leaving, and the younger ones do not want to become their heirs. By and large, there is nothing to inherit: our older generation of film critics has gone no further than structuralism and semiotics... Neo-formalism, feminism, queer studies, case studies, post-structuralism, post-modernism – all these things evoke horror mixed with hatred in many patriarchs.... The deplorable state of Russian criticism is only a reflection of the general confusion and vacillation in the humanitarian sphere. Film criticism always feeds on the ideas of academic writing. But if academic writing is limited to the historical texts of the journal *Film Studies Notes*, what do we expect from critics? Of course, the most advanced members of the film press have long since abandoned the local context and are inspired by Western studies. But such enthusiasts are few and far between. Moreover, they are often unappreciated. There are no serious analytical

assignments. There is Russian cinema, for example, on which the magazine *Seance* tries to base its cultural strategy. But it is still boring to write about our cinema because, with rare exceptions, it exists outside the global context" (Artyukh, 2005: 16-17).

Pessimistic sentiments about the demand for film and television criticism were also reflected in a number of other articles (Sekretnaya..., 2008; Stishova, 2005: 27-31; Tsyrukun, 2005: 77-79 and others).

Meanwhile, film critic V. Belopolskaya was convinced that those who say that we have the death of criticism ignore the obvious fact that we have a flourishing of criticism. When, under what other political, social, or technological conditions, could literally any half-wit get a podium? And that is exactly what has happened - and that is why criticism has flourished. We have so much criticism in print, electronic and other media, so many critics accredited to international festivals, so many professional people at press screenings, so many warriors of the invisible front of film journalism, that it is simply impossible not to notice the rapid flowering (Belopolskaya, 2005: 80).

At the same time, V. Belopolskaya emphasized that she meant film criticism and not PR, not announcements in various kinds of reference and poster publications, not notes on cinema in glamorous glossy publications.

Commenting about film criticism at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, V. Belopolskaya noted that the Internet has caused "irreparable mental damage" to Russian "classical" film criticism: "Some write to it unlimitedly, others read it unlimitedly. So there are: a) mountains of critical rubbish, texts marked by the cosmically idiotic arrogance of the authors – sites, unlike paper and broadcast publications, are rubber, and b) non-virtual criticism, containing mountains of information rubbish, gleaned virtually... Blooming criticism is concerned only with its positions and its position in social reality" (Belopolskaya, 2005: 81).

Similar tendencies were also noted in the discussion of the role of Russian film criticism in the Internet space (Versiya..., 2011: 87-97).

Culturologist M. Davydova, reflecting on the role of "ordinary film criticism" in social media, understood it as reviews by Internet users on various works of art or events. She argued that, as a rule, the authors of such materials have neither professional status nor special education. The quality of the reviews, if judged from a professional point of view, leaves much to be desired in most cases. Nevertheless, such texts are in great demand. The novelty of this phenomenon does not lie in the appearance of critical texts written by non-professionals. The boundaries of the professional have always been more or less blurred. The very possibility of trying one's hand at writing a literary or critical text is attractive. The classical amateur critic could not remain in this role for long. Either he received recognition from the public and/or his colleagues, or he refused to experiment any further, or he resigned himself to the stigma of being a loser and a graphomaniac. Today, the texts of everyday criticism take on a fundamentally different status. From a private creative experience, which in rare cases can develop into something more, everyday criticism becomes a self-sufficient and institutionalized system that ensures the reproduction and consumption of relevant texts (Davydova, 2012: 9).

Film critic R. Korneev was in many ways in solidarity with M. Davydova, noting that with the advent of the mass Internet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, professional film criticism, which had stopped somewhere deep in the 1990s in its ideas about its own attitude towards the viewer-reader, when "you say and they listen", was dealt the same blow as torrent trackers for film distributors. And while graduate film critics, along with the rest of journalism, were slowly moving out of the pages of magazines and into virtual space. A community of millions of film fans had already formed on the web. Today, this vast army, which has its own hierarchy and its own system of values, is itself an active source of the same evaluative consensus that was once the prerogative of an exclusively professional environment. ... The availability of video media and, above all, of broadband Internet for their distribution has, in recent years, created a broad layer of incredibly savvy viewers whose experience of watching film classics exceeds all the possibilities of specialized film universities. ... What's more, the new generation of formally non-professional film critics has always been given a walking distance to modern cinema, from the most exalted art house to television series, which a dozen years ago were not at all within the scope of interests of professional film criticism (Korneev, 2012: 6-7).

R. Korneev aptly noted that in a rather conflicted Internet space, top film bloggers, who, unlike venerable professionals, have passed through the hellish forge of selection by millions of ordinary moviegoers, are not only ready for these challenges, but they also cannot imagine life in a

less aggressive environment. They are well aware that the modern reader is only interested in someone else's opinion, however weighty, if it coincides with his own. For the average cinema-goer, the best opinion is his own. The art of presenting a non-banal thought in such a way that others, after reading it, say: "There! Just as I thought!" is the most important thing for a film critic blogger. This is the only way to earn a name and an audience. ... The ultimate art is to get readers to come over to your side. To do that, you must be more weighty, more conscientious, more readable. At the end of the day, just to have a polemical gift. And it is completely pointless to complain about the dominance of non-professionals. And at the top, as always, are those who, within the framework of large online publications, have managed to combine academic knowledge with the ability to conduct a dialogue with their audience. Or, on the contrary, those representatives of the non-professional writing community who have managed to save face and go beyond the confines of their "cosy blog" or social network community. Those who themselves created first quasi-, and then full-fledged thematic Internet publications, where the name, as always on the Web, is identical to the audience (Korneev, 2012: 8).

*Problems of documentary and popular science cinema*

The *Cinema Art* journal published very little about documentary and popular science in a theoretical vein in the 21st century. At the same time, only one article was published about popular science cinema at the level of theory, and that one was about the work of the one of French cinematographers (Fomenko, 2014: 113-121).

Referring to the Russian documentary cinema of the post-Soviet years, film critic L. Malkova wrote that the "Factory of Facts" was embodied on television in the fullness of Vertov's concept, taking on all the functions of the newsreel, with which analytical functions have increasingly merged in recent years. ... Losing its social function, the newsreel is transforming itself before our eyes into a style of screen thinking, gravitating towards two models: The Soviet film journal, reflecting the inertia of mass consciousness, and the pre-revolutionary, mute-laconic journal, consciously playing with cheap black-and-white film and resorting to inscriptions to avoid narration. St. Petersburg documentary filmmakers have been subjecting their newsreels to this kind of deliberate stylization for a number of years, although this style has not been fully maintained since 1998 – life dictates its own. In general, the national film journal is gradually becoming a separate trend of modern documentary cinema, for which the direct chronicle is almost an ideological and aesthetic credo, eliminating the conceptualization of the flow of life and political conclusions (Malkova, 2001: 96, 99).

Film critic S. Sychev has argued conclusively that in the 21st century the lack of access to documentary films for the viewer (on television ... it is shown not only extremely rarely, but mainly at night) has a detrimental effect on the state of national documentary filmmaking itself. Authors lose contact with the audience because they do not expect their film to be seen by anyone other than a small circle of professionals... TV bosses shy away from a good film. Television documentaries function solely on the principle of infotainment unpretentiousness: the three most common genres on television today – investigation, portrait film and popular science program – are made according to the same templates, without any hint of artistry" (Sychev, 2008: 75).

Meanwhile, according to S. Sychev, without successful film distribution, nothing seems to be able to force the viewer and television to change their attitude towards non-fiction films... A new stage in the distribution of non-fiction films can be digital distribution – a system of distributing film copies to cinemas not on film, but on any digital medium, when there is no need to spend money on printing film copies of the film, which was one of the significant obstacles to the distribution of low-budget films... It should not be forgotten that during the perestroika period the films of Podnieks, Goldovskaya, Uchitel, Govorukhin attracted many more viewers to the cinemas than many feature films. Nor should we forget Vertov... Perhaps we are at the stage of a serious tectonic shift for non-fiction cinema in Russia, and it is now very important to make sure that the earlier alarm is not false (Sychev, 2008: 79).

Alas, time has shown that the hopes of S. Sychev did not come true at all: documentary films in Russia have not managed to take root in cinema halls, and on television it is still shown mainly in the formats listed above by the film critic. Of course, quite a few documentaries are shown on the *Culture* channel, but its rating in relation to the leading TV channels of the Russian Federation is very low, and its audience does not exceed 2 % – 3 % of the total number of television viewers.

In general, in relation to documentary cinema, the position of the *Cinema Art* journal was very politicized, especially after the Ukrainian events of 2014.



Hence, it is not surprising that in 2017 the journal published an article by the biased Ukrainian film critic D. Desyaterik "Between Fiction and Trench. Ukrainian documentary after the Maidan" (Desyaterik, 2017: 24-35), where he, being completely on the side of the Kyiv "Maidan" of 2014, wrote that "revolution is a spectacular and effective experience of joint mass living, if by effect we mean not only the overthrow power, but also changes in the collective consciousness. Accordingly, Ukrainian documentarians do not regain their language – they master it again, not without the risk of falling into journalism... For Ukrainian cinema, the Maidan and the ATO remain the most important generators of plots and characters" (Desyaterik, 2017: 25, 29).

#### *Animation issues*

Theoretical aspects of animated cinematography in the *Cinema Art* journal of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were devoted to several more publications.

In 2001–2003, from issue to issue, the *Cinema Art* published chapters from the book by animation director Y. Norshtein, where he, in particular, wrote that when writing a new film, the director must assume practical shooting. The new film is a new aesthetic, that is, a sensual space. Aesthetic magic can become as intriguing as the action itself. The new aesthetic is not a way of painting. It is a new behavior of the image in action, coupled with new psychological tasks. Every detail of a character originates in the space of the frame (Norshtein, 2003: 127).

Film critic N. Sputnitskaya wrote about early Soviet animation (Sputnitskaya, 2021: 92-99), Russian commercial animation and blockbusters (Sputnitskaya, 2017: 34-43; Sputnitskaya, 2018: 193-202). At the same time, she noted that in the twenty-first century, the total reworking of Russian fairy tale plots and Soviet rarities in jingoistic animated films can only be compared to the persistence of directors who redraw the past, not always glorious but quite worthy, according to the meagre patterns of the present (Sputnitskaya, 2018: 202).

And thinking about Russian internet animation, N. Sputnitskaya was convinced that if we return to the idea of national identity, then analogues of Russian-language web animation can be found in ancient Russian face collections and popular prints. Everything that advertising recommends introduces the cinematic mainstream, everything that is mass is an object of mockery, of deconstruction, which the blogosphere indulges in with visible pleasure and finds ardent sympathy from the public. So what? Why is the ideology of postmodernism (and the blogosphere is postmodern in its purest form) worse than the correct forms of Russian democratic realism – from advertising to news? (Sputnitskaya, 2018: 258).

In his theoretical article "3D and view. Full-length animation: from Disney to modern times", the film critic N. Krivulya, in our opinion, very sensibly noted that digital technologies have taken animation to another level, significantly changed it. Today, it is dominated by visual appeal, often to the detriment of artistic expression. ... To surprise the audience, filmmakers rely on technical improvements and the development of new software. After overcoming the short format and mastering the field of full-length animation, computer technologies define a new style and set new artistic criteria. Films were no longer just fairy tales for children, but spectacles that could be enjoyed by children and adults alike. At the same time, the content of these films has lost its former edifying quality, and the plot is built on different levels: it has something that can be understood by a simple spectator and something that can attract an "advanced" film fan. Among the favorites techniques that fill the dramatic scheme are film quotations and parodies of famous films, cult film characters and well-known motifs of classical and modern cinema. Often, the seemingly simple and traditional plot is interspersed with episodes dealing with current issues in modern politics, mass culture, national-racial problems, and relations with the authorities. Again, this is not lost on adult viewers. As a result, animated films expand their audience and become a product of mass consumption (Krivulya, 2008: 69).

Also referring to the phenomenon of full-length animation, which has found a mass audience in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the film critic L. Malyukova drew the attention of the Journal's readers to the fact that a sense of exhaustion of ideas and techniques is forcing filmmakers to stop considering animation as a younger sister (especially since it is much older). The art of animation is now regarded by thoughtful filmmakers as an alchemical laboratory in which the substance of film aesthetics is created, molecularly reformed. Cinematography, in line with the general movement of the arts, merges into a stream of unprecedented syncretization (Malyukova, 2009: 83).

In 2021, L. Malyukova turned to another audiovisual phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: animation: "Until recently, many authors and artists had an arrogant attitude towards documentary animation. And it conquers new aesthetic and semantic spaces... It beckons with the

possibility of expanding and transgressing the boundaries between life and art. Penetration into spiritual vibrations charged with the current of reality. The reality that disappears in the overproduced documentary is transformed, as Baudrillard so aptly observed, into something else, albeit visible. Entering the spiral of multiplication (author's point of view + camera selection + montage + voice + mode of expression, film language), the physical world, the character with his experiences is transposed into post-memory, drawn through the eye of a suggestive, figurative. Animadoc – atmosphere. Another way of witnessing. An attempt to penetrate the subtle settings, the shimmering details, to contemplate the hidden, the opaque. A grandiose art laboratory for searching, for discovering oneself in the haystack of the global world with its white noise" (Malyukova, 2021: 253).

And two extensive theoretical articles in *Cinema Art* were devoted to a very popular Russian comedy-satirical series of flash cartoons by O. Kuvaev called Masyanya.

D. Golyenko-Wolfson (1969–2023) wrote that for millions of viewers "Masyanya appeared as a touchingly defenseless and self-confident sexual fetish... Why did Masyanya, and no other "devils and evil spirits" from flash cartoons, acquire an aura of hyper-popularity? What is the teleology of fame? What are the mechanisms of selection and choice in the top ten ratings? Multiple socio-economic concepts of public relations are unlikely to help us deal with the "Masyanya incident" – we are probably not dealing with a mathematically verified, but an unconsciously impulsive one. ... The general "goodness" of computer comics about the adventures of a "mean girl" is motivated by the fact that they inadvertently allow users to investigate the real, and to recoil immediately from the bleak prospects opened up to them. Prospects (and here we find an important key, know-how, for the interpretation of Masyanya's public confession) of the total internal failure of modern man, which is not amortised, but on the contrary, exacerbated by his social arrangement, the comfortable interior of well-being and security" (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2002: 98-99).

Moreover, D. Golyenko-Wolfson points out that the cartoons about Masyanya, using various layers and clichés of urban folklore, anecdotes and stories of the kitchen intelligentsia, or jokes and witticisms of an apolitical lumpen, are unlikely to imply a calculated target audience. The cartoon series about Masyanya (unlike the "soap operas") seems to consciously evade the choice of a clear target group; Masyanya is caressed and warmed by everyone, from the young to the old. Adult sceptics adore her in spite of (or perhaps because of) her infantile absurdity, and children forgive her a certain obscene, cynical unruliness. Masyanya's nationality and mass character can compete with the visual genre of hard pornography, demanded by polar and kaleidoscopic consumer groups, satisfying the tastes of picky university intellectuals and businessmen as well as vulgar bartenders and inhabitants of the working suburbs. Such an unexpected parallel is not surprising: pornography in the modern media space points to the tragic impossibility of a healthy transmission of the emotional and bodily experience of sex, and ultimately to an irreversible internal failure, a conscious crisis of love in the unifying conditions of a market economy (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2002: 100).

D. Golyenko-Wolfson further reveals the image of a character named Masyanya, noting that she seems to be a trivial type of yuppie woman for a post-industrial economic metropolis, advanced and frustrated at the same time, claiming independence and remaining a chip in the amusements of the multiplied male fantasy... Masyanya is not, of course, as dangerous and destructive as a vampire. As a wayward and rebellious girl, she seems to signal that the virtual is no longer a "dead zone" of the unknown but is already firmly established and domesticated in each of us (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2002: 101, 103).

E. Petrovskaya wrote that "Masyanya lives safely in his native element, not counting on expansion into other media. But even with such natural modesty, her existence is endowed with a binding meaning: created by a few cursory strokes, the (anti)heroine is elevated to the category of the bearer of a new national idea. (This is how one of the Internet journalists interprets it.) ... Masyanya really takes us by surprise, capturing our emotions and at the same time determining their further development. It is like a phenomenon of mass culture... The more understanding, the higher the degree of emotions. ... We fell in love with Masyanya because there is a particle of Masyanya in everyone. That, despite her cheeky manner of speaking and frankly bad habits, she is kind, good, vulnerable... sincerity peeps through this irony... Not hidden anywhere, on the contrary, clearly and even defiantly superficial, which can only be encouraging, since the "new" sincerity is equally open to all. This is the designation of the collective as openness itself (as opposed to sectarianism) or a commonwealth endowed with neither the essence nor the image of the ultimate goal, but, to use a well-known metaphor, the commonwealth of idle people who are not concerned

about the convention. Masscult is most sensitive to such invisible pulsations. He always deals with form in the making, and this form is social in the original sense" (Petrovskaya, 2002: 93-94, 97).

*Theoretical articles about foreign cinema*

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the *Cinema Art* journal devoted a record number of materials to foreign topics, but these were mainly reviews of foreign films and reviews of international film festivals. There were few theoretical articles on foreign cinema.

In 2007, A. Artyukh turned to the problem of film noir, reminding the readers of the Journal that the emergence of this film style was marked by a series of dark films, not so much in the canon of police or gangster genres, but offering "new criminal adventures" or "new criminal psychology". Strangeness, eroticism, nightmare, cruelty, ambivalence: these were the key words that had already been found for American noirs. Most of them revolved around murder. The latent obsession with death or the dynamics of cruel death found its impressive visual solutions in noirs" (Artyukh, 2007: 94).

At the same time, we can agree that "fate or destiny, which thwarted the plans of the heroes faster than the police could break them, meant a lot in noirs. Moral determinism, leading to retribution, kicked in as soon as the hero made a wrong move: he usually fell under the spell of a femme fatale or (which meant almost the same thing) undertook the task of an absurd rich man to make money and go far, far away with a beloved beauty. The heroes did not immediately understand that this was a fatal step. And when they understood, they couldn't do anything about it (Artyukh, 2007: 94-95).

A. Artyukh has been very accurately identified as the main character of classic film noir: a woman who embodies fantasies and obsessions, who fights "for her place under the sun, believing that any means are good for it. For the women of noir, the man was a means to an end: whether it was an older, rich man, whom they usually married, or a young hero, through whose hands they sought to eliminate a rich spouse as an obstacle to their long-awaited independence. The triangle here is the basic form of the relationship between the characters" (Artyukh, 2007: 97-98).

A. Artyukh was absolutely right that hopelessness, alienation, claustrophobia, a sense of fatalism are key words for noir. All this is supported, among other things, by the black-and-white, almost graphic style of the films, which creates what can be called a noir look... Noir's favorite technique is to half-light the protagonist's face, creating the effect of a collision between light and darkness, which can be interpreted as the visual embodiment of eternal moral dilemmas. Noir loves the streets at night, the play of shadows on the walls of dimly lit rooms and, following German Expressionism (another precursor of Noir), prefers vertical lines to horizontal ones... For example, noir had in common a low-key lighting technique in which the actors' figures were simultaneously illuminated by strong beams from above, creating black shadows, and by soft, diffuse light from the front (the light source was placed in front of the camera), which made the shadows more pronounced, filled them in, and made them more contrasting and expressive. In this way, light and darkness collided, darkening faces, rooms, the cityscape, creating an effect of mystery, suspense, danger. Varying the overhead lighting (it could be at a 45-degree angle, or placed behind the actors' backs), as well as eliminating the front light (which creates an area of darkness), provided different lighting possibilities... The noir favorite technique – deep focus and shooting with a wide-angle lens in intense lighting – allows to "stretch" the frame, create multi-figure compositions and avoid "figure-eight" montage during dialogues (Artyukh, 2007: 98-99). Understanding film noir as a style rather than a genre, A. Artyukh noted that noir continues to surprise with its new transformations even in the twelfth century.

Culturologist J. Lurie also analyzed film noir, noting that in it acts of destruction and violence... are aestheticized and given a dark, but extremely refined romantic coloring. Murder scenes, as an example of the highest level of destruction in terms of the degree of sophistication of visual techniques, are often perceived as separate, colorful showstoppers... Noir can be seen as an example of a crisis of social principles, the space where they do not work is perverted. The ideas of freedom of choice and dreams of success, key to American ideology, are subjected to cynical retribution in noir: plans do not work, and every choice leads to wrong steps or death. The characters and plots of the films embody Heidegger's idea of "being towards death", in the context of which death is a possibility, rendering all other possibilities impossible, revealing the meaninglessness of any project. In the land of possibility, no possibility is realized, and the self-made man becomes the self-destroyed man (Lurie, 2013: 100-102).

The film critic D. Komm has written that American noir, French polar or Italian giallo are not genres at all, but only different styles within one genre: a crime film, a thriller. Indeed, if we

compare the typical examples of noir and giallo, it turns out that on the level of the genre formula they are not so different: a brutal murder, a private or police detective, his investigation, a beautiful and mysterious woman who often turns out to be a criminal, an unexpected and shocking clue, etc. The stylistic difference is enormous. But the stylistic difference is colossal, and thanks to it, no one will ever be afraid of noir and giallo. In this case, the style defines the genre (Komm, 2009: 85).

In 2010, A. Artyukh turned to Hollywood in the era of the formation of media industry conglomerates and identified two main trends: one is an attempt to preserve the model of traditional spectacular blockbusters aimed at everyone and based on simple plots, powerful special effects and the associated opportunities for franchising... The second is the active exploration of complex, elite themes and unusual visual aesthetics, including computer games. ... Artificial blockbusters competing with traditional hits ... uphold the idea of "cinema for the elite". In contrast to the concept of "Hollywood for the whole planet", they bring back the idea of audience segmentation (Artyukh, 2010: 86).

As we well remember, in Soviet times, the articles of film critics and experts in the *Cinema Art* journal on foreign cinema were mainly about "high genres" and outstanding "progressive masters" of film art. When the journal wrote about film noir and giallo, for example, it was in a passing, dismissive, negative way, exposing the "degradation of bourgeois cinema".

In the *Cinema Art* journal of the 21st century, "low genres" have become the subject of numerous articles. And film critic D. Komm, for example, became a consistent researcher of giallo and horror films, once despised by Soviet film studies (Komm, 2001: 83-90; 98-107; Komm, 2003: 108-115; Komm, 2004: 101-105; Komm, 2006: 71-81; Komm, 2008: 69-79).

As early as 2001, D. Komm defined the cinematic "technology of fear" as a complex set of dramatic, stylistic and technical devices involving constant experimentation with the language of narration, the psychology of perception, the use of archetypes and myths of mass consciousness. It is the presence of this mechanism, and not the presence of the actual object of fear, that ultimately ensures the genre identification of the work as a horror film. ... Technologies of fear must overcome the localization of the object of fear, destroy its boundaries and release the basic fear contained within it. To make the spectator see what cannot be shown, even for a second, to release the energy of chaos on the screen: this is the most important task of any horror film, whether its creators are aware of it or not. Only in this case is the aesthetic experience of fear possible, which is associated with the birth of horror as a work of authorship (Komm 2001: 98-99).

After analyzing dozens of films that can be classified in one way or another as giallo, D. Komm came to the logical conclusion that, in terms of narrative structure, giallo resembles a pornographic film. In this type of film, scenes that serve to develop the plot and do not carry a fundamental semantic load alternate with the actual acts of love when the action freezes and the choreography of the flesh turns out to be the main content of the film. The same principle can be observed in giallo: narrative scenes serve only as a basis for the demonstration of self-sufficient shows – murders. ... If gialli are structurally similar to porn films, then the depiction of murders in them evokes associations with a fashion show. The female body is fetishized in these scenes, as the object of the perverted fantasy of a madman – director – spectator. The way the victim is dressed, the way the light falls on her body as she writhing in agony, and the way her corpse fits into the bizarre ornamentation of the frame mean much more here than any psychological motivations for the behavior of the killer and the victim. This is a far cry from Hitchcock and his "love murders". In giallo, the victim is actually a model in a surreal act of creativity – a murder performed on the screen by a mad artist. The corpse, in its completeness, is an ideal object for the application of the killer's creative fantasy, his work of art, a kind of artefact (Komm, 2001: 103).

Referring to horror films, D. Komm noted that modern horror is a bizarre phenomenon. Constantly mimicking, borrowing formulas and techniques from other genres, it has little in common with what was commonly understood as horror thirty years ago, let alone the static and uniformly created "monster stories" of Hollywood's "golden age". There is no clear hierarchy within the genre itself... The horror film is truly conservative: in the sense that it is closely linked to the dominant cultural and religious tradition, to symbols, mythology and mystical ideas. The blurring of these ideas, their mixing with a different cultural tradition each time, puts horror in a crisis, forcing a radical revision of the foundations of the genre (Komm, 2003: 108, 112).

D. Komm was convinced that multiculturalism was the main enemy of the horror film. In a situation of coexistence of different, often mutually exclusive religious practices and mythological systems, each of them loses its claim to universality and becomes one of the many "propagandas"

struggling for survival. Accordingly, they lose their clear contours of ideas about the nature of evil and methods of combating it, without which a horror film is simply unthinkable (Komm, 2003: 112).

In 2006, D. Komm, analyzing the so-called cinematic, wrote that the Gothic style, inconceivable without hallucinations and daydreams, was to the taste of the followers of the esoteric revolution... and the followers of the sexual revolution actively used the Gothic's ability to wrap forbidden subjects in a fantastic package. They also discredited the genre in the 1970s, when the victorious sexual revolution expelled the spirit of romanticism from cinema, and gothic (in name only) films became platforms for the demonstration of perverse sex scenes. ... The result of these processes is the disappearance of gothic from the screens in the era of Reagan conservatism – as morally obsolete and ideologically dubious (Komm, 2006: 76), and only Francis Ford Coppola, with his 1992 film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, marked the neo-Gothic stage...

In his commitment to the "lower genres", D. Komm was so consistent that in 2012 he came to the radical conclusion that when cinema is caught between Scylla and Charybdis, that is, between the marketing-oriented, calculated and predictable concept of a Hollywood blockbuster and the irresponsible, charlatan production of the "art house", only showstoppers remain small islands of creativity on which the embodiment of original artistic ideas can still take place. And since showstoppers belong exclusively to genre cinema, this leads us to the inevitable conclusion that today the realization of true authorial potential is only possible in genre works (Komm, 2012: 123).

An article by the sociologist E. Davydova was devoted to the semiotics of eroticism in American cinema, where she noted that, however different the sacred Hollywood monster may be from its audience, it is, like any idol, a gigantic projection of its desires, fantasies and fears. The erotic icons of the 1950s are characterized by a strange, almost schizoid duality. On the one hand, they are sex-obsessed, neurotic products of censorship; on the other, they are a premonition and prediction of the sexual revolution that the Swinging Sixties will soon rock the world with (Davydova, 2001: 82).

At the same time, E. Davydova expressed the reasonable opinion that, contrary to the postulate widespread in feminist film criticism that the gaze of the camera is always a male gaze, having in mind a woman as a sexual object, cinema from its first steps proved the opposite, seducing both female and male eroticism. The seducer has never left the screen. That's why he's a seducer who is attracted by traditional masculine qualities, but only by beauty... Eroticism is the only effective weapon of the seducer, whether he has power, whether he occupies a high social position, and whether his goal goes beyond the satisfaction of his own desires. More precisely, in this case beauty is power (Davydova, 2001: 86).

But then, according to culturologist D. Golyenko-Wolfson (1969–2023), "a postmodern vision of ambivalent sexuality emerged, with the obligatory ironic escape from the object of attraction, with a carnival change of cultural masks, with parodic quotes and theatrical props", and in the 21st century a "new intimacy" appeared on the screen, in which the reversal of the roles of man and woman became an unalterable leitmotif. The image of the cautious seductress passes to the woman, and the man is cast as an unapproachable narcissist, an object of long-term conquest... or a tiny toy of whimsical desire (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2003: 98).

B. Lokshin's article was also devoted to the theme of cinematic sex, recalling that the sexual revolution of the 1960s promised universal sexual freedom, but ended with freely distributed pornography. Capitalism digested the sexual revolution, packaged it commercially and sold it wholesale and retail. As for sexual repression, American universities, paranoid about rape, have begun requiring students to get written permission from each other before having sex. The revolution ends in reaction. Sexual permissiveness becomes sexual repression (Lokshin, 2017: 190).

Several theoretical articles by the authors of the *Cinema Art* journal in the 21<sup>st</sup> century were devoted to film comics (Bektemirov, 2019: 36-44; Golyenko-Wolfson, 2003: 100-107; Gorelikov, 2019: 20-28; Khitrov, 2019: 228-231; Loginova, 2019: 239-247; Sputnitskaya, 2019: 232-238; Tsyrukun, 2010: 131-137; Tsyrukun, 2012: 124-135; Shorokhova, 2019: 29-35).

D. Golyenko-Wolfson believed that in the 1990s, the gradual displacement of comics from the heights of mass culture coincided with the confident entry into the forefront of the postmodern genre of film comics, which often makes fun of the canonized techniques of comic stamping themselves. Cinematography borrowed from the comics its manner of presenting fairy-tale puppet reality in a nostalgic key, its conditional decorativeness and mannequin psychosomatics of the characters (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2003: 102).

At the same time, according to D. Golyenko-Wolfson (1969–2023), the comic in cinema acts as a legislator of the moral and ethical code of the builder of liberal democracy. At the epicentre of his plots there is always an apocalyptic-cosmogonic struggle between a tireless advocate of humanistic justice (in everyday life a shy schoolboy, a dandyish gentleman) and an unrestrained monster who personifies the fiend of totalitarian evil... Using the "atlas" of psychotic types and behavioural pathologies... It is most appropriate to include comic characters in the "autistic schizoid" column: hence their anchorage and detachment from worldly pragmatics, hence the confusion of their socio-symbolic roles. They are eternally and polarly divided into human and non-human avatars, which is evident in their masquerade-inspired, prop-shaped wardrobe and in their remarkable talent for acting out a trivially respectable life scenario during the day and transforming into elastic and demonic "ghosts of revenge" at night (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2003: 105-106).

Film critic A. Gorelikov reminds us that the image of the jester, the trickster, the harlequin is one of the key images of world culture... The analysis of the archetype can lead to a bad infinity, but at least it should be noted that the jester is associated with transgression, a transitional state, a carnival space where everything is turned upside down and laws are abolished. That is why even the kindest clown contains the potential of horror and there is an element of diabolical ambiguity (Gorelikov, 2019: 21).

Film expert N. Tsyrukun, in our opinion, has rightly pointed out that even the aged and sad Batman remains a beloved hero in film comics, because his fans still see their own reflection in him in one way or another. They see him as a person, unlike Superman, and identify with him, learning from his example how to deal with their own fragmentation, disorder, etc. In the postmodern situation, people need this kind of protection almost every minute, and in this sense the therapeutic function of comics is unique (Tsyrukun, 2012: 134).

Continuing the study of genres that in Soviet times were considered low and unworthy of the attention of film studies, the *Cinema Art* journal in the 21st century wrote extremely seriously and scientifically about films about zombies (Arkhipova, 2019: 146-151; Sandanov, 2011: 53-62) and vampires (Kushnareva, 2012: 136-141), about grindhouse (Pavlov, 2013: 61-70), camp (Tsyrukun, 2013: 55-60) and "vulgar authorship" (Pavlov, 2013: 54-63) in cinema.

Film critic A. Sandanov, analyzing film narratives about zombies, came to the bold, but in our opinion very controversial conclusion that it is rotten and mindless corpses that help modern man look at his insecurities and fears from the outside (Sandanov, 2011: 53).

Then A. Sandanov proceeded to a detailed systematization of the zombie theme, arguing that 1) unlike previous monsters, zombies are apocalyptic. Any other monster is a local disturbance in the normal picture of the universe... The very concept of the modern zombie implies the ubiquity and irreversibility of its presence; 2) zombie films are not limited to exploiting basic animal fears. The zombie apocalypse involves a series of real fears generated by an excess of insecurity. These are not just fears, but unresolved informational contradictions: Fear of global catastrophe in any form; fear of microbes, epidemics, radiation, "chemistry"; fear of alien, incomprehensible cultures; fear of irrational violence, street crime; fear of xenophobia, racism and other prejudices; fear of one's own and others' madness, nonconformity; fear of conformity; religious fear of retribution; fear of destabilization of society, anarchy, helplessness of the government in the face of global challenges; dependence of the individual on the infrastructure of civilization, lack of control over one's life, fear of state violence" (Sandanov, 2011: 55-56).

Thus, films of the "classical" zombie model, on the one hand, serve to playfully live out real "apocalyptic" fears, eliminating uncertainty, and, on the other hand, they are effective as raw material for identity formation through identification with obviously imperfect heroes... The therapeutic function of the film is therefore not only and not so much to show the fears and to overcome them. It is the "training" of a new identity. Mobile, maximally open and minimally burdened with abstruse models of behavior and self-identification (Sandanov, 2011: 62).

In our opinion, A. Sandanov's article is a vivid example of how, with a strong desire, any trash can be provided with a "deepest scientific basis", which in fact has (almost) nothing to do with the mass of primitive tapes about zombies.

In this sense, A. Pavlov was more cautious when trying to understand another phenomenon of "low genres" – grindhouse. In particular, he noted that grindhouse was, on the one hand, sexploitation films of various genres - from vulgar comedies, strange melodramas, light erotica, and hard pornography; on the other hand, horror films of various shades and films with taboo themes. Another type of grindhouse cinema were the tapes known as blaxploitation. Another popular theme

of exploitation cinema was the Nazis and all the possible atrocities and perversions that could be attributed to nazisploitation. Roughly on the same theme, but without the Nazis, there were images of "women behind bars", we can talk about the revival of the grindhouse in a postmodern sense. Unlike remake films, here the emphasis is on deliberate stylization and irony in relation to the legacy of the grindhouse (Pavlov, 2013: 64).

In the distant 1980s, film critic N. Tsyrukun liked to criticize and expose the "destruction of the spirit" in bourgeois cinema (Tsyrukun, 1986). But in the 21st century, on the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal, she was already seriously and with emphasized scientific piety analyzing Western film comics and camp and queer.

For example, she wrote quite profoundly that "queer theory, which exists in various forms, whether or not it is included in the umbrella term 'camp', is nevertheless applicable as an explanatory framework for 'being different' in a variety of ways, when it comes to exploring otherness or diversity, as a critique of rigid identity frameworks, but also as a tool for thinking about (and deconstructing) mechanisms of power. In particular, the historically established system of power relations that affirms the dominance of heterosexuality over all other forms of sexuality, that is, the heterosexist cultural matrix as a variant of totalitarian dictatorship" (Tsyrukun, 2013: 60).

A. Pavlov recalled that "vulgar auteur cinema" is usually ignored by critics because of the supposedly frankly low intellectual level of their films. It is also believed that the critics' rejection of these "authors" may be due to a personal aversion to the violence that "vulgar directors" preach. What is very important is that this violence is almost always not softened by irony, and when it is presented as "fun", it still tends to repel those who are used to watching more "serious" films. Supporters of "vulgarism" strive to find high art where it has not been customary to look for it (Pavlov, 2013: 56). And then he comes to the paradoxical conclusion that the supporters of "vulgar auteur cinema" ultimately bring the concept of authorship back into broader cultural spheres, trying not to limit the discussion to discussions of feminism, race, and queer culture... So, there is much more to the new phenomenon than it seems at first glance. And no matter how fragile the concept may be, it must be taken seriously and perhaps even sympathetically (Pavlov, 2013: 56, 63).

Of course, in the twenty-first century, the *Cinema Art* journal could not pass without a detailed analysis of the adaptations of the *Harry Potter* novels (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2002: 65-71), the phenomena of the *Toy Story* franchise (Lugovoy, 2020: 188-201), and the *Game of Thrones* series (Meisel, 2019: 281-289). Once again, the Journal turned to the James Bond franchise (Brileva, Brilev, 2021: 231-237; Fomochkin, 2021: 211-230; Kartsev, 2021: 240-251). The mass success of these media texts allowed the authors of *Cinema Art* to practice a lot of psychoanalysis, scientific formulations, and meaningful conclusions.

Here, D. Golyenko-Wolfson believes that the novels and films about the adventures of Harry Potter have managed to adapt precisely and elastically to the neo-sentimental ideological trend that prevails today... Moreover, *Harry Potter* had become the best spokesman for the new ideological "truth" about a person: a wizard, a sorcerer. It is not difficult and shameless for a modern person to become a mystagogue and, in general, a supernatural creature, one only has to make sure that armadas of glamorous puppet-board evil spirits scatter and burst at the wave of the most "ordinary" wand (Golyenko-Wolfson, 2002: 66).

And the film critic E. Maisel wrote that despite the fundamental and irrevocable connection of media franchises to literature, the key to creating and launching a franchise is not the art of storytelling and not the mastery of the show, but what researchers call transmedia world building – "transmedia construction of fictional worlds" (Dan Hessler – Forest). It sounds grandiose, but what it really means is that the previous art forms (the novel and the serial) have been replaced – in full accordance with the prophecies of the ideologists of postmodernism – not by a new actual form, but by a production concession that unites and adapts all art forms, old and new, with the same indifferent efficiency ("nothing personal") with which capital imperturbably transforms everything it touches into itself. Without this in mind, the innocent practice of franchising reveals to us a rather monstrous truth about the total convergence of this world, which denies any individual value by placing it in a kind of common market register (Maisel, 2019: 283).

Furthermore, E. Maisel, in our opinion, rightly points out that, using the example of *Game of Thrones*, one can also observe such a trend as the greatly increased role of franchise fans: "a common occurrence in our everyday life, fans have been in the center of attention in recent decades. From previously despised urban lunatics with a dash of masochism, they have turned into venerable evangelists actively involved in the creation of fantasy, superheroes and other universes

of Big Hollywood. Giants such as Fox or Disney enter into agreements with them and coax exclusives, and theorists try to see through a magnifying glass: who are they? fans? enthusiasts? cultists? But whoever they are, the paradoxical existence of fans is determined by the fact that their consumption coincides with the immaterial labor they produce, which is the basis of post-Fordism. It turns out something like an asymmetric symbiosis between producer and consumer. In any case, it is through the feelings and devotion of the fans that the brand establishes its authenticity, authenticity and, ultimately, value” (Maisel, 2019: 284).

Looking back on the history of Bond, the translator and film critic P. Kartsev wrote that the creator of the image of James Bond is the writer Ian Fleming, who created a literary hero whose basic quality and condition of existence is the need to be a loner, also because any contact with him is destructive. The main dynamic of his image is the initially impossible, doomed attempt to share this solitude with someone who is both opposite and identical to him; he confronts himself, armed with a big gun and an infallible ability to choose treacherous or doomed women as partners. His inner psychological conflict – like any psychological conflict – is insoluble, but through the Jungian transcendental function, which allows the integration of differently directed desires, and with the help of the initially false technology of capturing shadows and light on celluloid film, the lonely hero, destined to be a ritual sacrifice to the dark mother, becomes the property of the world and finds salvation in the infinite renewability of the life-affirming creative act (Kartsev, 2021: 351).

In this connection, O. and A. Brilev drew the attention of the magazine's readers to the fact that, despite all the dubious aesthetic and pedagogical value of the Bond character, he excellently fulfils a function that is usually not even mentioned in textbooks of literary criticism: ritual. The strict formality of Bond plots corresponds almost exactly to what Vladimir Propp describes in *Morphology of a Fairy Tale*: the hero is given the task of correcting some misfortune, he crosses the symbolic boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead, receives magical gifts and a guide (usually a woman), is tested, enters into a confrontation with a monster (many Bond villains are outright monsters), receives a mark (wound or identification), wins and returns to the world of the living. What is the nature of this journey? It is a description of a primitive initiation rite in which a person symbolically died and was reborn in a new status. Passing through all the stages of the trials with the hero gives the audience a feeling of renewal, of a new beginning. But for this to happen, the formula of the ritual must be followed with minimal deviations. A spy in our world is an analogue of a shaman in the primitive world. He exists on the borders between worlds, dangerous and mysterious, terrifying, and necessary. His ability to transform himself at any moment into a beast, a dead man, a stranger, an enemy, repels and attracts him at the same time. Things are acceptable to him that are unacceptable to other members of society: he is allowed to lie, kill, steal, come into contact with the ritually unclean. The tribe needs him as a gate to the Other: but the gate, to keep the Other beyond the threshold, must come into contact with the Other. Therefore, a shaman cannot live among the people, he lives on the outskirts, has no family, does not participate in the daily affairs of the people. He is an instrument of the tribe's will, but not part of it. But when the social structure changes, the image of the shaman merges with that of the warrior. A hero is born – the victor over the monsters, often a half-monster himself, but also a demigod... Yes, we are talking about Odysseus, the "wise Ulysses" (Brileva, Brilev, 2021: 234-235).

One of the articles by the film critic E. Maisel was devoted to the history of the American underground through the prism of the theoretical works of T. Adorno (1903–1969).

E. Maisel came to the reasonable conclusion that for about thirty years, the American underground, resisting the standards of commercial cinematography, carried out something like a comprehensive "negative dialectic" of cinema (Adorno's terminology). This negative dialectic was achieved 1) aesthetically – through the development of any form other than realism – this discourse of power, saturated with lies and full of them, even at the stage of imaginary mimesis; 2) economically – through the refusal to participate in the struggle for people's love, through the voluntary choice of directions that are far from being the most accessible to the general public and not the most "turnable" directions, through the refusal to turn both cinema and art into a market commodity; 3) politically - by free thinking and ignoring censorship restrictions, by independence from mass media and distrust of the consumer world, by contempt for power, for capital and its manipulation under the guise of cultural and educational expansion; 4) ethically – by preferring the personal to the personal, the private to the mass, art to industry, and honest research to manipulative entertainment. Taken together, this characterizes the American underground – and non-commercial avant-garde practice in general – as a kind of exception to the rule, as an



antidote that neutralizes the evil inherent in cinema by its very magical nature; as the other side of cinema, revealing its ability to be aesthetically non-offensive, economically non-corrupt, ethically sound, politically non-reactionary (Maisel, 2021: 68).

Reflecting on the religious theme in Hollywood cinema, film critic N. Sirivlya noted that for the mass consciousness, Christianity today is just a set of universally accepted ethical norms and humanistic principles, a metaphor for abstract philanthropy. At the same time, modern civilization is not so far removed from paganism in its ideas about the supernatural as a source of dubious power and an undeniable threat to human existence. And it turns out that, at the level of anthropology, we already exist, so to speak, in the post-Christian era: "God is dead". And according to His commandments, human beings must save themselves (or, as they used to say: "Man is descended from an ape, so let us love each other!"). And at the level of vague, poorly articulated religious feelings – into pre-Christian and perhaps even pre-Biblical times. "A civilization with such an internal gap in the ideas of God and man cannot exist normally, it always falls into a kind of schizophrenia, when philanthropy inevitably turns into violence, and attempts to collect, unite and order the world make its destruction more and more real. Perhaps this is the obsessive expectation of the inevitable end? (Sirivlya, 2001: 93).

One of the issues of *Cinema Art* in 2021 was devoted to media art, video art and audiovisual avant-garde (mainly foreign).

Art historian A. Krasnoslobodtseva recalled that, historically, video art is the art of resistance. From the moment of its birth more than sixty years ago, video art began to work closely with social issues, criticism of mass media, illusionist cinema, consumer society, comprehended political events, was the most important tool in the feminist struggle. Video art makes it possible to record events in real time without time limits, to edit images quickly and without a large team of narrow professionals, to create multi-layered statements with comments of various formats (Krasnoslobodtseva, 2021: 160).

Art critic T. Fadeeva wrote that media art offers us a unique experience: the experience of "expanding" ourselves through sensations that testify to new, unusual facets of reality, so that we go beyond the usual automatic perception. Like Deleuze and Guattari's postmodern subject, "born out of the states it consumes and reborn with each state"... Media art can thus be seen as an apparatus for generating "extensions" of our sensory interface, transit zones and even paradigms, and the apparatus is constantly improving and modernizing (Fadeeva, 2021: 49).

Media art specialist M. Dantsis, referring to the topic of feminist video art, noted that feminism today is not only a struggle for equality. First of all, feminist video art is a versatile study of society, introspection and self-observation, rethinking of personal experience, self-irony and humour. Today's video artists are working with a feminist agenda, using the possibilities of new technologies, their art is communicative and controversial, it offers the viewer a unique experience regardless of gender and social attitudes (Dantsis, 2021: 132).

#### 4. Conclusion

In the years 2001–2017, the circulation of *Cinema Art* was not mentioned in the imprint of the journal. According to data found on the Internet, the circulation of the journal in 2001–2017 was around two to three thousand copies, which is lower than even in the 1930s and 1940s. Since 2018, the journal's circulation initially remained at about the same level, but by the end of 2022 it had fallen to one thousand copies.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the editors of *Cinema Art* apparently realized that the attempts to turn it into a socio-political journal, made at the end of the era of "perestroika" and in the 1990s, did not bring the expected dividends. As a result, the magazine returned to the format of a cinematic publication. Hence the increase in the number of theoretical articles on cinema, which in the 21<sup>st</sup> century averaged eighteen a year.

Daniil Dondurey (1947-2017), who directed *Cinema Art* until 2017, maintained the journal's course towards a sociological understanding of the media process, while attracting leading authors in the field. The film critic Anton Dolin, who replaced him in the second half of 2017, on the one hand re-emphasized political accents and also strengthened passages in the journal texts that opposed the authorities, and on the other hand began to pay much more attention to the genres of mass culture in film.

Our analysis of the concepts of film studies (in the context of the socio-cultural, historical, political situation, etc.) in the journal *Cinema Art* in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has shown that the theoretical works on cinematic topics in this period can be divided into the following types.

- Articles and discussions devoted to the analysis of the theoretical heritage of the classics and the history of Soviet cinema (A. Fomenko, N. Izvolov, N. Kleiman, O. Kovalov, E. Maisel, E. Margolit, A. Medvedev, N. Sputnitskaya, V. Shmyrov, A. Shpagin, A. Shcherbenok and others);

- articles attempting to understand the film process at a theoretical level (O. Aronson, D. Golyenko-Wolfson, E. Maisel, L. Manovich, etc.).

- articles devoted to the sociological and cultural problems of cinema, television and film distribution (O. Berezin, K. Bogoslovskaya, D. Dondurey, D. Golyenko-Wolfson, E. Maisel, I. Poluekhova, K. Razlogov, V. Zvereva, etc.); at the same time, the analysis of the phenomenon of the Internet and virtual reality has become a new theoretical trend of the journal.

- theoretical articles on foreign cinema (A. Artyukh, D. Komm, N. Tsyrukun, etc.).

In general, *Cinema Art* in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as in the 1990s, offered new interpretations of the history of Soviet and world cinema and tried to find theoretical approaches to the current film process.

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## Appendix

The main dates and events related to the historical, political, economic, ideological, socio-cultural and cinematic context in which the publication of the *Cinema Art* journal was carried out in the 21st century.

### 2001

January 20: George W. Bush Jr. becomes President of the United States.

June 16: First meeting (Ljubljana) of US President George W. Bush and President of Russia V. Putin.

June 3–14: Festival Kinotavr-2001. Main prize: *Tender Age* (directed by S. Solovyov). Grand Prix: *Poisons, or the World History of Poisoning* (director K. Shakhnazarov).

June 21–30: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *The Believer* (USA, director G. Bean).

July 16: Russian and Chinese Presidents signed an agreement on good neighborliness, friendship and cooperation.

September 11: Air attacks in New York and Washington.

October 7: The US starts the war in Afghanistan.

November: V. Putin's visit to the USA.

### 2002

May 23–26: visit of US President George W. Bush Jr. in Russia.

Establishment of the NATO-Russia Council.

- June 5–14: Festival Kinotavr-2002. Main prize: *War* (directed by A. Balabanov). Grand Prix: *Lover* (directed by V. Todorovsky).
- June 13: The US denounces the anti-ballistic missile treaty.
- June 21–30: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Resurrection* (Italy-France, directors P. and V. Taviani).
- October 23–26: Chechen terrorists take hostages in the House of Culture during the musical performance *Nord-Ost* in Moscow.
- November: visit of US President George W. Bush Jr. in Russia.
- 2003
- March 20: The US starts the war in Iraq.
- May 31 – June 1: visit US President George W. Bush Jr. in Russia.
- June 3–17: Festival Kinotavr-2003. Main prize: *Old Women* (directed by G. Sidorov). Grand Prix: *Chic* (directed by B. Khudoynazarov).
- June 20–29: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Divine Fire* (Italy-Spain, director M. Hermoso).
- September 26–27: meeting of George W. Bush Jr. and V. Putin in the USA.
- 2004
- January 4: M. Saakashvili won the presidential elections in Georgia.
- June 5–15: Festival Kinotavr-2004. Main prize: *Driver for Vera* (director P. Chukhrai). Grand Prix: *My stepbrother Frankenstein* (directed by V. Todorovsky).
- July 18–27: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Ours* (Russia, director D. Meskhiev).
- September 1–3: Chechen terrorists take hostages at a school in the city of Beslan.
- November 13–16: Russian President V. Putin's first official visit to the United States.
- November–December: the victory of the "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine.
- 2005
- January 23: V. Yushchenko became the President of Ukraine.
- February 24: Meeting of Presidents George W. Bush Jr. and V. Putin in Bratislava.
- May 10: Russia-EU summit (Moscow).
- June 2–12: Festival Kinotavr-2005. Main prize: *Poor Relatives* (director P. Lungin).
- July 17–26: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Space as a presentiment* (Russia, director A. Uchitel).
- July 7: Attacks on the London Underground.
- August 8: Iran resumed its uranium enrichment program and pulled out of negotiations with the EU.
- September 16: Meeting of Presidents George W. Bush Jr. and V. Putin in the USA.
- 2006
- January 1–4: "gas crisis" between Russia and Ukraine.
- January: Russian President V. Putin announced the end of the counterterrorist operation in Chechnya.
- May 4: US Vice President R. Cheney in his speech accused Russia of using its natural resources as a foreign policy weapon of pressure, of human rights violations by Russia and of its destructive actions in the international arena.
- June 4–12: Festival Kinotavr-2006. Grand Prize: *Playing the Victim* (directed by K. Serebrennikov).
- June 23 – July 2: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *About Sarah* (Sweden, director O. Karim).
- July 14–17: G8 summit in St. Petersburg.
- 2007
- Political conflict between the United States and Russia over the intention of the United States to deploy missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic.
- February 8: US Secretary of Defense said that the United States "should be prepared for a possible armed conflict with Russia".
- February 10: Russian President V. Putin sharply criticized US foreign policy at the World Security Conference in Munich.
- June 3–11: Festival Kinotavr-2007. Main prize: *Simple Things* (directed by A. Popogrebsky).



June 21–30: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Traveling with pets* (Russia, director V. Storozheva).

July 14: President of Russia V. Putin signed the Decree "On the Suspension by the Russian Federation of the Treaty on Conventional Arms in Europe".

2008

March 2: D. Medvedev is elected President of Russia.

April 5–6: meeting of George W. Bush Jr. and V. Putin in Sochi.

May 8: V. Putin is confirmed as prime minister of the Russian government.

June 7–15: Festival Kinotavr-2008. Main prize: *Shultes* (director B. Bakuradze).

June 19–28: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Easier than simple* (Iran, director R. Mir Karimi).

July: World oil prices reach a new peak of over \$140 per barrel.

August 8–16: Armed conflict between Georgia and Russia over South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

August 26: Russian President D. Medvedev signed a decree recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

December 18–20: The seventh congress of Russian filmmakers, at which an attempt was made (in the absence of the necessary quorum) to remove the director N. Mikhalkov from the post of Chairman of the Union of Cinematographers and elect director M. Khutsiev (1925–2019) to this position.

August – December: with the fall in world oil prices (first to \$100 per barrel, and then below) and the collapse of key US credit and banking consortiums, the worst global economic crisis since the 1930s begins, especially felt in the export-dependent oil to the Russian economy. World oil prices are falling sharply (4.6 times): from \$140 per barrel in July to \$30 per barrel in December.

August – December: a sharp depreciation of the ruble (by 30 %) against world currencies.

2009

January 20: B. Obama becomes President of the United States, the beginning of the "reset" of US-Russian relations.

January: another "gas crisis" between Russia and Ukraine.

March 30–31: The Extraordinary Congress of the Union of Cinematographers of Russia canceled the illegitimate (due to lack of quorum) election of M. Khutsiev (1925–2019) and by a majority of votes again elected director N. Mikhalkov to the post of Chairman of the Union of Cinematographers of Russia.

May: The editorial staff of the *Cinema Art* journal received a letter signed by the chairman of the Union of Cinematographers N. Mikhalkov with an order to vacate the premises on the first floor of the house on Usievicha Street (Moscow), owned by the Union of Cinematographers of Russia. In August of the same year, the editorial office rented another office, also located in Moscow. The main reason for the eviction of the *Cinema Art* editorial office was the active participation of the editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art* journal D. Dondurey (1947–2017) in an attempt to remove director and actor N. Mikhalkov from the post of Chairman of the Union of Cinematographers of Russia at the congress on December 18-20, 2008.

June 7–15: Festival Kinotavr-2009. Main prize: *Spinning Top* (directed by V. Sigarev).

June 19–28: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Petya on the way to the kingdom of heaven* (Russia, director N. Dostal).

June: World oil prices rise to \$70 per barrel.

July 1: In Russia, gambling establishments are allowed to operate only in special gambling zones.

July 6–7: US President B. Obama's first visit to Moscow, his meetings with Russian President D. Medvedev and Prime Minister V. Putin.

September: US President B. Obama announced the reversal of the US decision to deploy missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic.

December 5: Fire at the *Lame Horse* nightclub in Perm, Russia (156 people died).

2010

February 7: Presidential elections in Ukraine were won by V. Yanukovich, who officially took office on February 25.

April 8: US President B. Obama and Russian President D. Medvedev signed in Prague an agreement on the limitation of nuclear weapons.

March 18: The Clay Institute of Mathematics announced the award of \$1 million to G. Perelman for proving the Poincaré conjecture.

April 8: Russian President D. Medvedev and US President B. Obama signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in Prague.

April 10: a plane crash near Smolensk, which killed the President of Poland L. Kaczynski and his wife, and several other Polish statesmen.

June 6–13: Festival Kinotavr-2010. Main prize: *Truce* (directed by S. Proskurina).

June 17–26: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Brother* (Venezuela, director M. Raskin).

August 31: US President B. Obama officially announced the end of the military operation in Iraq.

September 9: Ministry of Justice of The Russian Federation issued a certificate of state registration of the Regional Public Organization "Union of Cinematographers and Professional Cinematographic Organizations and Associations", which included less than two hundred filmmakers who disagree with the decisions of the Extraordinary Congress of the Union of Cinematographers of Russia dated March 31, 2009 and with the candidacy of N. Mikhalkov. The Film Union included directors A. German (1938–2013), Y. Gusman, B. Khlebnikov, N. Khomeriki, P. Lungin, V. Mansky, A. Mitta, G. Natanson (1921–2017), Y. Norshtein, A. Popogrebsky, A. Proshkin, E. Ryazanov (1927–2015), A. Sokurov, V. Todorovsky, E. Tsymbal, A. Zeldovich, screenwriters Y. Arabov, A. Gelman, editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art* journal D. Dondurey (1947–2017), writer, publicist and film critic D. Bykov, film critics and film experts L. Arkus, Y. Bogomolov (1937–2023), N. Kleiman, V. Matizen, N. Nusinova, L. Pavlyuchik, A. Plakhov, E. Stishova, K. Shcherbakov and others.

September 28: Moscow Mayor Y. Luzhkov dismissed "due to the loss of confidence of the President of the Russian Federation".

#### 2011

January 25: The Russian State Duma finally ratifies the Start-3 treaty.

March 1: The law "On Police" comes into force in Russia.

April 16: A visa-free regime between Russia and Turkey comes into force.

June 4–11: Festival Kinotavr-2011. Main prize: *Indifference* (director O. Flyangolts).

June 23 – July 2: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Waves* (Spain, director A. Morais).

December 16: Protocol on Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization is signed.

O. Sentsov, co-owner of a computer club in Simferopol, made an amateur feature film *Gamer* at his own expense.

#### 2012

March 4: V. Putin became the winner in the presidential elections in Russia.

May 7: V. Putin officially takes office as President of Russia.

May 8: D. Medvedev is approved for the post of Prime Minister of Russia.

June 3–10: Festival Kinotavr-2012. Main prize: *I'll be there* (director P. Ruminov).

June 21–30: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Junkhearts* (Great Britain, director T. Krishnan).

July 10: The State Duma of Russia ratified the treaty on Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization.

#### 2013

January 20: B. Obama takes office for a second term as President of the United States.

June 2–9: Festival Kinotavr-2013. Main prize: *The Geographer Drank His Globe* (directed by A. Veledinsky).

June 20–29: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Particle* (Turkey, director E. Tepegöz).

August 1: The Anti-Piracy Law came into force in the Russian Federation.

#### 2014

February 7–23: XXII Winter Olympic Games (Sochi, Russia).

February 18–21: "Maidan" conflict in the center of Kyiv (77 people died).

February 22: The Verkhovna Rada deprived the President of Ukraine V. Yanukovych of presidential power.

February 23: Interim duties of the President of Ukraine are assigned to A. Turchynov.

February 27: Russian special military operation begins in Crimea.

March 8–13: Kinosoyuz website publishes a letter in support of the new leadership of Ukraine and against the Russian special military operation in Crimea.

March 11–13: A letter from some famous Russian cultural figures in support of the policy of the Russian Federation in Crimea was published on the website of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation.

March 11: The Crimean Parliament adopted a declaration of independence from Ukraine.

March 16: A referendum on the status of Crimea was held in the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol. According to the official results of the referendum, 96.77 % of the voters of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and 95.6 % of the voters of Sevastopol chose to include of Crimea to Russia.

March 17: Russian President V. Putin signed a decree recognizing the independence of Crimea.

March 18–21: the reunification of Crimea with Russia, Crimea became part of the Russian Federation on the rights of autonomy.

April 7: Proclamation of the Donetsk People's Republic, which declared itself independent on May 12.

April 27: Proclamation of the Lugansk People's Republic, which also declared itself independent.

April – December: armed clashes in the Donbass between the formations of the DPR and LPR and the Ukrainian army.

May 2: in Odessa, there were clashes between supporters and opponents of the Ukrainian authorities, dozens of people died.

May 10: O. Sentsov, former co-owner of a computer club in Semferopol and amateur director, was detained in Crimea by the Russian Federal Security Service on suspicion of terrorism.

May 25: P. Poroshenko won the early presidential elections in Ukraine, officially taking office on June 7.

June 1–8: Festival Kinotavr-2014. Main prize: *Test* (directed by A. Kott).

June 19–28: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *My man* (Japan, director K. Kumakiri).

September 5: The Minsk Agreements on Donbass are signed.

2015

February 11–12: A meeting of the presidents and representatives of the Foreign Ministries of Germany, Russia, Ukraine and France took place in Minsk. A Declaration on Donbass was adopted and steps were developed to implement the Minsk Agreement.

June 7–14: Festival Kinotavr-2015. Main prize: *About Love* (directed by A. Melikyan).

June 19–26: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Losers* (Bulgaria, director I. Hristov).

August 25: The North Caucasus District Military Court sentenced amateur director O. Sentsov on charges of terrorism to 20 years in prison in a strict regime colony.

September 30: Russia launches first airstrike against ISIS positions in Syria, launching Russia's special military operation in Syria.

November 16: Premiere of the first season of the series *Servant of the People* with comedian V. Zelensky, which later became part of his presidential election campaign in Ukraine.

January-December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

2016

March 15: Russia begins withdrawing a military group from Syria.

June 6–13: Festival Kinotavr-2016. Main prize: *Good Boy* (directed by O. Karas).

June 23–30: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Daughter* (Iran, director R. Mirkarimi).

July 14: In Nice, during the celebration of Bastille Day, a terrorist in a heavy vehicle rammed a crowd of people, killing 85 people, about 200 were injured.

July 15–16: unsuccessful coup attempt in Turkey (about three hundred people died).

December 19: Berlin bombing: truck plows into crowd at Christmas market, killing 12, ISIS claims responsibility.

December 25: after taking off from Sochi airport, a TU-154 plane crashed, killing 92 people, including artists of the Song and Dance Ensemble of the Russian Army, well-known public figure E. Glinka, and others.

January – December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

2017

January 20: D. Trump takes office as President of the United States.

May 7: E. Macron wins the presidential elections in France.

June 7–14: Festival Kinotavr-2017. Main prize: *Arrhythmia* (directed by B. Khlebnikov).

June 22–29: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Crested Ibis* (China, director Ts. Liang).

October 14–22: XIX World Festival of Youth and Students (Sochi).

October 23: premiere of the second season of the series *Servant of the People* with comedian V. Zelensky, which later became part of his presidential campaign in Ukraine.

January – December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

2018

March 4: The incident with the poisoning of the former British spy S. Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury, which led to a political conflict between Russia and the UK.

March 18: V. Putin again won the presidential elections in Russia.

March 25: Fire at the *Winter Cherry* shopping center in Kemerovo, resulting in loss of people life.

April 19–26: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *The Tsar Bird* (Russia, director E. Novikov).

June 2–10: Festival Kinotavr-2018. Main prize: *Heart of the World* (directed by N. Maschaninova).

July 16: Meeting between Russian President V. Putin and US President D. Trump in Helsinki.

October 3: President V. Putin signed the Federal Law on amendments to pension legislation, including raising the retirement age.

October 11: The Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople officially announced the start of granting autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine, in particular, lifting the anathema imposed by the Russian Orthodox Church on the leaders of the canonically unrecognized "Kiev Patriarchate" and the UAOC Filaret and Macarius, canceling the decision of 1696 on the accession of the Kiev Metropolis to Moscow Patriarchate.

October 15: break of the Eucharistic communion of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

October 17: massacre at the Kerch Polytechnic College; 21 people (including the student-killer) were killed, more than fifty were injured.

January-December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

2019

January 1: The US decision to withdraw from UNESCO comes into effect.

January 4–6: schism of the Orthodox Church – Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople signed the tomos on autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, thereby legitimizing the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine; this decision was not recognized and condemned by the Russian Orthodox Church and a number of other local Orthodox churches.

February 2: US suspends Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, Russia responds symmetrically.

March 27: premiere of the third season of the TV series *Servant of the People* with comedian V. Zelensky, which became part of his presidential election campaign in Ukraine.

April 18–25: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Personal growth training* (Kazakhstan, director F. Sharipov).

June 9–16: Festival Kinotavr-2019. Main prize: *Bull* (director B. Akopov).

May 20: comedian V. Zelensky, who won P. Poroshenko, took office as President of Ukraine.

July 21: The *Servant of the People* party of President V. Zelensky won the early parliamentary elections in Ukraine.

August 2: The United States formally withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with the USSR.

September 7: Imprisoned amateur director O. Sentsov was released early from his place of detention as part of an exchange of detainees between Russia and Ukraine and left for Ukraine.

December 8: The SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic, which causes COVID-19, begins.

December 9: The summit of the Normandy Four (Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine) was held in Paris, following which the territories of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions, which are under the control of the self-proclaimed DPR and LPR, are extended the status of a "special region".

January-December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

2020

January 8: Russian President V. Putin and Turkish President R. Erdogan opened the Turkish Stream gas pipeline.

January 15: The Russian government headed by D. Medvedev resigned.

January 21: A new government is formed in Russia headed by Prime Minister M. Mishustin.

January 31: The UK left the European Union (Brexit).

January 31: World Health Organization declares the coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

February 29: The US and the Taliban sign a peace agreement to end the war in Afghanistan.

March 17: The European Union closes the external borders of the community for 30 days due to the coronavirus COVID-19.

March 18: Russia restricts entry for foreigners due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

May 25: African-American J. Floyd dies during arrest in Minneapolis, sparking massive protests against racism in the US and elsewhere.

July 1: Freight rail traffic on the Crimean bridge across the Kerch Strait was opened.

August 20: Russian oppositionist A. Navalny was hospitalized in the Omsk hospital with poisoning, from where he was later transferred to Germany for treatment.

September 11–18: Festival Kinotavr-2020. Main prize: *Scarecrow* (directed by D. Davydov).

September 27: Beginning of the armed conflict in Karabakh.

October 1–8: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *Siege Diary* (Russia, director A. Zaitsev).

November 10: Armenia and Azerbaijan sign a ceasefire declaration. Armenia handed over territories in Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan.

January – December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

2021

January 6: Trump's supporters seize the US Congress building in Washington to reject the official results of the 2020 presidential election and support Trump's demand for Vice President Michael Pence and Congress not to recognize Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 elections.

January 20: J. Biden officially takes office as President of the United States.

January 23: opposition actions in support of A. Navalny in several Russian cities.

January 29: Russian President V. Putin signs the law on the ratification of the agreement extending START-3 for five years.

February 2: the court in the case of "Yves Rocher" replaced the oppositionist A. Navalny with a suspended sentence for a real one lasting 3.5 years – in a penal colony.

April 10: A. Navalny's political videos, prepared by him with the help of Western media professionals in Germany, *I called my killer* (2020) and *Palace for Putin* (2021), received a special award from the White Elephant from group of Russian film critics.

April 22–29: Moscow International Film Festival in Moscow. The main prize "Golden George": *#asshole* (Romania, director A. Khutsulyak).

September 18–25: Festival Kinotavr-2021. Main prize: *The sea worries once* (director N. Khomeriki).

December 8: German Chancellor A. Merkel resigned. O. Scholz was appointed the new Federal Chancellor of Germany.

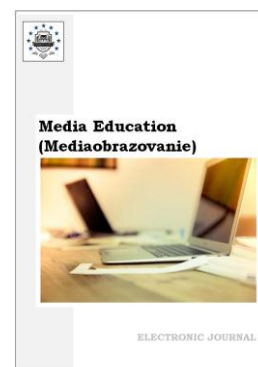
January-December: continuation of the "frozen" conflict in Donbass.

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## Theoretical Articles of Film Expert K.E. Razlogov in the *Cinema Art* Journal

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### Abstract

The evolution of theoretical film studies positions of the famous film expert K.E. Razlogov (1946–2021) in *Cinema Art* journal is analyzed in this article.

Purpose of study: comprehensive retrospective analysis of the theoretical film studies position evolution of K.E. Razlogov in *Cinema Art* journal in configuration of historical, political and socio-cultural snapshot.

The results of content analytical discourse of the film studies positions in the theoretical articles of K.E. Razlogov on the pages of *Cinema Art* journal allow outlining some conclusions:

- the theoretical film studies positions of K.E. Razlogov to a greater extent were focused on the plot-structural analysis of the film, its genre originality, the specific features of expressive means in the historical context;

- the content of some articles of the film expert reflected the problems of studying the most important phenomena of the foreign cinematography history and theory by the Soviet film critics, standing for the need of conscious orientation towards the development of spectacular cinematography, the importance of developing a methodology based on the principle of historicism, the segment unity of the ideological and semiotic approaches;

- the texts of the theoretical articles of the film expert, written in the Soviet period, contained the traces of ideology of the ruling Communist party; the author repeatedly referred to the ideological dogmas, resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR in his publications, paying attention to the semantic content analysis of the official documents and degree of cinematography development in accordance with the established positions;

- in the period of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the author's works substantially referred to the studies of the historical evolution and the problem of film presentation on Russian TV screens;

- in general, the film studies publications of K.E. Razlogov were dedicated to studying the correlations and influence of political and socio-cultural transformation processes on the development of cinematography in the context of various periods of history.

**Keywords:** Razlogov, theoretical articles, film studies position, film expert, film studies, *Cinema Art* journal.

### 1. Introduction

Today the theory and practice of cinema develops a wide range of problems using a deep deconstruction and understanding of the scientific heritage as a fundamental support in the context of film studies.

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The appeal to the Soviet and Russian scientific potential of film studies is by no means accidental, but determined by the need to find answers to currently unsolved problematic vectors in the field of methodology, development of expressive means, structure of the film, determination of the boundaries of the film studies subject field in the space of its study by film experts of the past years.

One of the most recognized experts on cinema and television, and media culture in general, was the outstanding film expert, cultural scientist, film critic, teacher, journalist, professor of Russian State University of Cinematography, President of the Guild of Film Experts and Film Critics of Russia (2015–2021), Honored Artist of the Russian Federation (1996) – Kirill Razlogov (06.05.1946 – 26.09.2021).

The main theoretical works published by K.E. Razlogov on the pages of *Cinema Art* journal were dedicated mostly to cinematographic problems, mainly to professional issues of film studies, theory and art of film production, its plot and imagery concept (the basic works were published at different times under headings “Theory and history”, “Culture contexts”, “Discussions”, “TV – resonance”).

At the same time, a significant number of K.E. Razlogov’s scientific studies referred to such important issues, as development of methodological problems of film studies; analysis of problematic field of studying the methodology of Western cinema production in line with the ideological and political, economic dogmas of the Soviet period; significance of television in the socio-cultural context; problems of film screening on television.

Unfortunately, today no fundamental scientific research on the transformation of the theoretical conceptual positions of the outstanding film expert K.E. Razlogov has appeared yet, that emphasizes the scientific novelty and theoretical significance of our article.

## 2. Materials and methods

In our study the time limits, which were made within the retrospective analysis of the theoretical studies of cinema expert K.E. Razlogov, reflected in *Cinema Art* journal, are determined by the beginning of theoretical articles publication in *Cinema Art* journal (1973) and ending with the life and professional path of K.E. Razlogov (2021).

The research material is represented by the texts of theoretical film studies of K.E. Razlogov published in *Cinema Art* journal. Various methods were used for the analysis, including content analysis, comparative historical analysis, textual and hermeneutic methods of text understanding and interpreting, as well as theoretical methods of analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction.

The object of study is the semantic content of the texts of K.E. Razlogov’s film studies in *Cinema Art* journal, and the subject of study – evolution of theoretical film studies conceptual positions of K.E. Razlogov in *Cinema Art* journal (Razlogov, 1976; Razlogov, 1978; Razlogov, 1982; Razlogov, 1990; Razlogov, 1995; Razlogov, 1997; Razlogov, 1998; Razlogov, 2002; Razlogov, 2006 and others).

Thus, this scientific study aims to analyze the evolution of K.E. Razlogov’s theoretical views in *Cinema Art* journal and investigate the semantic development of his concepts in the context of historical, political and socio-cultural changes.

## 3. Discussion

Film study trends and conceptual views undergo transformations depending upon the historical period. For example, in the period of classical cinematography development the researches aimed at analyzing the film structure, studying the language of cinema and its impact on the viewer prevailed.

The investigation of transformation of the film study trends and conceptual views in correlation with the development of scientific knowledge makes it possible to understand how the scientific-research community adapts to the changing conditions and requirements of modern times.

The issues of history of cinema art and cinematography are reflected in the scientific film studies texts (Andrew, 1976; Andrew, 1984; Anosova, 1961; Aristarco, 1951; Bazin, 1971; Bergan, 2006; Braniganetal, 2015; Casetti, 1999; Dobrenko, 2008; Gibsonetal, 2000; Iezuitov, 1958; Kenez, 1992; Komarov, 2000; Lebedev, 1974; Levin, 1967; Livingston, 2009; McIver, 2016; Plantinga, 1993; Ryabchikova, 2014; Shlapentokh, Shlapentokh, 1993; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007; Woll, 2000 and others)

Recently, the scientists have been actively researching and getting an understanding of the theoretical approaches and methods used in the film studies in order to shed light on their

semantic shades and role in the analysis and interpretation of the deep constructs of film productions. However, it is important to say that, in general, the studies are of contextual manner.

The analysis of theoretical aspects of the cinematic construct allows us to expand and enrich our understanding of the cinema art, its aesthetic and semiotic features. As a result, the scientists are developing theories of cinema art, offering new approaches and views on the cinematography.

It should also be noted that *Cinema Art* journal plays an important role in this process providing a place not only for publishing and sharing new study ideas and results, but analyzing the best practices as well.

The publications of A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya present a profound analysis of the theoretical concepts of the film studies in *Cinema Art* journal of the period of 1930-s – 2000s (Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, 2023; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2023; Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, 2023), disclosing the film studies positions of the film experts through the lens of the retrospective analysis.

In our previous articles, a content analysis of the theoretical articles by famous Russian film critics I.V. Weisfeld (Gorbatkova, 2022), R.N. Yurenev (Gorbatkova, 2023) was carried out.

In this article, we performed a retrospective analysis of the theoretical texts of film studies by one of the leading authors of *Cinema Art* journal K.E. Razlogov in the subject field of the evolution of positions in correlation with historical, political and socio-cultural representation.

#### 4. Results

Analyzing K.E. Razlogov's works, it is important to note that throughout his film study path, one of the central subjects of his scientific search was the discussion of methodological problems of the film studies in different historical contexts.

Back in 1975, in the article "Material, problems, methodology", K.E. Razlogov raised some problems of the methodology of Western cinematography focusing on such theoretical issues as: the phenomenon of specific refraction of historical achievements through the lens of the investigation of foreign film studies (i.e. reliance on the principle of historicism in the course of film texts comprehension); the lack of studies focused on the creative work of individual masters; the research of various trends in the film art determined by the ideological processes, and the trends of its critical comprehension in the West; the problem of aesthetic understanding of communication systems between people and their synthesis in the cinematography integrating various audiovisual forms; the issues related to the nature and genres of the Soviet literature about cinematography.

In the opinion of K.E. Razlogov, there were very few publications devoted to the study of the creative works of the Western masters of cinema, their art studies and journalistic performances reflecting the main historical stages of the cinema development in the research understanding of foreign cinematography in the Soviet film studies of the 1960s – 1970s. In this context K.E. Razlogov stated that "to some extent, this task was set only by the collections dedicated to the works of Federico Fellini, Ingmar Bergman and Jean Renoir. We think that with the next controversy of the next materials, inaccuracy of some assessments, which turned out to be especially prominent in the collection dedicated to Fellini, subjected to fair and reasonable studies in Communist journal, these books nevertheless helped the film experts in striving to see the film art phenomena they were interested in related to the real context, to the entire film process. Therefore, it seems extremely important that such collections (always accompanied by Marxist critical interpretation of the material included in them) appear not only for the individual masters, but also for the trends important for the history of cinema, for individual periods and national schools (such first experience – "Cinema of Great Britain" collection – unfortunately, cannot be considered a success)" (Razlogov, 1975: 102).

Proceeding from the Soviet ideological requirements of the 1970-s, K.E. Razlogov wrote that the film studies "tasks faced by the authors of future studies are truly immense; the main one even today remains the systematic study of the development laws of the Western cinematography – reactionary and progressive, meantime our cinema study had no time to accumulate enough studies focused even on more specific tasks: on the study of both individual masters and private problems. Thus, if, for example, Ch. Chaplin's creativity was constantly given a lot of attention, and only a list of works published in the Russian language about him could make a small brochure, then in case of Erich Stroheim, Fritz Lang, John Ford, Luis Bunuel, say nothing about younger, but already famous artists, each researcher is forced to act as some kind of a discoverer. After all, rare film reviews, as well as individual essays or reviews of international festivals, can in



no way be considered a sufficient basis for the consistent critical study of the creative work of these directors and the entire film process” (Razlogov, 1975: 103).

Among the obvious drawbacks of the Soviet scientific publications on the issues of foreign cinema of the 1960s – 1970s, according to K.E. Razlogov’s opinion, were: the systematic focus on the same personalities; the lack of the cinematic landscape expansion. At the same time, the film expert emphasized the paradox that “the works of masters of modern social and political cinematography, which despite of the fact that they cannot be considered unambiguous in any way, and which nevertheless are particularly interesting and important for us (the works of Frenchman René Allio, Italians Taviani brothers, Brazilian Glauber Rocha, American Robert Kramer can serve as the examples), are much more often analyzed on the pages of the foreign (bourgeois!) press, rather than in our books and journals. Moreover, the cinematography of recent years is increasingly demanding the research not at the level of individual films (like in festival reports) or the experience of even the most outstanding directors, but at the level of trends in the film art and the trends of its critical comprehension that have emerged in the West, due to the general ideological processes that include the mass media in their sphere of influence” (Razlogov, 1975: 103).

Studying the process of cinematography development, K.E. Razlogov reasonably stated that it was the social-political situation that determined the certain changes in the film art nature and form. According to the author’s opinion, this “process proceeds in a contradictory interaction of the external factors (patterns of social development of a country, its role in the international arena and related ideological cataclysms) with the intra-cinematographic factors (the nature of film production and distribution, their function in the social life; finally, the aesthetic level of individual works and the development of cinematic expression means)” (Razlogov, 1975: 103).

In addition, K.E. Razlogov reasonably believed that the relationship between the world history as a whole and the history of cinema in the focus of defining the boundaries of the film studies was clearly reflected in the importance of studying the sociological and aesthetic segment of the cinematography, and these aspects could not be interchanged or, moreover, “mutually absorbed, as it happens in many our film studies. We’d like to remind, in this regard, that the value of any research (regardless of its genre and scope) is ultimately determined by the author’s ability to generalize and classify the disparate data, overcoming the still living tradition of empiricism” (Razlogov, 1975: 104).

K.E. Razlogov paid considerable attention to the development of the problem of cinematography expressive means, especially the study of the contradictory processes of the “cinema language” evolution in the West. At that, in the middle of the 1970s K.E. Razlogov wrote that “we should never forget that our ideological opponents, who widely discussed (of course, with the anti-communist positions) the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR “On measures for the further development of the Soviet cinematography”, and not by chance especially criticized that provision, which contained the studies of the attempts of individual directors to uncritically borrow the techniques of foreign cinema alien to the art of the socialist realism. As per the opinion of such “speakers”, in this part of the document allegedly appeared the misunderstanding of genuine innovation in art and the strive for restriction of the Soviet artists’ searches range. But formal solutions, the stylistic features of certain films are ideologically never neutral. That is why the study of how, why and in what context this method (or a set of methods) carries or is able to carry a particular content load is always associated with the demanding tasks of the ideological struggle. These problems can be solved only with the Marxist theory of the cinema” (Razlogov, 1975: 104).

Reviewing the theoretical problems of foreign cinema, K.E. Razlogov analyzed the issues related to the nature and genres of the Soviet literature on bourgeois cinema. Here he reminded to the readers that film studies included not only studies, aesthetics and film theory, which studied the general laws of the cinema art formation and development, but also “filmology, which combines all various approaches to the cinema from the standpoint of other sciences, the history of cinema. At the same time, it is history that is primarily intended to summarize all the data related to the cinematography and its development over time” (Razlogov, 1975: 112).

However, according to K.E. Razlogov’s opinion, it is precisely one of the reasons for the Soviet film studies lagging behind, studying the peculiarities of the development of Western cinema, that is the lack of research results in the field of the relationship between the philosophical thought and the cinematography. As per the author’s opinion, “only a creative community of scientists of different profiles can lead to significant results on the way of studying the relationship

between the philosophical thought and the film art”... Moreover, among the wide range of film study literature, there are no fundamental scientific studies in the focus of foreign cinema, to a greater extent there is only popular literature that has little in common with fundamentality. “Absence of solid scientific methodological base leads to precocious, often mutually exclusive assessments, shallow quick retellings, unlawful generalizations, and in some cases uncritical adherence to foreign samples of “sensational” literature. It is easy to see that often it is not a scientific, but a commercial approach. ... Such trend is dangerous not only for the reader (it is obvious), but also for our film studies” (Razlogov, 1975: 113).

The above-mentioned problematic issues of the theoretical fundamental field during the analysis of foreign cinema, according to K.E. Razlogov’s opinion, could only be solved by forming a conscious orientation among the Soviet film critics towards the development of “fundamental film studies, which will not only serve science as such, but will also solve one of the main tasks set by the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR “On literary and artistic studies” – it will contribute to raising the ideological and theoretical level of literary and artistic studies” (Razlogov, 1975: 119).

Obviously, relying on the attitudes and canons of the ideology prevailing at that time, in his theoretical works K.E. Razlogov tried to focus his attention on the importance of using the potential of the established ideological position in the development of film studies as a science, while clearly indicating that “only by mastering the entire arsenal of methods of Marxist science, the film studies will be able to solve those most difficult tasks, which are put before them by the ideological struggle in the modern world, in one of the acute areas of which there are figures of literature and art, and among them – film experts and film critics” (Razlogov, 1975: 119).

Investigating the film studies of K.E. Razlogov at the end of the Soviet period, one cannot ignore the position put forward by the film expert regarding the development of the cinematography of the totalitarian era presented in detail in *Cinema Art* journal in 1990 under the heading “Discussion” in the article “Cinema of the totalitarian era” (1990).

Here K.E. Razlogov identified four groups of film productions in the film repertoire of the totalitarian era:

- The first group – films that expressed the dominant ideological concept at the official level (for example, *The Great Citizen*, *The Triumph of the Will*);
- The second group – films that did not reflect the prevailing ideology so clearly, but were not devoid of the “imprint” of the totalitarian system;
- The third group – films that tried to avoid the real events of the totalitarian era in the storyline (the adventure and musical films are vivid examples here);
- The fourth group – films against the totalitarian regime (Razlogov, 1990: 115).

In the post-Soviet period, K.E. Razlogov was sure that in the 1990s the film studies existed mainly in the forms of the opinion-based journalism: “It (like the printer’s ink in general) has ceased to be perceived as a mouthpiece of ideology and has become an expression of private or (rarely) group position. Rarely, because the cinema ... seldom becomes the object of political disputes. ... Methodologically, the post-Soviet studies is both colorful and traditional. Having shed the “donkey skin” of Marxism-Leninism ..., the studies returned to descriptiveness, journalism (in the context of political pluralism), aestheticism... Critical exhibitionism has become a new word, which made some works more readable and funny, but even more removed them from any film process. ... The studies continues to be non-demanded, now by the authorities too. It has no effect on the public opinion, on the repertoire and attendance of the cinemas, or even on the priorities of the cinematographers’ community, whether it is the distribution of state funding or the Nika Award, etc. The film studies remains a thing in itself, existing mainly for self-satisfaction (of the film critic), so the well-being of each of us depends on how well one or the other managed to get settled” (Razlogov, 1995: 55).

It can be noted that the above trends, so keenly noted by K.E. Razlogov above, continued and continue to dominate the Russian film studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Analyzing the aspects of cinematography and television interaction, K.E. Razlogov argued that on Russian TV “as it was expected, the plenitude of outstanding Western films stopped soon. The films were purchased “by packages”, where two or three masterpieces accounted for tons of waste paper...” (Razlogov, 1997: 46). One of the key reasons for the “collapse” of foreign “junk” on the Russian television in the 1990-s, according to K.E. Razlogov’s opinion, was the appearance of the NTV channel with the content reflecting clear reliance on the political messages and high-

quality cinema of that time, and the arrival of a “new” team at ORT.

K.E. Razlogov very evidently revealed the existence of a tendency to return to the past Soviet cinema characterized by the fact that “the most popular are already well-known works of the past decades, first of all. Of course, the national ones (here Gaidai was and remains the absolute champion), and among the foreign ones – the former champions of our film distribution (Fantomases and Angelicas)”.

Moreover, the author drew readers’ attention to the fact that “although they talked about cinema on the Russian television, but it appeared in TV shows “almost exclusively as an element of advertising, scandalous chronicles or show business. It fit into the “extra-cultural” context. ... It was not by chance that the programs that set themselves the task of “cultivating” the demonstration of films were gradually replaced from the broadcast grid: “Cinema Museum”, “Century of Cinema”, “Cinema Marathon”... Thus, the kind of art, which works are completely repeated by the television and with minimum distortions, moreover, constitute a significant part of the repertoire, is purposefully deprived of the status of artistic value. ... The current crisis of film screening on the television is also a kind of payback for the cinema withdrawal beyond the culture framework” (Razlogov, 1997: 47).

Thus, according to K.E. Razlogov, it is very significant that “the multiplication of cinema programs on all channels went parallel to the disappearance of the latter in the classical cinema version from the cultural practice of the bulk of the population. The current crisis of film screening on the television is also a kind of payback for the cinema withdrawal beyond the culture framework” (Razlogov, 1997: 47). In this regard, the film screening remained in non-cultural context, since the programs of the educational and cultural segment, as a rule, did not include various kinds of reflections on the film process. A significant part of the film productions that was repeated by the television was purposefully deprived of artistic value orientation.

Considering the audiovisual process in the historical context of its whole existence period, K.E. Razlogov believed that the Russian film screening on TV in the 1990s went from “a stream of masterpieces to a stream of junk”, and this was determined by several reasons:

- cinema for television (except for some high-quality works of the 1970s) has ceased to be at an advantageous position;
- absence of “new” foreign films on the screens;
- lack of technology to identify the outstanding films in the stream of television programs in the Soviet film studies.

Several years later K.E. Razlogov continued his reflections in the context of the problems of film screening and the spectrum of film production analyzing the beginning of a new stage in the history of the Soviet film screening associated with the “domination” of TV series and individual TV films on the television screens. According to the film expert’s opinion, the national cinematography was experiencing difficulties at that time due to the dominance of the American film production on the television screens. However, television series and films became more and more popular, and despite the fact that the national industry at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century did not reach a high level of profitability, there was a kind of revival of the cinematographer’s profession, and there was a tendency to “protect national culture” (Razlogov, 2001: 95).

Thus, the key topic of the theoretical scientific research of the film expert and culturologist K.E. Razlogov throughout his professional career were the methodological problems of film studies, such as the analysis of the theoretical heritage of the Soviet cinema, directing, film drama, genres, specifics of the cinema and television. In his publications he repeatedly pointed out the need for substantial study of the cinematography, the determination of the cinema development by the political, economic, socio-cultural factors characteristic of a particular historical segment.

At the same time, K.E. Razlogov made an attempt to look at the film process in a generational context. So, he evidently noted that the representatives of several generations carried out activities in the Soviet cinema:

- the first generation, characteristic of the period of the 1920s and 1930s (S. Eisenstein, D. Vertov, L. Kuleshov, A. Dovzhenko and others). At that, among the great masters (in 1940s – 1950s) only those preserved their influence further, who successfully “switched” in 1930s: G. Kozintsev and S. Gerasimov among those, who finished from the Factory of the Eccentric Actor, G. Aleksandrov and I. Pyryev, S. Yutkevich and M. Romm... These people together with the officials and party workers decided what is good and what is bad on the screen, helped (or did not help) the young people to start their carrier. ... They (then they were gradually replaced by

G. Chukhray, S. Bondarchuk, Yu. Ozerov, L. Kulidzhanov and others, who made their directorial debut in the 1950s) established the “game rules” in the cinematography until the middle of the 1980s (Razlogov, 2002: 83);

- the second generation, “the fifties — the sixties (A. German, A. Konchalovsky, K. Muratova, N. Mikhalkov, S. Solovyev)” (Razlogov, 2002: 84).

- the third generation, associated with the appearance of a new type of the cinematography, which K.E. Razlogov called “a new Russian cinema” (the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), their representatives included, “first of all, the descendants of famous cinematographers, secondly, people who started their professional career as clip makers... masters brought up not only by the cinematic screenings, but also ... by television (F. Bondarchuk, F. Yankovsky, E. Konchalovsky and others) (Razlogov, 2002: 85).

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis of K.E. Razlogov’s main theoretical articles demonstrates that they are written at a high professional level, abound with cinematic terms and are not devoid of expressive artistic imagery. The theoretical concepts presented by him are confirmed by clear logic of presentation and consistent argumentation based on primary sources. At the same time, the author’s position, assessment and attitude to the subject of study are clearly traced in the general content and the generalizing conclusions to each article. Structurally the articles are usually written with scientific style, have clear structure and rather large volume.

The results of the content-analytical discourse of the film studies positions in K.E. Razlogov’s theoretical articles on the pages of *Cinema Art* journal allow us to make a number of conclusions:

- K.E. Razlogov’s theoretical film studies positions were mostly reduced to the plot-structural analysis of the film production, its genre originality, the specific features of expressive means in the historical context;

- the content of some articles of the film expert reflected the problems of studying the most important phenomena of the foreign cinematography history and theory by the Soviet film studies; emphasized the importance of developing a methodology based on the principle of historicism, which allows using the data of modern history, sociology, aesthetics to study the controversial issues that determine the evolution of the Western cinematography, the value of the ideological and moral content of the Soviet cinema, as well as the unity of ideological and semiotic approaches, increasing the ideological and theoretical level of the literary and artistic studies;

- the texts of the theoretical articles of the film expert, written in the Soviet period, contained the traces of ideology of the ruling Communist party; the author repeatedly referred to the ideological dogmas, resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR in his publications, paying attention to the semantic content analysis of the official documents and degree of cinematography development in accordance with the established positions;

- in the period of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the author’s works substantially referred to the studies of the historical evolution and the problem of film presentation on Russian TV screens;

- in general, the film studies publications of K.E. Razlogov were dedicated to studying the correlations and influence of political and socio-cultural transformation processes on the development of cinematography in the context of various periods of history.

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## Pandemic and VUCA World: Analyzing Indian Scenario of Integrated Marketing Communication on Digital Platform

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### Abstract

The marketing sector in the recent pandemic of COVID-19 time has seen a massive transformation. In order to retain its consumers, different innovative approaches have been strategized to hold its brand positioning or to sustain its equity in the market. The comprehensive advertising networks globally set in motion the measures with their distinctive magnetism and quipped the branded content is imperative in today's VUCA world. Branded content is getting more attention and is able to create brand recognition. Consumers tend to like branded content because they believe the content is more consumer focused. There comes the market confront and their struggle to build brand personality because "Advertisements are ephemeral but its residues are rock hard." The main objective of this research is to understand the trends of digital marketing communication campaigns in the VUCA world related to covid-19 pandemic awareness in India; it explores the consumers' perception related to the phenomenon of brand communication. The present research finds that, there is a thorough understanding of creative strategies of marketing (advertising/public relations) messages, information, and appeals emerged in pandemic period (Covid-19 and post covid scenario) in today's imperative VUCA world. This study argues that by adopting the new embedded strategies businesses in this crisis time, companies have emphasized their continued existence and their capability to go on with the delivery to their prospective customers for the same products and value despite the disaster.

**Keywords:** digital media, marketing communication, Covid-19 scenario, reach, engagement, consumer response.

### 1. Introduction

The marketing sector in the recent pandemic of COVID-19 time has seen a massive transformation. In order to retain its consumers, different innovative approaches have been strategized to hold its brand positioning or to sustain its equity in the market. The vision is to cater to the needs, to be empathetic, and most important to craft its approach in such a way that it would touch the senses of its target consumers.

The paradigm shift has occurred tremendously in the area of marketing communication with no doubt; suddenly the convergent approach has emerged to disseminate in omni channel platform to scattered heterogeneous audiences. The Indian marketing communication adopted a new strategy of brand, creativity, and craft; sensitivity in storytelling method has been experimenting with different types of 'appeals' and architectures.

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Understanding the modern world is never been very easy and today's world is called the VUCA world which means a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous world. This situation makes living life uncertain. Though difficult to cope with in this merciless complex situation, if one communicates properly then he or she can survive well enough through this situation (Mehdi, 2018).

The comprehensive advertising networks globally set in motion the measures with their distinctive magnetism and quipped the branded content is imperative in today's VUCA world. Branded content is getting more attention and is able to create brand recognition. Consumers tend to like branded content because they believe the content is more consumer-focused. There comes the market confront and their struggle to build brand personality because "Advertisements are ephemeral but its residues are rock hard."

Various contents are evolved but how the branded content can be stayed there in consumer's minds and how can they be brand resilient is the main aim of the present research. Most of the problems are created in consumers' minds because of 'clutter'; people don't want to watch the advertisements. There are many strategies adopted by consumers to ad avoidance. In many media, the percentage varies from 60 % to 92 %. But in this crisis pandemic period, it is worth researching how sponsorships and advertorials were the reason for distractions in the popular media. The 'era of product placements' is the key strategy and implementation and it is beautifully crafted in a film like 'Cast Away' and 'Ye Jawani hai Deewani'. The rise of 'Entertainment Options' in terms of context started in the early to mid-1900s in the Indian context.

There comes the 'media integration' where the brands started approaching media owners to integrate their content to be relevant in the story itself. The best example in the Indian context is MTV roadies. In developing engagement with the potential consumer is the need for great storytelling and an unobtrusive part of content, content marketing. The strategy of digital marketing communication highlighted the importance of advertising, public relations, and brand communication in this crisis situation.

Research objective: The main objective of this research is to understand the trends of digital marketing communication campaigns in the VUCA world related to covid-19 pandemic awareness in India; to explore the different types of appeals and intended messages for brand communication and lastly to have a thorough understanding of creative strategies of marketing (advertising/public relations) messages, information, and appeals in this pandemic period in today's imperative VUCA world.

Scope of the research: The expected variable has been chosen to see how the consumers have been influenced by the content or the appeal. Audience Analysis also is done which will explore the possibilities to understand the advertising appeals changing scenarios and strategies. The research explores the effectiveness of content and consumer awareness measurement also is an integral part of this research.

## 2. Materials and methods

Recent research is done on "Marketing aspects of innovative development of business organizations in the sphere of production, trade, transport, and logistics in VUCA conditions" by Popova et.al in 2020. Researchers tried to identify recent trends of innovation and integration in marketing which in turn will help the business organization to develop marketing activities towards sustainable innovative development. The researcher aimed at finding the impact of modern characteristics of the digital world on the innovative development of the business organization (Popova et al., 2020).

Recent research is done on "Soft Skills – The only Set of Skills that Help Sustain in the VUCA World" by Mehdi et.al in 2018. The researchers aimed at discussing the importance of effective soft-skill communication in the VUCA world. The researcher tried to analyze how good communication skill is essential for this complicated business world. The researcher has also analyzed the role played by verbal and non-verbal communication sustaining in the VUCA world (Mehdi, 2018).

Recent research is done on "Management of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity). Using machine learning techniques in industry 4.0 paradigm" by Mohanta et al. in 2020. Researchers have reviewed VUCA terminology and how it is important in Industry 4.0. The researchers have also studied the challenges and peripherals related to this (Mohanta et al., 2020).



Recent research is done on “Personnel development at enterprises with regard to adaptation to the VUCA world” by Popova et.al. in 2020. Researchers describe the result of the study related to personnel working at transport and logistic enterprise and how they are adapting to the VUCA environment. The study reveals the formation, development, and maintenance of a competency framework for the working personnel is a mechanism to adapt to the VUCA environment for the enterprise (Popova, Shynkarenko, 2016).

Recent research is done in the area of “Modelling and analysing the impact of Circular Economy; Internet of Things and ethical business practices in the VUCA world: Evidence from the food processing industry” by Persis, et.al. and published in 2021. The researcher mainly focuses on exploring different facets of circular economy (CE), IoT, and ethical business practice (EBP). The researchers tried to evaluate all these concepts with respect to the food processing industry. Factors responsible for the company’s preference for CE, IoT, and EBP were analyzed by researchers in this paper. Factor analysis is done also Fuzzy ANN system for the classification of factor were used to examine the level of adoption intention. Researchers suggested in their result that deployment of the “Ant Colony Optimization” method makes decision-making more efficient and robust. It also helps the ANN system work more efficiently (Persis et al., 2021).

Research is also done on “Improving Brand Performance in Vuca World” by Nidhi Sinha in 2018. The researcher focuses on identifying behavioral responses, consumer preferences, and consumption patterns. For achieving this researcher has divided the market into several sub-market which are homogeneous in nature. The researcher collected the data from the focus group through the interview method. The researcher analyzed 50 brands. Findings revealed that by using K-means clustering researcher created 11 consumer clusters where the performance of each cluster was aligned with the specific functions of a brand (Sinha, 2018).

M.A.S. Raja 2020 published a research article on “Digital integrated marketing communication (DIMC) and its logical relationship with co-branding and brand values with reference to coke studio.” The researcher aimed at exploring the variables which contributed to the success of Coke Studio and contribute to the creation of a new digital integrated marketing communication model which explains key variables like brand equity, brand value, and co-branding effect. The researcher has tried to explain the effect of DIMC and cobranding, brand equity, and brand value diagrammatically to identify the reason behind the success of Coke Studio. Researchers claimed that this model will help in understanding customer preference, experience, and loyalty which will in the future help to develop good relations in this digital world with the end customers (Raja, 2020).

Research gap: There is research done on marketing aspects of innovative development of business organizations in the sphere of production, trade, transport, and logistics in VUCA conditions. There is also research done in the area of Soft Skills–The Only Set of Skills that Help Sustain the VUCA World. There is little more research in the area of management of VUCA in Industry 4.0. Research is done in the area of personnel management in enterprise with reference to adoption in the VUCA world. But there is hardly any research on digital integrated marketing communication strategies in today’s VUCA world with reference to covid -19 scenario in India.

Theoretical framework – VUCA stands for:

Volatile – fast-changing and unpredictable;

Uncertain – The present is unclear and the future is uncertain;

Complex – many different interconnected factors play a chaotic situation;

Ambiguous – there is a lack of clarity and awareness of the situation.

In 2009 B. Johansen in his book “Leaders Make the Future” adopted the VUCA model for the business world. He used it to reflect turbulent, unpredictable factors that affect any organization. According to him new skills, behavior, and approach are required to manage any of the four VUCA threats (MTCT, n.d.).

All four characteristics are applicable to the situation faced by the world during the Covid-19 crisis.

**Volatile:** Changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic that is affecting every day in a dramatic and unpredictable way.

**Uncertainty:** No individual can predict when this pandemic will end and normalcy will return.

**Complexity:** The pandemic is affecting all sectors including business, economy, healthcare, and social life in a very complex manner.

Ambiguity: No best practice can be found to manage this challenge due to the pandemic (Ghabour, 2020).

Organizations and leadership can use the VUCA model to successfully build strategies to fight the crisis. Likewise, the organizational vision can be redefined. Understanding five competitive forces that reshape the strategy is required. Clarity is another factor that is much required in current times to give direction to employees of the organization about their job and future (Ghabour, 2020).

**Integrated Marketing Communication:**

There are seven levels of integration for integrated marketing communication:

a) Vertical Integration of Objectives: Overall organization goal should fit in the communication objective in marketing.

b) Horizontal Integration: Marketing communication needs to align with other branches like HRM, manufacturing, and operations.

c) Integration of Marketing Mix: Message communicated needs to fit in with the marketing mix.

d) Integration with communication mix: Communication tools are used to portray the proper message to the customer.

e) Integration of Creative design: It is the consistency that should be maintained between creative design positioning of services or products.

f) Internal or External integration: There is inter-departmental alignment and cohesion and they need to work with external agencies of the organization.

g) Financial integration: The budget should be optimal for various activities to achieve efficiency in attaining the “desired goal” (Rai, 2020).

Oancea (Oancea, 2015) in her research paper “The Model of Integrated Marketing Communication: Who has the Role to Influence Consumer Behaviour” proposed an updated integrated marketing communication model. In this model, she included a correlation between several factors influencing any favorable buying decision.

These factors are:

a) sociological variables which include family, membership group, reference group, culture, sub-culture, social class, etc.

b) external stimuli which include prices, attributes of the product, quality, brand, packaging, emotional values, etc.

c) integrated marketing communications which include communicating messages, communicating tools such as mass-media advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, online marketing, etc.

The researcher has proposed this updated version of the Integrated Communication Model to determine the actual purchase behaviour of the consumer. If a consumer decided to purchase the product or service then this Integrated Marketing Communication model is maintained and updated. But if the consumer does not express purchase intention, then the IMC model needs to be reviewed and modified to influence the positive purchasing behaviour of consumers (Oancea, 2015).

Research questions – The following are the research questions formed for this present study:

RQ 1. What are the trends of digital marketing communication campaigns in the VUCA world related to covid-19 pandemic awareness in India?

RQ 2. How the agenda setting has been changed for the digital marketing communication campaign related to covid-19 pandemic awareness from an Indian perspective?

RQ 3. How is the consumer’s perception existing related to the recent phenomenon of brand communication?

RQ 4. What are the creative strategies of marketing (advertising/public relations) messages, information, and appeals in this pandemic period in today’s imperative VUCA world?

*Research methodology.* The present research is qualitative in nature. It will adopt content analysis (qualitative) and case study (particularistic) methods along with code will be assigned for content analysis. In this research paper, the researchers intend to analyze the trends of these digital marketing communications depending on the theme COVID-19 pandemic awareness campaign and its intended approach for consumers. The research explores the effectiveness of content and appeal measurement of brand communication is an integral part of this research.

### 3. Discussion

Imran Ali et.al. published a research article on “Risk and resilience in agri-food supply chain SMEs in the pandemic era: a cross-country study, *International Journal of Logistics Research and Applications*” in 2022. Researchers tried to examine how small-scale enterprises (SMEs) and Agri-Food Supply Chains (AFSC) in both developed and developing countries are disrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic and what are measures taken to restore supply chain resilience (SCRE). The researchers have applied a qualitative research method with the semi-structured interview in both developing countries (Pakistan and Tanzania) and developed countries (Australia). Cross-country analysis done by the researchers made the difference in risk and supply chain resilience more prominent. Researchers have developed a possible list of covid inflicted risks and related supply chain resilience strategies to survive covid-19 pandemic and other future crises. The result has created the roadmap for building more resilient agri-food small-scale enterprises (SMEs) (Ali et al., 2022).

Soomro et.al published a recent research article on “Workforce resilience in the post-COVID-19 era: differences based on manufacturing-service orientation and firm size, *Production Planning & Control*” in 2022. The researchers tried to explore whether the workforce resilience factor will affect the post covid era. They tried to examine if this factor has performed differently in service versus manufacturing sectors and small-scale enterprises versus large firms. Results showed six factors were complicated regarding workforce resilience in small enterprises. They are positive thinking, differentiation, degree of involvement, sense of responsibility, cognitive process, and innovation. Whereas in large firms there are two factors of workforce resilience that are complicated. They are decision-making and work-life balance. Findings will help managers to design strategies to leverage workforce resilience in post covid era (Soomro et al., 2022).

Carvalho et.al published a research article on “35 Years of Excellence, and perspectives ahead for Excellence 4.0” in 2021. Researchers tried to examine how “excellence” faces challenges in the new industrial paradigm. They analyzed the current scenario and future challenges of excellence through various literature reviews and an understanding of broad history. The result highlights the challenges and limitations of excellence and provides a key concept for the scope of solutions for dealing with an industrial model in upcoming times (Carvalho et al., 2021).

Jaiswal et.al published a research article on “Rebooting employees: upskilling for artificial intelligence in Multinational Corporations” in 2022. Researchers tried to analyze key skills that are required to upskill employees for the adoption of AI in business. Researchers have applied qualitative methods and interviewed twenty people from MNCs in India’s IT industry. Findings revealed five skills are crucial for employee upskilling; they are digital, decision-making, complex cognitive, data analysis, and continuous learning skills (Jaiswal et al., 2022; Gálik, 2020; Gálik, Oprala, 2021).

V. Butkouskaya et.al published a research article on “Inter-Country Customer-Perspective Analysis of Strategic Antecedents and Consequences for Post-Purchase Behaviour in Integrated Marketing Communications” in 2021. Researchers tried to analyze integrated marketing communication consequences and antecedents from the consumer’s perspective in developing and developed nations. Findings revealed that consumer orientation directly influences Integrated Marketing communications and indirectly post-purchase behavior. In developing countries, the positive influence of IMC depends on the evaluation of post-purchase behavior. Whereas, in developed countries, consumer satisfaction rules the relationship between IMC and post-purchase behavior (Butkouskaya et al., 2021).

Nikseresht et al. published a review article on “Using artificial intelligence to make sustainable development decisions considering VUCA: a systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis” in 2022. Researchers examined sustainable development-related decision-making in the light of VUCA threat phenomena. Researchers applied bibliometric and network analysis to examine recent trends in this area. Findings give the conceptual idea and practical managerial aspects (Nikseresht et al., 2022).

Sahoo et al published a research article on “Identification of critical success factors for leveraging Industry 4.0 technology and research agenda: a systematic literature review using PRISMA protocol” in 2022. Researchers tried to explore and identify existing and critical success factors taken for implementing Industry 4.0 in the VUCA environment. Researchers have applied the SLR method with a systematic review, meta-analysis, and content analysis of preferred items. Findings revealed the gap in the literature of previous research studies which has ignored that

Industry 4.0 implementation in the manufacturing sector and service sector creates value addition like an increase in productivity. Secondly, the researchers have identified twelve critical factors behind the successful implementation of Industry 4.0. These factors are organizational culture, training and development, infrastructure, innovation capacity, security system, top management support, financial resource, technical infrastructure, standardization of process, change management and governance, communication, and cooperation (Sahoo et al., 2022).

Monohar and Rehman published a research article on “Brand resurrection in an emerging economy” in 2018. Researchers have done a case study of Amalya Diary Pvt Ltd, to study why the adoption of a new integrated marketing communication technique is important in today’s business for building brand image after a major crisis. Researchers have also analyzed how the brand Amalya Diary Pvt Ltd adapted to this new communication world when faced with a major brand crisis (Manohar, Rehman, 2019).

In their study (García et al., 2022) finds that the level of smart phone addiction during the pandemic is higher in female students in comparison to male students. The very reasons were identified as the risk of not getting adequate information and to evaluate the perception gathered in various media/sources.

Online instructional learning is vehemently done in Nigeria during Covid-19 and the study suggests that FOSS, Android and computer apps were largely used (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

#### 4. Results

##### *Case Study 1*

*Brand name – ITC Ltd. Period of study – 2020-2021. Industry – FMCG. Country – India.*

Introduction – The pandemic has shifted the focus of ITC Ltd. to a more digital platform for marketing and launching new products. ITC Ltd. started investing in IoT, AI, and ML to develop cutting-edge technology to enhance productivity at a minimum cost (PTI, 2020).

In their annual report for 2020-21 ITC Ltd. has mentioned diverting “investment” on innovation through digital platforms. It is a priority to make the company a “digital first” brand at the beginning of the pandemic. The pandemic has boast the e-commerce segment manyfold as consumers could do shopping sitting back at home during lockdown situations. Further, internet penetration has rapidly increased which has increased online payment, a wide range of products faster delivery through channels. The report claims that the company has witnessed a double in revenue generation from the e-commerce sector in FY21 which is equivalent to 5 % of the FMCG segment revenue (PTI, 2020).

##### *Digital Integrated Marketing Communication strategy followed*

Anticipating customer preference for “contactless shopping” and “home delivery” the company has “proactively engaged” in the e-commerce platform and also aligned with stock delivery channels for faster delivery of stock. Further, the company focuses on the recent demand for chemist products and specialist outlets and has designed specific strategies to capture emergent differentiated market opportunities (PTI, 2020).

The need for direct-to-consumer facility is augmented by channels like Swiggy, Zomato, Dominos, etc. and the company’s engagement with them has solved this issue and made products available to customers.

During the lockdown phase people preferred to consume in-home products like sanitizing products for health and hygiene and ITC Ltd. has focused on producing more content on health and wellness from experts which was the demand of the time. Therefore, ITC Ltd has informed in their annual report that purposeful communication was done during this phase to meet the growing consumer demand in the new space (PTI, 2020).

ITC Ltd. has already established a marketing command center in 2019 which enable the company to watch “real-time” consumer trends and at the same time craft suitable response for them. Thereby, it creates new avenues for contextual communication. ITC Ltd. claims that this procedure enhanced their real-time monitoring of consumer reaction to the communication, therefore, helping in delivering effective communication. In 2019, the company claimed to have started 500 campaigns on social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This is said to have given them insight into consumer preferences and trends with respect to various spaces which helped them grow in the area of new products (Mukherjee, 2019).

ITC Ltd. has developed a digital ecosystem with new initiatives like social media engagement, and contextual communication for the entire period of the pandemic which has gained the ground

for the company into profit-driven initiative. The company has developed such a center to look into consumer insights to invest in new areas of the product that fit the situation which is induced by the pandemic. Also, they have set up online stores like ITCstore.in and classmateshop.com and have developed the e-choupal segment to aid the agricultural sector smoothly during the pandemic (Dutt, 2021).

#### *Case Study 2*

*Brand name – Nykaa. Period of study – 2020-2021. Industry – FMCG. Country – India.*

Introduction – Nykaa is an eight-year-old brand for beauty and wellness products. During the pandemic and lockdown in 2020, the company faced difficulties in running offline outlets. With Govt. guidelines to restrict online sales to essential items company further needed to redefine its inventory and started selling essential items for sanitizing products and related essential products. The offline stores were converted to inventory stores and the entire business become online-based. Reports have shown Nykaa revived its sales by up to 93% by mid-June 2020. In the FY20 the company generated enough revenue to make a profit of Rs. 78 lakhs against a loss of Rs.21 crore in the previous financial year. The company has engaged actively in social media promotion of the brand prior to the pandemic which proved beneficial during the pandemic to enhance its marketing strategy (Ghosh, 2021).

#### *Digital Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy*

Nykaa has been successful to date due to its ability to use social media platforms most effectively. They have used the social media voice to promote their product. They have turned social media voice into credible voice and at present into conversation. They have also used community building as a key to excel in their social media promotion. They have created engaging content with video to support it. Focus on video has earned them more focus. They have started videos on “how to” and beauty tips and hacks for Youtube and Instagram. All these contents have targeted beauty enthusiasts who are likely to transform into prospective clients (Ghosh, 2021). Nykaa targeted their customer in the age group 18-35 in India and so they preferred to go digital in brand promotion. They took special care in writing blogs and reviews under the product label. The beauty product industry to a large extent depends on education, correct application, and usage of the product to enhance beauty. So, Nykaa has correctly banked on social media influencers for educating on the correct usage and application of a wide range of products to enhance beauty (Nazi et al., 2020).

Therefore, in the wake of the pandemic when the entire fashion industry shifted online, Nykaa also moved to a 360-degree marketing strategy through influencers on social media and providing appropriate content to promote the brand by educating customers to make the right choice for the purchase of any beauty product. Influencer marketing is a strategy of marketing followed by brands where they use vloggers, bloggers, and social media influencers to promote their brand through strategic content publishing (Buch, 2020).

#### *Case Study 3.*

*Brand name – FABINDIA. Period of study – 2020–2021. Industry – Textile. Country – India.*

Introduction – Fabindia is a store-based brand in the pre-covid era. It started its journey in the 1960s. The company was doing business in India and overseas. But from 2020 march onward when India went into lockdown the company faced a tough time coping with the new normal. The brand deals with handcraft and artisan products which means they do not categorize into essential items. So, the brand started re-booting its inventory and product line by focusing on essential product sales like safety masks, PPE kits, and sanitizing products to survive in the difficult period. After July 2020 the brand started opening the store and the company invested a lot in covid safety measures ranging from changing toilet patterns to proper sanitization installation and regular screening of employees' health and temperature check-ups. Though it cost lots of revenue it was essential measure that was requirement of time to get customers back on stores. Fab India also started a “white glove service” for their loyal customer who is allowed to choose the design and customized fabrics from the catalog book for their lifestyle products and company employees will bring the product to try at home comfortably (Doshi, 2020). All these attempts are taken to give a boost to the business in the handicraft sector which is hard hit in India by the pandemic.

Digital Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy: Fabindia has based its marketing strategy on integrated marketing communication and started using it to understand the way to retain customers. They have used the online platform for creating meaningful communication in

360-degree online and offline connections with customers. They have analyzed every review, feedback, and other customer comments and engagement on social media platforms to understand their preference and accordingly develop themselves to cater to their need. This approach has enhanced collaboration across an internal team like design, supply chain, store, merchandise, e-commerce, etc. along with seamless communication on various social media platforms as well as in-store communication; which in turn has created a 360-degree approach to marketing success. Fabindia.com has been promoted digitally to bring loyal customers back to the store when the situation normalized (David, 2021). Fabindia has launched a home and lifestyle concept store in Delhi to cater to the growing need of making homes adaptable to new scenarios (Gupta,2021). Fabindia has already installed Experience Centre for their loyal clients in different locations which are reopening in 2021 with adequate covid norms and protocols to give customers a safe shopping environment (David, 2021). Fabindia spends 40% of its advertising revenue on digital promotion and creates content that is tailored to suit consumer preference which helps them to understand consumer trend insight (Jangid, 2017).

#### Case Study 4.

*Brand name – Jio. Period of study – 2020-2021. Industry – Telecommunication. Country – India.*

**Introduction**–During the pandemic just like any other company jio also faced a tough situation with people locked up in their houses due to the pandemic lockdown and shops all closed so recharge of pre-paid subscriptions become impossible. Reports say that 70 % of wireless customers are pre-paid subscribers so Jio faced the problem of supporting and servicing their customers who are used to going to a physical retail shop for recharge. To cope with the situation Jio field team had come up with solutions like Jio Associates Program. This program created 1.2 million associates for recharge in their hyperlocal community. Jio Associates can recharge their customers’ connections by using JioPOS Lite app without letting them leave their homes (Sawhney, 2020). This program went successful and helped the company to retain customers even during the lockdown. Also, Jio started a touch network service and work-from-home customer care service to adapt to the new normal situation in the coming days (Sawhney, 2020).

**Digital Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy** – In the wake of the pandemic, Jio transformed its marketing strategy into a digital platform. Before the pandemic breaks Jio used to reach out to small businesses in person and educate them on the facilities of Jio cloud service. But lockdown made physical visits impossible so Jio transformed to promote digitally by conducting several webinars with these small enterprises and informing them about various services of Jio cloud (Sawhney, 2020). Jio Mart along with other Jio digital services and cloud services has gone online to facilitate the need of the time. Healthcare sectors are also opting for telemedicine systems to deal with the situation. Jio aimed at keeping all their customers digitally connected and also announced recently to remain accessible and affordable to a maximum subscriber during this ongoing pandemic. Jio phone has recently launched an affordable scheme and aimed that connect every Indian digitally (ETTelcom, 2021).

#### Appeal Analysis

Several brands have strategically used appeals for their brand communication during this time of the pandemic.

Here are some glimpses of appeals used by different brands on or before Covid-19.

**Table 1.** Glimpses of appeals used by different brands on or before Covid-19.

Brands	Appeal	Mode and Major Objective of Communication	Target Audience	The theme on Digital Media (website)
BMW	Emotional	Email concerning all their stakeholders and prospective buyer and consumers	Rich and High Earned	‘One World, one country, and one people
Panera	Rational	Emails turned from solemn to determined (rational)	To all customers emphasizing to	‘Mindfully Packaged’

Brands	Appeal	Mode and Major Objective of Communication	Target Audience	The theme on Digital Media (website)
		appeal cum promise	deliver of food eliminating the hassle of contacting	
CVS	Empathetic	Made sure for the visit a health professional those who seek medical attention	Those who are ill or need medication	'Consultation and comfort from home'

By adopting the new embedded strategies businesses in this crisis time, companies have emphasized their continued existence and their capability to go on with the delivery to their prospective customers for the same products and value despite the disaster.

During this Covid-19 phase, brands have banked on the following essential components for effective communication-

a) *Abstract Concepts*. for different businesses, companies focus on what are the things that the buyers have in their minds. For example, the various brand triggers the punchline of 'beat coronavirus' or boost immunity by using their product (disinfectant liquids, floor cleaner (Lizol, Nymile), fan (Crompton, Bajaj), Acs, and even packaging of products also follow the same category (like Amazon, Flipkart, etc), health drinks and vitamin supplements (Revital, Glucon D, Chawanprash, etc) There is an emergence of products like a face mask, hand sanitizer, toilet paper (local as well as established brand) during Covid-19.

b) *Intended Action*. This is the second most important to execute the ideas to do good business with an effective strategy. Most companies follow the elements like social currency, triggers, emotions, practical value and utility, and stories.

c) *Mood*. By knowing the aims and potential customers/consumers, the intended messages can be clear and meaningful. The mood or tone of the message can be proved as empathetic in times of pandemics.

Changed Preferences of Marketing Approach- the trends of digital marketing communication campaigns in the VUCA world related to covid-19 pandemic awareness in India drastically modified. Potentially now its focus has been changed to 'knowing the customer segment (customer data platform)' from the concept of 'marketing begins with knowing the consumers (potential)'.

Changed Agenda in Digital Mode – The present 'Z' and 'Y' generations are now very tech-savvy and mostly rely on digital mode (from food to fun). So, the acceleration of digital transformation has made companies integrate the 'direct to consumers' phenomenon by hyper-personalizing personal data through niche or search advertisements.

So, the brands for effective marketing communication especially to the VUCA world need to be incorporated the content (which should accelerate the personal usage through apps or emails) and the commerce or businesses should be triggered with hybrid experiences; the community must be assembled with business to business approaches to satisfy the needs of the consumers and finally, the convenience which redresses the easiness of buying e-experience (visiting the websites, offers, discounts and many more).

## 5. Conclusion

The key to managing VUCA can be breaking down the elements of VUCA and identifying the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous situation prevalent for a particular business. Also handling it according to the need of the situation. Johansen has proposed a possible framework to tackle and manage the VUCA threat for any business and it is named VUCA prime (Ghabour, 2020).

Indian entrepreneurs and digital marketers are likely to see an influx of requests from brands all over the world as they make their journey into the virtual terrains. It's a moment of reckoning, one that digital marketers and developers in India are more than ready to embrace.

The risk of physically going to the market during current times has made even the technologically unaware familiar with online shopping. And only now are they realizing the sheer

advantages of being able to order everything from a book to a water purifier from the safety of their homes (Balis, 2021).

While the plan was there before, the moment to deliver has arrived now. That is because marketing trends at the moment are not just calling for a transformation but a digital revolution.

While doing this research paper researchers face a few limitations like a lack of adequate updated data from the company website for their current marketing strategy. Apart from this, there is a lack of enough literature to support the change in Integrated Marketing Communication theory in the VUCA world during the Covid pandemic and how it applies to Indian customers.

Future studies can be done in empirical research methods to support the theory of the digital integrated marketing communication model. Further, research is also possible in exploring how brands of specific sectors follow different integrated marketing communication strategies to influence consumer purchasing behavior.

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## Formation the Media Literacy of Culture and Arts Universities' Students in the Process of Analyzing the Interactive Environment

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### Abstract

The article presents various approaches to the general problem of media literacy developing in the context of the students preparation. The authors present a review of current Russian and foreign publications that consider the structure of media literacy of culture and arts universities students in the context of key competencies. The analysis enabled to view professional activities in the system of integrated media educational component in culture and art universities. Key concepts of media literacy are associated with ways to master it. The media competencies are distinguished by their indicators, which are acceptable for the field of integrated media education arts. A real model of the formation of students' media literacy was built on the basis of media competence and the relationship between methods of analyzing media value practice. By authors established that in the system of integrated art education, the main goal is to select media concepts, adapt them, choose media and bind them to forms of stage action. The structure of students media literacy is determined key, basic and special. The key competencies determine the nature of perception and media communication, perceptual and interactive components of media literacy. Basic competencies come to the cognitive component of media literacy.

**Keywords:** media literacy interactive environment, media literacy, culture and arts universities, media competence, theater, stage space.

### 1. Introduction

It is quite obvious that in modern conditions the importance of integrating media education is increasingly growing as the part of the competencies of culture and art students. At the same time, the problem of developing media literacy is aimed at skills and competencies in the process of analyzing the interactive environment. In this regard, the importance of training the students is an important part of preparation of culture and arts students. This educational direction in is a response to some time challenges in a situation, "where traditional pedagogy began to be concealed of as authoritarian and was contrasted to a hypothetical" pedagogy of support" (Kayumov, 2019).

The media pedagogical segment of educational programs can and should contribute not only to the development of critical thinking, but also to the adequately perceive the art of theater in an interactive environment. This process is not just a form of human interaction with the world of media culture (Chelysheva, 2016), but is a form of developing key basic and special competencies as well. The global goal of any formation and development of students' media literacy is to develop analytical and critical skills, subject to ensuring media competence within the framework of the

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educational system of their professional preparing. It is quite obvious that the training should take into account the peculiarities of the analysis by undergraduates of perception, their socially oriented communication and media interaction in the stage space. As a result, a new culture of perception, patterns of behavior and activity is formed, represented in the stage space. There is a relevance of the theoretical foundations connection media education with practical approaches to their inclusion in the process of vocational training of undergraduates and also prospects for the development of the potential of media literacy in the modern system of higher education in the field of culture and art.

## 2. Materials and methods

Materials of our research are academic books and articles on integrative media literacy, as well as websites. Methodology is based on theoretical framework on dialogue of culture. The materials used in the study are presented from the point of view of the unity of the theoretical foundations and practical approaches to the inclusion of media literacy in the process of professional training of the cultural and art student of university students. The research methods is based on systems, structure and comparative analysis, abstraction and concretization.

## 3. Discussion

The main problems of the human media literacy development are the basis of many studies of modern scientists in media education direction. They are presented in the researches by the works of D.A. Dondis, I. Chelysheva, A. Fedorov, G. Kolychev, A. Levitskaya, G. Mikhaleva N. Simbirtseva and others (Chelysheva, 2008; Dondis, 1974; Fedorov, 2004; Kolychev, Simbirtseva, 2016; Levitskaya, 2016; Mikhaleva, 2011).

Visual aspects of media literacy can also be analysed by D.A. Dondis, who had revealed the technological possibilities of synthesizing visual style through understanding the structure of basic elements and visual communication strategies (Dondis, 1974). Thus, a communicative approach to media literacy through visual communication was justified. However, at the same time it becomes quite obvious, "that the process of self-education begins to form from the moment of understanding one's own goal as meaningful, easily presented in the format of a visual image, emotionally colored and meeting the values of the individual" (Byundyugova et al., 2022: 322).

However, the analysis of contemporary researches and studies on the visual communication does not have the completeness of adequate and constructive communication. In this process, the civility of people and the intellectual and media level of dialogue are directly related to media literacy. In this sense, W. Potter turned out to be right by noting that "an audience at a higher level of media literacy has a higher level of understanding, management, and assessment of the media world" (Potter, 2001: 423).

At the same time, visual communications can be closely associated with the approach to socio-emotional and cognitive competencies of students, according to I. Schoon, B. Nasim and R. Cook, "in conceptualising social background", "although the associations with socio-emotional competences are less strong than those with cognitive competences" (Schoon et al., 2021).

Another point of view on media literacy in the context of media competences was put forward by A. Fedorov. It provided for a broader creative focus on the development of the ability to perceive, analyze, evaluate and create media texts and, along with this, the allocation of a reflective component: understanding the socio-cultural content and functioning of the media in the modern world, the formation of codes and representative systems (Fedorov, 2004: 67).

In the same direction, they are developing their pedagogical strategy T. Notley and M. Dezuanni, orientation on "learning across academic disciplines have the potential to reach all matriculated students" (Notley, Dezuanni, 2019; Notley, Dezuanni, 2019).

One cannot but agree with the effectiveness of developing a kind of cultural approach to the conceptua level of understanding media by students A.J.S. Cajandig, L.S. Lomibao, in the line of which was developed Computer-Aided Instructional (CAI) (Cajandig, Lomibao, 2020).

An important addition to this approach is thought Jr. Martin that fact the very inclusion of students in the process of production, perception and distribution of media products has a noticeable impact on the creative potential development (Martin, 2021).

It is important to note necessary to take into account the phenomenon of double media manipulation, which, according to N. Fitzpatrick which manifests itself in that "*the media itself can be manipulated and misled by individuals and organizations*" (Fitzpatrick, 2018: 45).

The development of critical thinking and media competence of university students is presented in the researches by A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya. They note the importance of critical assessment of media manipulations in the artistic images of cinema art in the modern world, which is included in the technology of "managing the mood of a mass audience for the benefit of certain groups" (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021: 65).

A similar experience is described by D. Buyarov, approving "as well as various tasks aimed at developing such skills as finding and extracting information from the text, the ability to integrate and interpret the text, to comprehend and evaluate the text and use the knowledge obtained from the texts for practical purposes" (Buyarov, 2023: 352).

Along with this T. Snelson developing an ethical and aesthetic fit in the perception of screen violence, affirms "this *key moment of institutional, regulatory and aesthetic transition*" (Snelson, 2018: 58), which objectively can also take place in theatrical action.

The opposite point of view takes place by S. Kalibekova, A. Kosshygulova, L. Sarsenbayeva and Z. Karakulova about "focusing on the pedagogical system and work aimed at determining the pedagogical conditions for the formation of the competence of self-organization of future students in higher education" (Kalibekova et al., 2022: 1145). At the same time I. Chelysheva established a connection between the process of forming a person's media literacy with the skills of "navigate, isolate the main thing, evaluate and analyze incoming media information," interpret it (Chelysheva, 2008: 243).

Looking at the process in the further psychological development of man, E. Shilshtein notes the key qualities formed in the sense of media literacy "that the intellectual apparatus comes to be fully formed, enabling the youngster to make a reasoned construct of his own world view, his individual system of values, and his conception of self" (Shilshtein, 2021: 50).

In the same way, the algorithm of special training in media literacy is presented by G. Kolychev and N. Simbirtseva, who see the goal of developing a media literate personality in fulfilling the productive task of creative use "of material associated with media images, not only in their functional and contextual meaning, but also within their own worldview" (Kolychev, Simbirtseva, 2016: 113).

Some scholars study the possibilities of involving connection between media literacy and personal media competence. They propose the use of the experience of teaching media literacy, based on the "British model of media education – an open pedagogical system with a complex structure and aimed at developing media literacy and media competence of citizens" (Mikhaleva, 2011: 124).

At the same time, another experience is described by P. Addai, J.O. Sarfo, I. Okyere, B. Kumordzie, meaning that a necessary condition for the quality of education is the fact that "higher educational institutions must create student satisfaction to sustain students' loyalty" (Addai et al., 2023: 331). Consequently, the media competence and degree of satisfaction with the education are closely related to each other.

Following the principles of the open British model of media education, A. Levitskaya notes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to the development of mass media literacy cultivated in Canada: "the competence to critically analyze and evaluate media text, relying on gender, ethnic and class representations," while relying on audience research, globalization of mass media, marketing strategies in mass culture, innovations in computer literacy" (Levitskaya, 2016: 45).

Questions of training students of humanitarian universities for professional activities and integrated media education based on the concepts of media literacy are the most important area of scientific research of many scientists. Among them are works written by I. Chelysheva (Chelysheva, 2008), N. Chicherina (Chicherina, 2012), A. Dolgireva (Dolgireva et al., 2022), A. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2004), L. Gzach (Gzach, 2019), O. Gorbatkova (Gorbatkova, 2014), A. Hart (Hart, 1997), A. Hajar (Hajar, 2019), K. Krebs (Krebs, 2020), A. Levitskaya (Levitskaya, 2016), E. Vovk (Vovk, 2021), A. Zharkova (Zharkova, 2021) and other scholars.

The most common approach to cross-cultural communication in the process of end-to-end learning, aimed at developing professional competencies, develops K.S. Krebs, the essence of which is that "across academic disciplines have the potential to reach all matriculated students, preparing them for diversity in their immediate communities, the international reach of their professions, and their responsibilities as citizens in the world" (Krebs, 2020: 45).

It seems that at the level of pre-professional training of students of theatrical specialties, the development of the so-called "social interactive skills (i.e. intangible benefits)" (Hajar, 2019).

The addition above named position towards students as amateurs is the view of L. Gzach related to "*visual aesthetics of these films while placing them in their social, political, and historical contexts*". At the same time, the author assigns an important role to the moment associated with the fact that "*each discussion is enhanced by technical notes and the analyses are also juxtaposed with personal reflections by artist*" (Gzach, 2019: 179).

Modern scholars note the acceleration of the introduction of information technologies in various spheres of education and culture, which forms a completely different way of life, changes the worldview of students, mobilizes the process of accelerated development (Zharkova, 2021: 198). For this reason, the concept of continuous improvement of students media education is being formed. The result of this process is an increase in the "levels of media competence/media literacy, which makes it possible to constantly increase the degree of perception, interpretation and analysis of cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and ethical media information" (Fedorov, 2007: 77).

In the other hand, training specialists in the field of culture and art is working with teachers. In this sense, it is necessary to improve teachers' understanding and skills in digital literacy, which allows "to introducing transversal skills, which in turn can have a significant impact on the transition to a competence-based learning approach and content" (Afrilyasant et al., 2022: 284). Besides, it is necessary to improve teachers' understanding and skills in digital literacy, which allows to introducing transversal skills. This turn "can have a significant impact on the transition to a competence-based learning approach and content" (Afrilyasant et al., 2022: 291). Besides L. Saptono asserts "importance of evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching, personal competencies, and pedagogical-didactical competencies in media literacy on themselves" (Saptono, 2022: 552).

The development of this theory is the analysis methods of integrating media education into extracurricular activities of modern students, which are aimed to improving the creative of students and "key vectors of their successful development of today's information field" (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023: 43).

A number of scholars also note the importance of creating a cultural universe in the information and educational space of media education in the process of developing cultural heritage and developing intercultural dialogue (Dolgireva et al., 2022).

Wherein the key task is "conducting a cross-cultural analysis of the academic engagement of students from Russian and other foreign countries" (Chelysheva, 2019: 665). This approach allows students, like schoolchildren, according to I. Dvoretzkaya, "forming a common vision of the use of information and communication technologies in the educational process" (Dvoretzkaya, 2001: 107). Besides, the opportunity arises points to the close connection between media criticism and media education in the process of their synthesis, proposing to emphasize in the media education of students on "stimulating creative abilities to perceive, analyze and interpret media text" (Gorbatkova, 2014: 118).

A study of the literature on corporate training issues shows that analyse the consistency of learning personalisation as a concept and the main characteristics that define carry out dominant components of teachers' personalising actions: attention to uniqueness, curriculum flexibility and mentoring» (Urraza et al., 2023: 413).

It also requires that "the division of the discursive personalities into three basic groups – participant, attractor, creator – is presented as optimal regarding the basic needs of modern society. A values-based approach within discourse studies extends the neo-anthropocentric paradigm in modern linguistics as well as contributes to the socio-cognitive approach to discourse studies" (Skrynnik, 2023: 42). In this aspect can also be analysed problem E. Vovk, affirming the importance of initiating the personal development of students "in the form of information coding skills and in the search for new meanings and mastery" (Vovk, 2021: 72).

In this vein, the statement of T. Notley and M. Dezuanni is true regarding the dubious information on social networks, which can be extrapolated to scenic practice : "Our analysis finds that while social media is one of young people's preferred sources of news, they are not confident about spotting fake news online and many rarely or never check the source of news stories" (Notley, Dezuanni, 2019: 689).

A similar point of view is expressed by L. Robinson, who sees in the festival process unstable interactions allow us to rethink the network as an assemblage of events and individuals" (Robinson, 2016: 75), which also takes place in the theatrical movement.

In particular, N. Chicherina distinguishes four components of media literacy: motivational, cognitive, behavioral and value-sense. At the same time, the cognitive component of media literacy, according to the author, "includes knowledge grouped by key concepts of media literacy, process, context, media text and media presentations." It becomes obvious and does not raise objections to the author's position that "media literacy can be considered as one of the key competencies that determine effective interaction with media texts" (Chicherina, 2012: 57). Developing the concept of media literacy, I. Zimnyaya connects the tasks of mastering it by students with the development of value-meaning orientation in the media (Zimnyaya, 2003, 2003: 34).

Within the above competencies, it is appropriate to use the R. Aitken program, which includes "offers an instructive contrast to conventional accounts of social reconstruction and of the history of the "social" as an analytical category" (Aitken, 2019: 331).

Many authors define the structure of media literacy as a system of knowledge and skills based on a certain set of key concepts of media literacy. The most common version of the system of key concepts proposed by the British Film Institute includes categories such as media agencies, media categories, media technologies, media languages, media audiences and media presentations (Hart, 1997: 210).

Thus, R. Aufderheid also emphasizes media literacy on the value-and-supply component, which "is formed on the basis of the basic conceptual provisions of media literacy, which are a kind of code, a set of postulates that determine the" ideological basis "of the process of forming critical autonomy." It is especially noted that "media texts are not only constructs, but, in turn, they construct reality" (Aufderheide, 1997: 80).

It seems that the position of C.J.T Wai, E.E. Kemps, Y. Manor, M. Shin, M. Juvenin are a clear progress in overcoming online addiction in viewing and theatrical performances. In this sense, the authors are right that "measured online media use with media addiction scales than as amount of time spent using online media" (Wai et al., 2022: 107).

The analysis of the literature showed the interest of scientists in the problem of using media literacy in teaching. There are not enough publications devoted to the use of media literacy in the institutes of culture in the learning process in general, and the use of this digital technology in theater training, in particular.

#### 4. Results

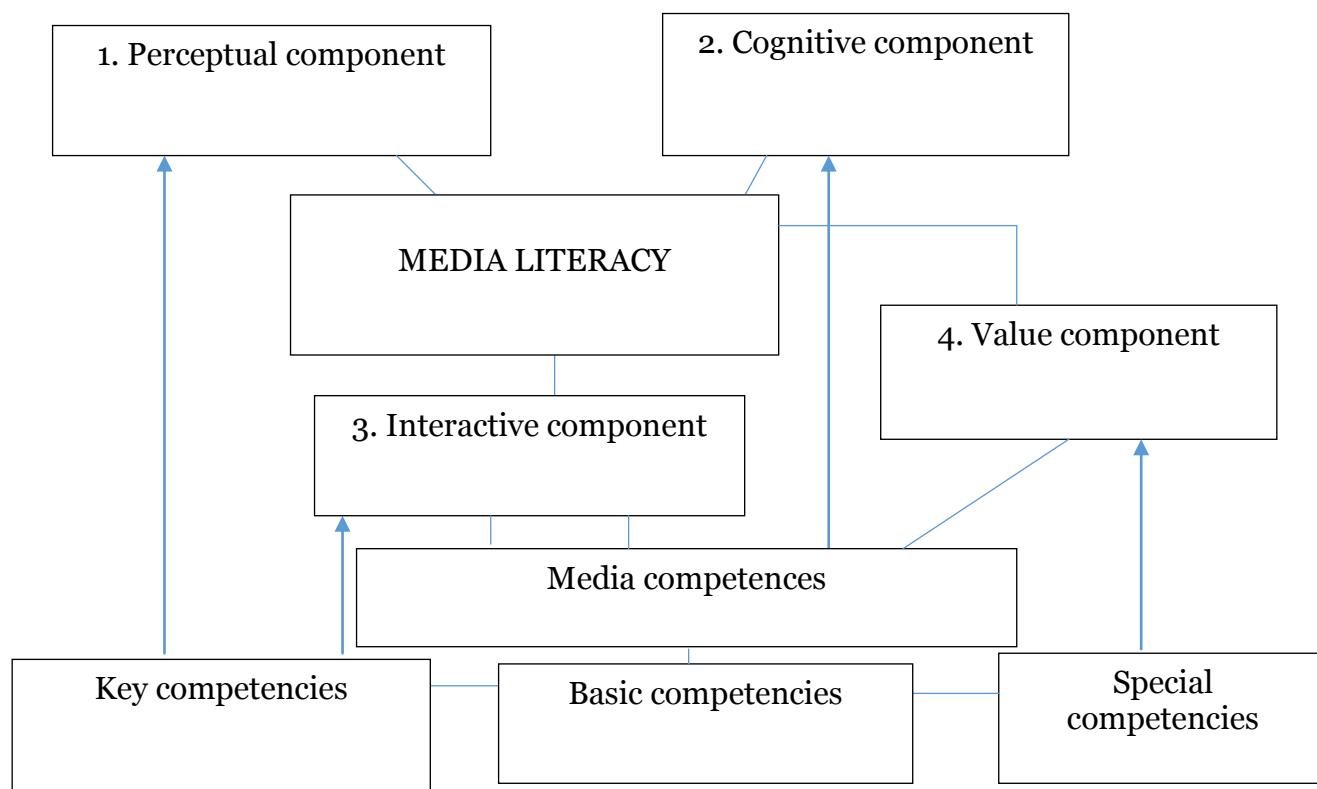
Media education as the part of training students in universities of culture and arts includes professional and integrated branches. In particular, theatrical education requires an integrated approach to media training. It is closely related to the analysis of digital technologies in the theatre media environment. There are many various ways formation the media literacy of culture and arts students universities in the process of analyzing the interactive environment.

The first way is to integrate an art educational into media content. In this system (theatrical system) the main goal is not to create a media context, but to select media concepts, adapting them, choose media and bind them to forms of stage action. The second way is to hybridize the content and form of the stage space using an active media environment. Therefore, here we should talk about the media educational component of non-profile art education.

The structure of media literacy of culture and arts students in universities in the context of professional competencies is determined by such types of competencies as key, basic and special. At the same time, key competencies determine the nature of perception and media communication and through them perceptual and interactive components of media literacy. Basic competencies of students of universities of culture and arts come to the cognitive component of media literacy. Starting from the key concepts of media literacy in the cognitive component, includes process, context, media text and media representations (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023; Kačínová, 2019; Vrabec, Bôtošová, 2020). We come to the conclusion that the above structure of media literacy can be extended to other components of media literacy. Special competencies, the most acceptable for students of non-core artistic specialties and directions, are aimed at the content of the value-meaning component of media literacy (Figure 1).

According to the figure, media literacy includes four components: perceptual, cognitive, interactive and value. Its formation is based on the development of the corresponding four media competencies. Its formation is based on the development of the corresponding four media competencies. The main role is played by the development of key competencies aimed at the perceptual component of media literacy and media environments. The basic component of media

competencies is aimed to the cognitive and interactive components of media literacy, which looks like mastering the content of performances and interaction in the media environment. A special component of media competence goes to the value component of media literacy, which determines the understanding of the significance of the synthesis of media and real images of the performance.



**Fig. 1.** Structure of media literacy of students of universities of culture and arts in the context of key competencies

At the same time, adapting various methods of mastering media literacy to integrated forms of forming the media competence of students of the specialty "Theater Art," we get the following scheme for including these methods in the basic concepts of media literacy (Table 1).

1. The process of finding new meanings of the media forms the semantic field in the performance and the media environment and the media text, concluded in the perception of viewers and media images. Forming the media content of the performance here lies in the problematic presentation of the means of embodying the stage plan.

2. Adapting the process-analytical abilities of the media vision and stage images, a functional context of media images and a media text based on the creative use of media-like material are formed. The media representation here is aimed at designing the media form of the performance.

3. In the direction of stimulating creative abilities to hybrid perception of the scene, the subtext of the stage action is triggered, aimed to the media representation expressed in the game modeling of media interaction.

4. Finally, the process of mastering heuristic methods of studying the idea of a performance based on traditional text and context is represented during the assessment of the interpretation of media text.

As can be seen from Table 1, the concept of "process" in the structure of media literacy is aimed not only at detecting meanings, but also at the productively developing hybrid perception of stage action. This type of integration has special features related to the integration of digital technologies in the theater space (Spivak, Genova, 2022: 42).

At the same time, the mechanism of motivation for creativity based on stimulating creative abilities is triggered. Within the framework of the concept of "context" based on a certain semantic field, it is possible to identify the functions of the contexts of media images, which expands the possibilities of their perception and ultimately leads to the study of the subtext of stage action.



The concept of "media text" is aimed at determining the nature of symbiosis of viewers and media images based on the creative use of media-like material that formed media text. In the problematic field of the concept of "media presentation," means of embodying the stage plan arise, which allows one to design the media design of the performance. This is followed by the game use of media interaction modeling with an assessment of the quality of the level of interpretation of the media text.

**Table 1.** Key concepts of media literacy and ways to master it

№	Key concepts of media literacy and ways to master it			
	Search for new media meanings	Context	Media text	Media presentations
1.	Search for new media meanings	Definition of the semantic field of the performance in the media environment	Determining the symbiosis of viewers and media images	Problematic representation of the means of embodying the stage plan
2.	Adaptation of the analytical abilities of the media vision of stage images	Identification of media image context functions (G. Kolychev, N. Simbirtseva)	Identifikation von medialen Bildkontextfunktionen (G. Kolychev, N. Simbirtseva)	Design der medialen Formung der Performance
3.	Stimulating creativity to hybrid scene perception	Exploring the subtext of stage action	-	Game simulation of media interaction
4.	Mastering heuristic ways to study the idea of the performance	-	-	Evaluation of media text interpretation

Modern science notes the peculiarities of the general manifestations of personality media competence, which includes "the totality of its motives, knowledge, skills, abilities (indicators: motivational, contact, informational, perceptual, interpretive/evaluative, practical-operational/activity, creative), contributing to the selection, use, critical analysis, assessment, creation and transfer of media texts in various types, forms and genres, analysis of complex processes of media functioning in society" (Fedorov, 2004: 45).

The above indicators of media competencies, as well as the existing federal state educational standards in the field of culture and art, make it possible to identify media competencies which are acceptable for the field of integrated medical education in universities of culture and arts.

Motivational indicator is an ability to distinguish and analyze visual concepts, to give argumentation of media thoughts. The contact indicator is expressed in updating interest in media educational projects, determining intertextual connections, the presence or absence of stereotypical representations and ways to influence the audience. The information indicator is manifested in state standards in expanding knowledge about the world of media culture, as well as in successfully mastering the information field and the ability to search for information in various media sources. The perceptual indicator is not characteristic of integrated media education, but nevertheless it is aimed at forming information of coding skills.

The interpretation/evaluation indicator is manifested in the development of media project thinking of students. Practical-operational/activity we cannot think without critical analysis and assessment of media texts related to stage action. In turn, the creative indicator is aimed at forming the new iconic levels of media of various semantic saturation. The basis for building a pedagogical model of media education is invested, as Sergey I. Belentsov rightly believes that "the creative and constructive mode of civic activity of the younger generation at the conceptual level" (Belentsov, 2023: 342).

Thus, there is a real model for the formation of media literacy based on media competence, building on the basis of the relationship of methods for analyzing media value practice with components of media composition and methods for mastering media literacy in integrated media education (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Media literacy model based on media competence

<b>№</b>	<b>Methods of analyzing media-value practice</b>	<b>Components of media literacy</b>	<b>Methods of mastering media literacy</b>	<b>Media competence components</b>
1.	Analysis of stage adaptation of multimedia technologies	Cognitive component: process	Adaptation of the analytical abilities of the media vision of stage images	Actualization of interest in media educational projects; ability to search for information in various media sources
2.	Understanding the nature of entering augmented reality	Cognitive component: process	Finding New Media Meanings	Increasing Knowledge of the World of Media Culture successful development of the information field
3.	Rethinking the functions of screen images on the stage	Cognitive component: media presentations	Stimulating creativity to hybrid scene perception	Mastering the argumentation of media thoughts.
4.	Analysis of hybrid context	Cognitive component: media presentations	Mastering heuristic ways to study the idea of the performance	Overall Media Text Score
5.	Character analysis Media modeling of the scene	Cognitive component: media representations	Game simulation of media interaction	Formation of information coding skills
6.	Analysis of the balance of visual technologies with the images of the performance	Cognitive component: media representations	Problematic representation of the means of embodying the stage plan	Mastering new iconic levels of media of different semantic saturation
7.	Analysis of dynamics multimedia vision stage space	Perceptual component: context	Definition of the semantic field of the performance in the media environment	Highlight and analyze visual concepts
8.	Analysis of perceptions of theatrical imitations and illusions	Perceptual component: context	Identification of media image context functions (G. Kolychev, N. Simbirtseva)	Define intertextual links
9.	Media Impact Analysis	Perceptual component: context	Exploring the subtext of stage action	Identify ways to impact audiences
10.	Analysis of the feedback value of audience participation using media	Interactive component: media presentations	Creative use of media-like material (G. Kolychev, N. Simbirtseva)	Determination of the presence or absence of stereotypical representations
11.	Identification of the emotional environment of communication of the media composition of the performance	Interactive component: media presentations	Determining the nature of symbiosis of viewers and media images.	

№	Methods of analyzing media-value practice	Components of media literacy	Methods of mastering media literacy	Media competence components
12.	Critical statements of the film adaptation of fragments of theatrical action	Value-sense component: media text	Evaluation of Media Text Interpretation	Critical analysis of media text
13.	Identification of the value of current tasks of using information technology in the theater	Value component	Projecting of the play's media format	

Proposed model of media literacy formation on the basis of media competence is built on the basis of interrelation of methods of analysis of media value practice with components of media competence and methods of mastering media literacy in integrated media education.

## 5. Conclusion

Thus, in the system of integrated art education (in this case, theatrical), unlike professional, the main goal is not to create a media context, but to select media concepts, adapt them, choose media and bind them to forms of stage action, followed by hybridization of the content and form of the stage space using an active media environment.

The structure of media literacy of students of universities of culture and arts in the context of key competencies is determined by such types of competencies as key, basic and special. At the same time, key competencies determine the nature of perception and media communication and, through them, perceptual and interactive components of media literacy. Basic competencies of students of universities of culture and arts come to the cognitive component of media literacy.

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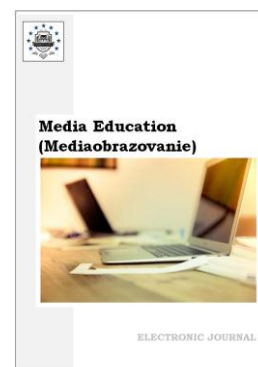
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## Criteria for the Necessity of Anglicisms in Modern Media

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### Abstract

One of the ecological criteria is a useful variety of linguistic means of expression and a plenty of synonymic rows. In recent decades synonymic rows have been actively replenished by borrowing anglicisms. References to 2025, when new high-quality dictionaries with a list of anglicisms that have no analogues in native linguistic means and therefore allowed to use are unlikely to be correct. If these are standard dictionaries formed by analogy with explanatory ones or dictionaries of foreign words, they will not help solve the problem, and it is also impossible to hope that a "small monograph" with a list of connotations, pragmatic co-meanings, etc., will be written about every anglicism.

Therefore, the urgent problem of the article is to identify in general criteria for the necessity of anglicisms. Of course, it is possible and necessary to talk about the benefits (or lack thereof) for each definite word, but some generalizations can be made. This is exactly what is done in this article. Based on the material of modern media texts, it is shown which types of anglicisms and why fully correspond to ecological thinking and can be considered not as a harm, but as a means of replenishing the Russian language. The methods of analysis were chosen based on the integration of deduction and induction, traditional for the humanities, with the methods of sociolinguistics, cognitive science and linguopragmatics.

**Keywords:** language contacts, language policy, borrowings, semantic, pragmatic content, ecological thinking, linguoecology.

### 1. Introduction

The consideration of anglicisms in Russian and other European languages is devoted to voluminous literature that an exhaustive bibliography becomes simply impossible. There are some works where the problem of borrowing is directly connected with the principles of ecological linguistics (Brusenskaya, Kulikova, 2018; Kulikova, 2022; Kulikova et al., 2023; Skovorodnikov, 2019); for more information about the categories of ecological linguistics and ecological thinking, it would be useful to see: (Hodges, 2013: 93-103; Steffensen, 2014: 6-25).

The discussion of the problem of foreign language influence on the Russian language got a new impulse after amendments to the law "On the State Language" adopted by the State Duma in the second and third readings in February 2023. The article attempts to generalize the analysis of this problem in the light of the new Russian legislation on language.

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## 2. Materials and methods

Based on the material of modern media texts, it is shown which types of anglicisms and why fully correspond to ecological thinking and can be considered not as a harm, but as a means of replenishing the Russian language. The methods of analysis were chosen based on the integration of deduction and induction, traditional for the humanities, with the methods of sociolinguistics, cognitive science and linguopragmatics.

## 3. Discussion

According to our observations, the prevailing trend of recent times in the “eternal” discussion about the measure of foreign-language words has become an indication of the undesirable redundant number of anglicisms.

For example, this thought: “... Could you explain to me why totally in our cities it is necessary to write on the signs “café” in English instead of “kafe” in Russian and such a discordant word “shop” instead of “magazine” (shop in Russian)? Not to mention the hordes of *franchaizingi* (in Russian – plural form of *franchising*) and *merchendaizingi* (in Russian – plural form of *merchandising*) occupied our media” (Agranovsky, 2023: 3). Also, about this phenomenon: “Unrestrained borrowing (mainly from the English language), which was characteristic until recently, contradicts the ideas about the optimal development of the national linguistic culture ... “import substitution”, which should be understood not as a global rejection of everything foreign, but a more balanced, functionally substantiated use of these resources” (Brusenskaya, Kotaeva, 2022: 24).

Therefore, the acute question arises: what are these reasonable criteria for the use of foreign language resources in the Russian language?

One of the criteria is well known, and in the terminology of the lacunarity theory it is designated as the elimination of conceptual lacunae. In this logic, the avalanche-like influx of anglicisms into, for example, the sphere of economics is the elimination of lacunae, since the traditional terminological apparatus was not adapted to express the new conceptual content, that is the categories of the market economy. Of course, there were also costs: a lot has been said about using foreign language terminology without reasonable necessity, only for reasons of fashion and prestige, but in general it was a necessary and beneficial process of creating a terminological base for a new science.

No one denies anglicisms as short names (there is only a cumbersome descriptive name in native language) for new realities that have come into life together with the established name of English origin (about this: Shilina et al., 2023). But we will focus on less obvious examples when the benefit of borrowings is not so obvious, but, in our opinion, very significant.

Thus, there are so many anglicisms in the usual media practice (Boulianne, 2019; Deligiaouri, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Jang, Kim, 2018; Kang et al., 2022; Kayal, Saha, 2023; Lane, 2020; Langer, Gruber, 2021; Osipovskaya, Savelyeva, 2023; Shin et al., 2022) that it contradicts reasonable ideas about the measure of all things, for example: “*Kreativnoe kom'yuniti ehkspatov na Bali (The creative expat community in Bali) has been developing for decades*” (Dovger, 2023: 10). It is a plenty of anglicisms that has given rise to numerous Internet wits to compose texts just with English words but only prepositions and conjunctions (and even not always) represent the original units.

And after the adoption of amendments to the law on language, media personalities amicably drew attention to this. Political expert Dmitry Drobnitsky in the broadcast “Evening with Vladimir Solovyov” (TV channel “Russia”) on May 15, 2023 expressed his opinion as follows: ...*this, as they would say recently, is messedzh* (message)...(Drobnitsky, 2023).

That is, the word that V. Novikov included in his first “Dictionary of Buzzwords” (Novikov, 2005: 70-71), is being displaced as undesirable. Meanwhile, V. Novikov noted that this word has a “vast semantic range: from a household remark to a spiritual message to humanity” and even in the everyday meaning of ‘message’ it is useful as enriching the synonymic raw, creating speech flexibility and variability, increasing the degree of communicative freedom.

Using a metaphor, “this is the main essence that needs to be isolated from an extensive text”, and this is a new and relevant meaning, however, as V. Novikov writes, “it used to be called an idea, but the poor Greek word in our country has been greatly vulgarized, so it's better to give it a rest” (Novikov, 2005: 71). So, we think, the political expert Drobnitsky hastened to get rid of this useful acquisition of the Russian language. For example, a more successful replacement:

*“Exchange of sofas” is the Russified name of kauchserfing (couchsurfing). This is a kind of independent tourism in which, through a special online service, you can exchange housing for a while or find a free overnight stay (Barannikova, 2023: 12).*

*“I think it is unnecessary to erect an “iron curtain” between Russian and other languages, but excessive lexical import sometimes causes irritation. I just want to cry out: my native Russian, why do you need to become so English. It is impossible to live from any “developer” (developers), and even the usual produktsiya (the word of Latin origin, in English – production) are now being converted into “prodakshn” (production) in the Saxon manner. I hope that over time there will be a natural deportation of illegal migrant words. And first of all, with the wish “good riddance to bad rubbish!”, I would say to such words as “selebriti” (celebrity)” (Novikov, 2016: 243)*

In the newspaper *Soviet Russia* under the heading "I read in the “SR”, which presents readers' responses, there is a note “Yaroslavl deputy proposed replacing the word “mayor” with “gorodnichii” (archaic synonym for mayor)” (Yaroslavskij..., 2023: 4), which indicates the strong associative links of the name “gorodnichii” (archaic synonym for mayor) with Gogol's Skvoznik-Dmukhanovskii in the *Revizor* (inspector in tsarist Russia). Thus: a foreign word turns to be more acceptable than our own one. It is known that any word existing in the language for a long time inevitably acquires connotations and pragmatic co-meanings, and “gorodnichii” for a person of Russian culture is a collective character of the state power of Gogol's Russia. It is a very unpleasant character.

Jokes on the topic of linguistic import substitution have become common: Within the framework of linguistic import substitution, the “Comedy Club: will be renamed “Smeshno – I tochka” (“Funny – period”) (V ramkakh..., 2023: 1).

Of course, we can point out many cases when the Russian language do not need borrowings. For example: *“...borrowed words began to grate on ears more strongly. Well, why do you need to go to the hospital for a chek-ap (check-up) if there is a well-understood medosmotr (medical examination)? Or why do you need to advertise a trip (trip) if it's an ordinary puteshestvie (travelling)? Or to prolongirovat' (prolong) the contract in the bank, if it can be simply prodlen (extended)?” (Arbatskaya, 2023: 10);*

*“And I would not trust firms that tempt customers with a low prais (price). Otherwise, you will lose both money and time, and that is important you will lose nerves, – commented realtor Nikita Ozerovskiy” (Berezina, 2023: 6).*

These examples are akin to when, instead of “bilet” (ticket), it is unclear why, for example, young people say “tiket” (ticket), and instead of “stol” (table) – “tehibl” (table). If this is not for a language game, then, of course, such uses do not cause anything but bewilderment. Now we would like to analyse typical cases when borrowing should be recognized not only as appropriate, but also enriching the Russian language culture.

#### 4. Results

We should note: it is difficult to wholly agree with the statement that «elements of the Russian language of different levels and different complexity are being replaced by English analogues for no apparent reason» (Kravchenko, 2021: 264; Baranova et al., 2022; Skvortsova et al., 2022). Of course, there are cases like “tiket” (ticket) and “tehibl” (table), but more often we just do not know how to determine the reason for the popularity of English analogues, because we do not pay enough attention not only to the pragmatic comeanings of new linguistic units, but also to the semantic nuances: “kheit” (hate) is not real, but Internet hate”, “feik” (fake) is not just lie, but a lie thrown into the Internet” (Krongauz, 2021 : 7), as well as (Van Duyn, Collier, 2019; Wenzel, 2019).

Only the lazy did not say that the word “kreativnyi” (creative) is not needed if there is a good Russian “tvorchestvo” (creativity).

Vl. Novikov wrote about the word “kreativnyi” (creative) “an adjective met with hostility by many» (Novikov, 2016: 127). Just few people saw the difference connected with the high pragmatics of the word “tvorchestvo” in Russian (creativity), which prevents its everyday use. It means, it is impossible for a person with good taste to say in Russian: *I am in my “tvorchestvo” (creativity)... “Bulat Okudzhava, sensitive to the language, reacted ironically to questions about “tvorcheskii (creative) plans” in the last years of his life: “Tvorchestvo (creativity) is with Alena Apina, and I just work” (Novikov, 2016: 127). That is, the more mundane essence of the word “kreativnyi” (creative) (for example, “kreativnyi klass” (creative class), idiom “kreativ poshel”*



(creative went) and so on) makes it necessary and important in the palette of appropriate designations.

The specifics of the pragmatic potential ensured the expansion of “ing forms”. Such forms are not characterized by fixed stylistic colouring and are not markers of the actual written speech. This differs them from Russian deverbatives, the more it applies to negatively evaluated clerical (that is why they have traditionally been used as a source of the comic – *neprileplenie marki* (the non-attachment of the mark) in the text by A. Chekhov, etc.). They are more dynamic than their Russian equivalents, and in some cases they much better express both semes – objectness and processality; there are several thousands of them in modern Russian, and therefore it is correct to say about the russification of the suffix -ing in words denoting the observed processality (*shopping* (shopping), *bullying* (bullying), *branding* (branding), *trolling* (trolling), *cleaning* (cleaning), etc.).

Anglicisms have a clear pragmatics of novelty, which is manifested in the system of their evaluations by the authors of texts: “*And now, in modern terms, we are waiting for an upgrade of performances. Every performance is a living matter. It gets either better or worse. We don't let the performances get worse. They should get better, including at the expense of the artists who are included in the production*” (Shablinskaya, 2021: 19).

The Russian word *neudachnik* (loser) is replaced by a *luzer* (loser), because, according to I. Levontina (Levontina, 2017), in the Russian word “sympathy is superfluous”, and to express the idea “You did not achieve and it's your own fault, very bad” a loser is more suitable. “*Klining* (cleaning) is sold at exorbitant prices compared to national *uborka* (cleaning), that is, anglicism precisely sounds stylish. It is already a pragmatic co-meaning” (Gutorova, 2016: 11), in this case we can talk about differences between borrowings and native Russian lexemes in linguistic and pragmatic characteristics, which provides some commercial effect. For example:

- *I have been using the services of this agency for a long time, – said Fedor ...the agency always supplies us with good women. Excellent wording: “postavlyayet zhenshchin” (supplies women). Such a light-version of a brothel (Stolyarova, 2022: 9). It is difficult to imagine a Russian equivalent here. Of course, the fact that many anglicisms today have the pragmatics of novelty and emphasized modernity does not provide them with eternal life in this quality. For example: “...we must not forget that every fashion is fraught with overkill, tastelessness, and a person should use a buzzword, especially a foreign one, not in order to be distinguished, but only in order to better express his/her thoughts to the interlocutor. It should be done with sense and taste, just as it is necessary to be able to wear fashionable clothes” (Interview..., 2023: 10).*

Another important sign of the relevance of anglicism is formed figurative meanings. Taking into consideration only the initial conceptual meaning, a “*khot-dog*” (hot dog) is a typical balast, since there is a Russian analogue – *sosiska v teste* (a sausage in the dough). But in Russian, the word has got the meaning of ‘second-rate, low quality’, and not only in relation to material objects, but also in relation to works of art:

“*As “Anna Karenina” for dummies, the book by Basinsky is impeccable, but it is not necessary to pass it off as a special investigation by a wise detective of non-existent riddles. ... So, the true story of Anna Karenina was written by Leo Tolstoy. And Pavel Basinsky presented some information about that, which, of course, cannot be blamed, unless, of course, not to give out “khot-dog” (hot dog) for fua-gra (foie gras)*” (Moskvina, 2022: 15).

The word *fast-fud* (fast food) has undergone similar semantic transformations. In its direct meaning, it had the reasons that it is shorter than *setevoi restoran bystrogo pitaniya* (a fast food chain restaurant) or the products of such a restaurant. For example, figurative meaning: “*Sometimes so-called modern look can turn art into fast-fud (fast food)*” (Babalova, 2023: 11).

There are also figurative meanings that have a chance to become regular: “*Hamlet*” is an *inexhaustible play, every time and every scene offers its own version of reading, and this “kvest” (quest) has been for many centuries*” (Moskvina, 2021: 15);

- If a woman in such a situation keeps her head, then she will help you in difficult situation! – Malosoltsev appealed to head before *sdat' v lizing* (to give in lease) his hand and heart (Kolomeysky, 2021: 32);

And, at last, another feature of the usefulness of borrowing is its word-formation productivity (*laitovyi* (light – adjective), *laitovo* (it is light – state category word), *feikovyi* (fake – adjective), *draivovyi* (driving), *kreativchik* (diminutive from creative with suffix -chik), *frikokratiya* (freakocracy), etc.)

Aspiring to the periphery of the Russian language, the word *tineidzher* (teenager) has a derivative expressing a very important notion concerning the spiritual life of the country in the texts by Yu. Polyakov. It is *tinehidzherizatsiya obshchestva* (the tastes and habits of teenagers dominate in society), and it is impossible to choose any Russian analogue here.

## 5. Conclusion

It is known that the modern media discourse is a dominant communicative sphere in which different linguistic innovations fixing the world picture dynamics are presented. Media texts clearly demonstrate how diverse modern anglicisms included in all these processes are used. The different means of expression created at the expense of them does not contradict, but, on the contrary, correspond to the parameters of ecological thinking. The opinion that “borrowing is in some sense a betrayal” (Moniava, 2016: 299) “borrowing is in some sense a betrayal” is true only in relation to a very limited number of uses.

Neologization of the language due to anglicisms is carried out rapidly, but several factors can ensure a long life in the host language: elimination of conceptual and pragmatic lacunae with the help of anglicisms (and the pragmatics of novelty and modernity is especially important), the development of stable figurative meanings based on the Russian language, word-formation productivity. An extra tolerant attitude towards anglicisms will give way (under the influence of social factors, including as a result of the adopted amendments to the law on language) to a more balanced, deliberate and functionally motivated use of anglicisms, wholly corresponding to ecological thinking.

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## Digitalization of Education: Analysis of Engagement and Socio-Demographic Features of Online Learning Participants

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### Abstract

The emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic required instructors and students to switch to distance learning. Although higher education institutions had used digital technologies way before the COVID-19 pandemic, necessity caused by long-term lockdowns showed that digitalization became a part of teaching and learning process. Higher education professors took advantage of digital technology to deliver their educational services with no physical contact between instructors and students. Many of them transferred from traditional and blended pedagogy to fully virtual learning and distant course delivery. The purpose is to consider educational environment rapid transformation, but also to analyze shortcomings of completely digital learning and the impact it has on students and instructors. To understand how they coped with the transition to learning in digital format, we studied how they feel about it. Using the questionnaire, we found two different groups of people in education: the first was more interested in digitalization and successfully coped with the tasks of online learning, and the second scored lower in both of these areas. When compared in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics, as well as assessing the relationship between each socio-demographic marker and engagement in coping, it was found that instructors and students did better with digitalization and online learning if they had had previous experience in blended education. The conducted research was based on the methodology of data collection and analysis, gives a broad overview of how technological innovations overcome limited space and time in students education. Diversified educational resources are created by digital technologies implementation in education various aspects and spheres. The article is concluded with a discussion of the problems that arise and ways and methods of their solution. Distance learning has both advantages and disadvantages, but it is definitely here to stay.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, distance learning, digitalization, online learning, author's copyright courses.

### 1. Introduction

In spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the education system disrupting the learning of more than 80 % of students worldwide and upending educators' lives. As higher education institutions tried to provide continuity of learning, instructors and students were forced to appeal to distance learning with no time to get ready for it. To understand how they coped with this transition, we focused on two key issues in our research: the participation of instructors in

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distance learning and students' coping strategies with the forced digitalization of educational material and distance learning in general. Although it was stated that the transition to online learning went well under the circumstances of the emergency, most of the respondents faced obstacles, such as insufficiently developed digital teaching materials, long adaptation to the distance learning model, insufficiently developed infrastructure, psychological and pedagogical factors of online learning (stress due to self-isolation, maladaptation, inability to organize personal and study time, etc.), personal and interpersonal contexts of educational interaction, including student performance assessment and final certification. In addition, it is necessary to mention the insufficiency of using the available technological tools and various training modes. Digitalization is a transition from the real to the virtual, from the physical to the digital space, that is, the introduction of digital technologies into various aspects of society such as the economy, education, public administration and others. Digitization in the field of education can include various multimedia and multimodal modes such as graphics, audio texts, video and animation (Makarova, 2018).

Four aspects of digitalization are usually discussed: (1) the use of the latest technologies, (2) the role of the teacher in the presentation of educational material, (3) the approach to the educational process and the final product on the part of students, and (4) the involvement of the target audience in the learning process (Camilleri, 2021). Digitalization is more than just another "fashionable topic" that will pass, the "eternal values" of education as the most stable social institution cannot remain the same. The modern education system is changing under the influence of changes in society caused not only by global crises, but also by the development of society in general and industrial revolutions in particular.

Some higher education institutions were able to transfer from existing traditional and blended approaches to fully virtual and remote teaching. However, such an abrupt transition often led to various technical and psychological problems for teachers and students. To conduct online classes, an Internet connection was required, as well as familiarity with the learning management systems of their universities, such as *Moodle*, *Blackboard*, *Zoom* and others. To get around these difficulties, many teachers chose to record their lectures on video, so as not to depend on the vicissitudes of the Internet connection, and make them publicly available. As an alternative to such recorded lectures, teachers communicated with students through virtual meetings, real-time video conferences, during which they could answer questions and provide clarifications if the lecture material was not fully understood. This synchronous interactive communication helped improve the learning experience of the students. Both parties needed training, facilitating or guiding the session to familiarize themselves with e-learning resources, as well as gaining experience in delivering online classes and using digital resources. Although the majority of teachers and students considered the turn to distance learning to be successful in terms of progress, some at the same time recognized a certain degree of complexity of this learning mode with a low level of preparation of teachers and students (in 75 % and 62 % respectively) (Zaccoletti et al., 2020).

At the same time, students noted that small groups and close contact with teachers are exactly what the majority takes into account when choosing a university for further education and mastering professional competencies. With online learning or digital presentation of educational material, this close contact is not possible. Instructors who delivered their lectures in real time mode evaluated online learning higher than those who pre-recorded their teaching materials or used them in asynchronous mode of delivery (any online content such as articles, case studies, videos on the topic of study, etc.). Two-thirds of faculty members reported disconnected from their audience and found it difficult to teach in synchronous mode, while most of the students figured out that they had lost touch with the student community and said they needed more time and effort to complete their coursework and homework in conditions where it is impossible to consult a teacher or classmates. During lockdowns and online teaching and learning, four strategies have proven to be effective in enabling distance learning. They included online vocational training, video conferences, webinars and communication between participants in the educational process by mail or via SMS (Baloran, 2020).

The study also took into account the age range of instructors, their teaching experience, academic degree and title, subjects taught, experience with failure, individual perception, cognitive abilities, as well as previous distance learning experience, such as blended courses, conducting webinars or receiving additional education online. The majority of instructors reported that they simply transferred their courses to a "synchronous" online real-time modality (58 %), while the rest preferred an "asynchronous" modality that was characterized by a less targeted impact on students,

these are methods such as sending educational materials to the mail and/or uploading pre-recorded content to the electronic information and educational environment of the university. The psychological overload of teachers was due to overcoming the consequences of the transition to emergency distance learning. Teachers were forced to urgently switch to online learning mode; there was no time to master digital literacy, as well as digital learning materials. Videoconferencing proved to be the most suitable alternative to classroom lectures and classes (Maher, 2020) as it allowed instructors to interact with students both in large groups and in small groups. The use of the *Zoom* platform allowed students to interact and work together in practical sessions.

The study also looked at factors that could potentially influence stakeholder behavior patterns. University instructors' adaptation to new teaching reality influenced their understanding of how students managed to cope with the new learning modes, balancing between acceptance and avoidance coping strategies and adjusting to positive and negative outcomes of forced distance learning psychological situation. In terms of the level of involvement of teachers in the online learning mode, their activities are associated not only with conducting online classes, but also with modifying the curriculum, overcoming technical difficulties (technical issues in the process of conducting online classes and digital competences in getting their teaching materials ready for performance in class), changes in the assessment scheme, as well as with the attitude of students and their own attitude towards online learning in general and the digitalization of the educational process in particular. As a result, a cluster analysis was conducted to better understand individual components roles and socio-demographic variables in overcoming the emergency transition by teachers and students to distance learning.

The results of the survey gave some idea of how to cope with the situation when both teachers and students are isolated from society, but continue to actively participate in the public and academic life of the university. Much depends on the individual characteristics of the teacher, on the specific factors that affect the well-being of teachers and the adaptation of students to a new form of distance learning, and the relationship between these factors. For example, many have pointed to the importance of maintaining the effectiveness of the learning process along with the synergy between work and personal life (Makarova et al., 2022). Our online survey was designed to explore what circumstances, behaviors, attitudes and psychological characteristics made it easier to accept the new reality, what difficulties the respondents faced, and what helped them to overcome them. Of great importance was the mode (real time or asynchronous) of the classes, as well as the differences between them from the point of view of teachers and students.

## 2. Materials and methods

Data collection was carried out using an oral survey and a special questionnaire created on a software platform for conducting surveys (in order to cover a larger number of respondents in different universities in the South of Russia). Eligibility for the survey was a shift from conventional face-to-face learning to online learning in response to the threat of the COVID-19 epidemic, as opposed to the planned and designed online learning that also existed prior to the outbreak. The result of the survey is also the desire to continue to work and study online, regardless of the need. The survey resulted in a report summarizing the opinions of teachers on the transition to distance learning, identifying significant differences in opinion about the productivity and effectiveness of this type of learning, the role of previous online learning experience and its impact on teacher adaptation and access to resources. The survey concluded that universities that previously conducted online classes had minimal problems when working in the new conditions; online tools and online conditions did not greatly affect the quality of the learning process.

In the studied context, the following demographic factors played a decisive role: age (pre-retirement age teachers could not quickly master the computer and the new online learning functions for them). In addition, they had problems with feedback, so most of these teachers chose the asynchronous presentation of educational material and receiving feedback from students in the form of written papers sent to the teacher's personal email or to the department's corporate mail. Although there is a significant gender disparity in our sample, dominated by women, the results show that gender did not play a significant role in the process of engaging in online work. Women teachers were also actively involved in the development of a new virtual reality for them compared to their male counterparts, attended master classes and webinars for more successful development and effective use in the educational process. There were no significant differences between gender groups in terms of solving technological problems. Work experience and previous experience of

online learning or teaching proved to be important for a smooth and quick adaptation to new circumstances. As expected, teachers who had experience in distance learning were significantly more involved in the work and also coped better with the difficulties in the classroom than those who switched to distance learning without having experience in this mode of work. From the point of view of the mode of conducting online classes, teachers who conducted their classes in real time were significantly more involved in learning compared to those who used asynchronous modes of presenting educational material (video-recorded lectures and video lessons). Interestingly, synchronous teachers also reported significantly less difficulty in using new technologies in class and withholding technical support during such classes. The digital era requires not only new digital competencies of teachers and students, but also a different approach to organizing learning itself. Based on the results of an expert assessment of teachers from three universities, we identified seven tasks for the digitalization of education that need to be addressed now in order to stay in the trend, and all of them should be addressed simultaneously:

1. Creation of information platforms for the use of digital educational and methodological materials.
2. Creation, testing and application of digital educational materials.
3. Refusal of paper information carriers, transition to innovative digital educational materials.
4. Development of applications that provide equal and free access to databases for all students, as well as the flexibility of learning and digital equality.
5. Development of a system of universal assessment of students' knowledge and skills, creation of new assessment tools.
6. Creation of a unified digital system of an educational institution.
7. Improving the skills and digital competencies of teachers in the technical sphere ([Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2020](#); [Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2021](#); [Gordeeva et al., 2021](#)).

In the transition to digital teaching methods, it was not clear which circumstances, behaviors, attitudes, or psychological characteristics were most important for teachers to successfully manage this transition. Therefore, in addition to socio-demographic information (age, gender, social status, level of education), the questions concerned personal and professional experience, knowledge of digital technologies, the type of educational institution represented, attitudes towards distance learning (synchronous and asynchronous), physical and mental health, as well as personal characteristics – factors considered important for adapting to the difficult conditions of a new situation. It was necessary to understand how teachers have adapted their traditional academic courses to distance learning and digital educational technologies. To study digital competence of both students and instructors, the questionnaire "Digital Competence Index" by G.U. Soldatova, T.A. Nestik, E.I. Rasskazova was used ([Soldatova et al., 2017](#); [Soldatova, Rasskazova, 2018](#)).

### 3. Discussion

Traditional or blended education limits students and instructors to the designated auditorium at the designated time. The process of teaching and learning consisted mostly in sharing information, discussions, and arguments, thus giving birth to new ideas, gaining knowledge and contributing to science development. Before printed books appeared instructors and university professors had been the major resource of knowledge and ideas. Students met their teachers in somebody's house, spent some time together sharing information and solving problems. Later in the history of education, the first official places for teaching, called universities, appeared in different countries. Students and faculty met in classrooms; however, these were not the only place for learning. Libraries appeared in universities providing greater access to knowledge and acting as a hub for acquisition and exchange of knowledge. Most of teaching and learning occurred in specially equipped rooms where students and their instructors met. In the 21st century, things took a different turn as education is transferred from traditional and blended mode of teaching to distance and online modes of teaching and learning ([Camilleri, 2019](#)).

Digital education as we know it today began to take shape around the technological advances of the day and allowed greater flexibility in teaching to a wider audience. While some academic subjects are more suitable for formal academic education and require direct interaction between teachers and students, others, such as technical or scientific research, vocational training and professional development programs, require more independent work of the student and can be transferred to the online space. Technology, although advancing rapidly, is still unable to replace



the teacher in terms of the simulation of real-world experience and hands-on activities. From traditional to blended education, then to digital technologies introduction, distant learning is undergoing several levels of transformation; during the COVID-19 pandemic universities and other educational institutions offered numerous virtual courses online (Jelinska, Paradowski, 2021; Luckin et al., 2012).

Just like distance learning, these virtual courses transcend the barriers of place and time having advantages over regular distance learning due to the use of a digital environment and the digitalization of educational material. From a technical point of view, it was difficult at first to switch to distance learning for both teachers and students, as the emergency mode of distance learning was introduced due to the pandemic, although many universities have organized a help desk in case of failures and/or to solve technical problems. However, teachers occurred in a situation where they were not psychologically ready to use the digital environment for their classes, and there were also no teaching materials that could be used for online classes.

In addition, many teachers did not have their own digital resources to provide their subjects. Digital resources that teachers can find in the Internet are temporary in nature; they can disappear from the site at any time without a trace or an opportunity to be restored. That is why educators do not rely on the Internet resources or teaching materials created by others and set the stage for designing and developing their own digital resources and teaching materials. Students, in turn, experienced psychological difficulties due to isolation, which could unbalance them, or because of their lack of self-discipline. Senior students with more developed self-regulation strategies were better able to control their learning and allocate their time than students who had just started studying and had no experience of self-study and self-preparation at the beginning of the pandemic (Ayanyan, Martsinkovskaya, 2016; Zhai, Du, 2020).

The education and the way we teach and learn have rapidly changed. Student teaching has been transformed through the Internet in the form of online learning as an alternative approach to education. Now online education is changing from temporary approach in emergency situation into a permanent crucial factor of future successful life. Many researches consider problems that students have while getting education online; especially popular are studies that compare demographics of education process participants (Yu, 2021; Luic, 2022). Unlike many other researches, we have considered opinions of all the participants of education in our study (teachers as well as students), analyzed problems that both sides have experienced during the transition period and also outlined perspectives for the future.

Generated with the help of computer graphics, animation, Internet research and programming, digitalization is a product of not only information, but also teaching technologies. Modern ways of constructing a digital teaching and learning environment allow to register the position of a learner in it, which opens up new research for experimental capabilities and equips it with methods that have a number of advantages over traditional teaching instruments. Digitalization adds validity, flexibility, learners' polymodal stimulation and full involvement in teaching and learning process. Although digitalization was given an incredible boost during COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, home science pays unjustifiably little attention not only to specific applications of new technologies, but also to problems related to its theoretical and methodological aspects (Andryuhina et al., 2020; Batrakova et al., 2021; Gálíková Tolnaiová, 2020; Gálíková Tolnaiová, 2021; Kopyrin, 2018; Polupan, 2018).

Digitalization was studied from social, philosophical, psychological, technical and other perspectives, many research works were published during the pandemic period in Europe and the Americas (Castaneda, Selwyn, 2018; Feenberg, 2017; Kimmons, Rosenberg, 2022; MacKay, 2019; Niedlich et al., 2021). On the one hand, pandemic COVID-19 actively stimulated incorporation and development of digital technologies into university activities. On the other hand, it revealed a number of limitations and factors that have a significant impact on digitalization processes not only at the level of an individual educational institution, but also on the education system in general. They influence public attitudes to the transition to digital teaching and learning instruments and in many boards determine the change in interaction between different structural elements of the system (Michela et al., 2022). Besides, there are new trends in digital assessment and evaluation of educational results, new digital tools of assessment that teachers should use now and in the future (Collison, 2021; von Davier et al., 2021; LaFlair et al., 2022; Langenfeld et al., 2022).

Three years ago there were just a few online courses in distant education, several digital tools were available for students and teachers, but the Covid-19 pandemic gave the boost to digital

education, 2020 marked a paradigm shift towards EdTech and the trend has strengthened in 2022. Teachers and students have realized that traditional offline teaching and learning haven't built the capability to provide the support needed in these hyper-competitive times. So many researches consider up-to-date teachers' competences needed for today's educational process (Ahadi et al., 2021). There is a certain digital competences framework needed for students in order to be successful not only in learning, but in their future professional career (Byundyugova et al., 2022; Egorova, 2022; Tzafilkou et al., 2022). Also, new methods of digital competence development have been proposed (Kosova, Redkokosh, 2022).

#### 4. Results

The sample consisted of 328 students aged from 17 to 21 from three different educational institutions: Southern Federal University (Taganrog and Rostov-on-Don), Taganrog Institute of Management and Economics (Taganrog), Don State Technical University (Rostov-on-Don). Respondents were mostly freshmen and sophomores, 45 males and 78 females and 67 University instructors. Demographic components provide a wide coverage of the quantitative and qualitative composition of universities. Also, a questionnaire was offered both to students and instructors to figure out the strengths and drawbacks of online teaching and learning and competences of all the participants of online education. The results of the research are presented in the tables below.

**Table 1.** Various digital resources application in Russian universities (assessment by teachers and students)

Resources	Instructors' assessment		Reliability of differences ( $\varphi^*$ ; P)	Students' assessment		Reliability of differences ( $\varphi^*$ ; P)
	2021	2022		2021	2022	
University platform	50 %	53 %	0,35; P>0,05	75 %	90 %	3,18; P<0,05
Zoom	69 %	75 %	0,77; P>0,05	75 %	85 %	2,05; P<0,05
Moodle	50 %	55 %	0,69; P>0,05	67 %	69 %	0,27; P>0,05
Skype	42 %	40 %	0,18; P>0,05	35 %	33 %	0,4; P>0,05
MS Teams	21 %	23 %	0,21; P>0,05	44 %	48 %	0,63; P>0,05
Discord	19 %	21 %	0,38; P>0,05	22 %	24 %	0,45; P>0,05
E-mail	94 %	96 %	0,84; P>0,05	87 %	89 %	0,58; P>0,05

Table 1 shows that during 2021-2022 there were certain changes in resources aimed at organization of teaching and learning. The percentage of Moodle use as learning management system grew, which integrated with the university platform created universities' digitalized environment. It also shows growing availability of open resources for organizing conferences, group meetings and online classes. As it can be seen Zoom maintained its position as the most convenient and accessible platform leaving behind MS Teams and Discord. E-mail keeps its positions as the most frequently used resource to exchange information, send messages and communicate.

Calculation of Student's t-test when comparing relative values is shown in Table 1.

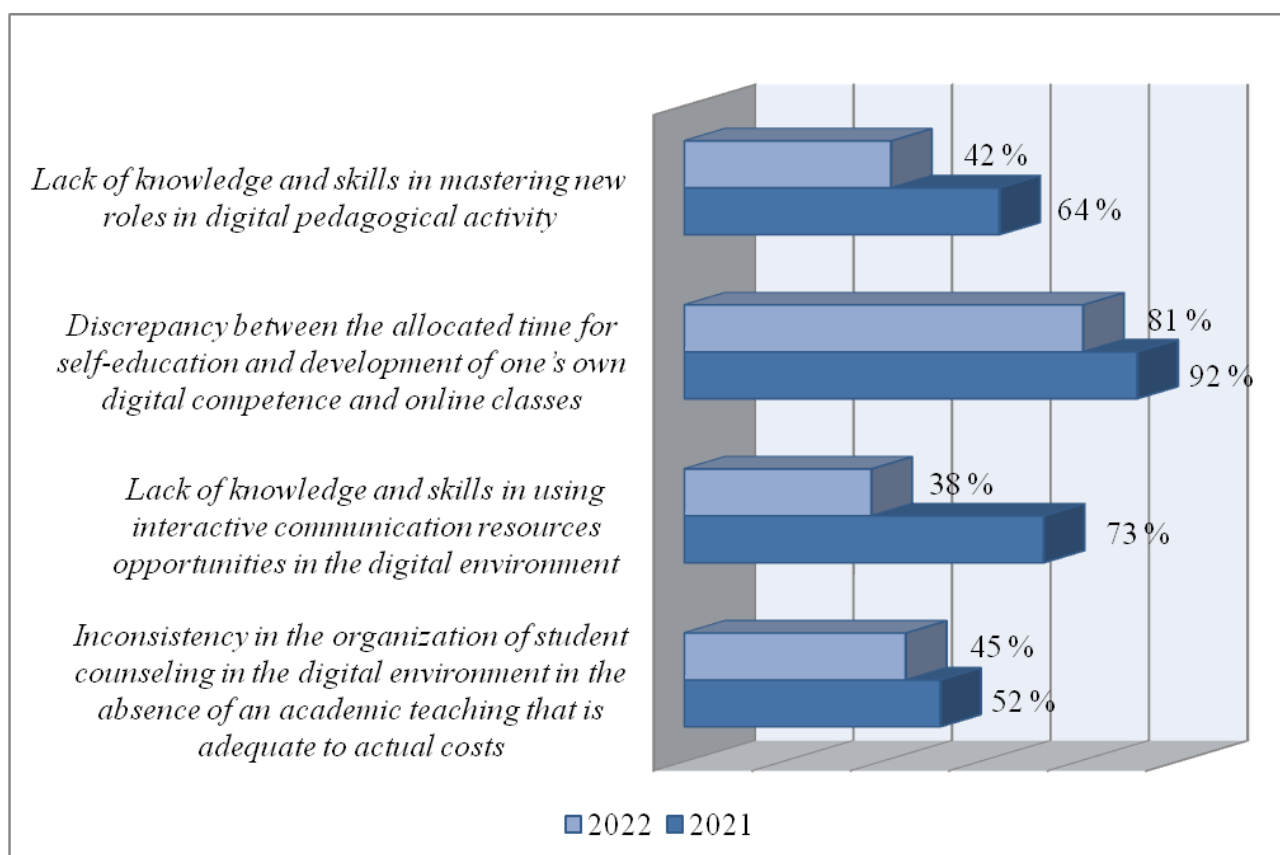
Differences are statistically significant among students of the University platform and Zoom, among teachers differences are statistically insignificant.

**Table 2.** Comparing instructors' digital competences during different periods of online teaching

Instructors' digital competences	2021	2022	Reliability of differences ( $\varphi^*$ ; P)
Most teachers used modern digital technologies for effective teaching	35 %	44 %	1,24; P>0,05
Most teachers used digital teaching materials from open access resources	56 %	67 %	1,24; P>0,05

Instructors' digital competences	2021	2022	Reliability of differences ( $\varphi^*$ ; P)
Most teachers used different platform to arrange their classes	42 %	78 %	4,54; P<0,05
Most teachers used their own digital resources for effective teaching	39 %	86 %	6,27; P<0,05
Most teachers had digital competences for organization of effective teaching	45 %	89 %	6,28; P<0,05

Table 2 shows that teachers significantly increased their knowledge and skills in digital technology application for the period of temporary restrictions and online education; improved digital competences indicate the dynamics of digital content development, self-assessment of teachers' progress in creating own online courses and other teaching materials. Positive dynamics and attitudes to changes are shown in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1.** Attitude to changes in pedagogical activity when working in digital educational environment of the universities among survey participants (instructors) 2021–2022

Calculation of Student's t-test when comparing relative values shows that differences are statistically significant. Analyzing the questionnaire's answers the following facts have been noticed. Among other drawbacks, most instructors noted:

- Inconsistency in the organization of student counseling in the digital environment in the absence of an academic teaching that is adequate to actual costs.
- Lack of knowledge and skills in using interactive communication resources opportunities in the digital environment (soft skills).
- Discrepancy between the allocated time for self-education and development of one's own digital competence and online classes.
- Lack of knowledge and skills in mastering new roles in digital pedagogical activity.

The results of the research show that various digital resource applications have different impact on students' and instructors' digital competences development, thus influencing their

consistency in teaching and learning. We can follow positive dynamics in mastering new roles in educational environment and interactive communication.

## 5. Conclusion

Given that distance learning is increasingly becoming an integral part of mainstream education; it is worth identifying the factors influencing its performance and identifying the key factors for its success. Our results suggest that the key factors that predicted teacher participation in the emergency transition to online learning were the level of technical equipment of the educational institution, the asynchronous or synchronous modality, and the level of preparation of teachers to cope with them (digital competences). It is suggested that the situation with online learning may well represent a “new reality” that will need to be continued, focusing on how the use of technology to provide educational services, online learning will continue to evolve as education develops. Existing technological advances that are being used in higher education have helped overcome the limitations of space and time during the COVID-19 pandemic (Andryuhina et al., 2020). The essence of digital transformation is to effectively and flexibly apply the latest technologies to move towards a personalized and result-oriented educational process. It can be assumed that the main goal of the further development of education is the formation of the so-called “digital teaching staff”, the formation and development of digital competencies of teachers. This indicates the need to improve the skills of teachers in the use of ICT as the main guide for professional development and use not only in the extreme conditions of the pandemic, but also in everyday life. Digital educational systems should be viewed as a continuously evolving entity that will change and be updated depending on changes in technology and in accordance with the requirements of the time. Creating research forecasts regarding the future of a particular area of professional activity, of course, causes certain difficulties. As part of the implementation of such a forecast, one can rely on existing Russian and foreign research, as well as on the practical experience of past years. The results obtained, of course, will be inaccurate, but the main goal of this work is to identify trends and directions of change, try to see significant shifts and determine the prerequisites for the possible formation of new types of professional activity. Such an approach will make it possible to implement the concept of advanced learning and use already developed programs and technologies for the further development of the education system.

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## Innovations in the Global and Russian Media Industry and Media Education

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to the analysis of innovative approaches used in the contemporary media industry and media education. The research is based on a critical analysis of scientific literature, both national and foreign, that point out the facts of the beginning of the use of innovative technologies in the work of editorial boards in the last 5 years, as well as trends in the development of the media sphere, positive and negative factors that affect the quality of the information product. Researchers mainly point out in their articles the trend of the increase of the role of mass media in the society as well as the increase of their influence on the government, social institutions and social groups. Experts also emphasize that the media agenda, professionally generated by communicators, covers a significant number of Internet users and a significant audience of online media.

Contemporary researches take into account the key parameters of the information environment – convergence, interactivity, hypertextuality and multiplatform, which give us an opportunity to find new ways for presenting the information. Experts pay increased attention to civil journalists who by their selves study the professions of commentator, reporter, photojournalist, service editor, SMM specialist, SEO manager, content manager, etc.

The authors come to the conclusion that in contemporary media studies they mark the fundamental role of the audience in the exchange of information and point out the striving of the media for democratic principles, such as independence, impartiality, relevance and correctness. The functions of providing information, critical assessment, monitoring and participation are assigned to the media. The main competition unfolded for the trust of the audience, the quality of the content and the style of work of the media. Economic sectors are being integrated with the information and communication technology sector.

The problem of the predominance of the technological factor over the content factor is raised. On the one hand, automated problems, improved tools, the appearance of infographics and multimedia elements have opened up opportunities for creating a high-quality information product. On the other hand, in conditions of competition and economic instability, representatives of the media industry are forced to balance between the obligation to promote certain values and the need to earn money and therefore simplify the information product, following the unassuming interests of the audience.

**Keywords:** media, media education, media literacy, media competence, media studies, university, students, media industry, innovations, advanced technologies, media research, journalism.

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## 1. Introduction

Over the past five years, the problem of innovation in journalism has been a priority in scientific discourse. According to the definition proposed by Rogers in the year 2003 under the innovations one should understand an idea, approach or object that is perceived as a new way to improve the current state (Rogers, 2003: 12). These include elements of diffusion, a history of diffusion research, contributions and criticisms of diffusion research, the generation of innovations, the innovation-decision process, attributes of innovations and their rate of adoption, innovativeness and adopter categories, diffusion networks. Researchers approach the main features of innovations in the media industry and media education from the standpoint of methodological, conceptual and systematic analysis (Goodman, 2017).

According to E. Vartanova, it is difficult to exaggerate the role of modern mass media, which today "select, structure, illustrate, comment, analyze and distribute huge amounts of information", but the main point is that "this process of the processing of the original information that leads to the appearance of new senses and values construct the backbone of the mediatization" (Vartanova, 2018: 34).

Profound changes in the media sphere caused by digitalization have opened a new phase in the development of media production at all levels and stages, as well as new technological opportunities for obtaining a high-quality information product. There has been happened a radicalization of traditional media caused by the possibilities of digitalization and the conditions of competition with network media. The main struggle unfolded for the trust of the audience, the quality of the content and the style of work of the media. Competent selection, interpretation and prompt delivery of content were decisive in the choice of information sources by the audience (Rossijskaya..., 2021).

The scientific discourse actively discusses the causes of deep transformations in media production that affect the nature of communication, draws attention to the fact that the media space opens up unprecedented opportunities for the activation of the younger generation, its representatives act as subjects of communication (Demidov, Lomteva, 2022).

The attention of experts is drawn to the unprecedented change in the perception of online texts. Thus, based on the materials of the undertaken sociological research and analysis of the situation, the article examines the problems of youth media consumption and its impact on the formation of behavior stereotypes from different points of view. On the one hand, media consumption is considered as a factor that influence the successful socialization of the young generation and the most effective profound career guidance, on the other hand, as a negative factor that affects the quality of processing and analysis of the huge amount of information, which undoubtedly negatively affects both the psychological and physical health of young people and their increasing to illegal and political manipulations. These authors come to the conclusion that uncontrolled amusement in the Net as well as the neglect of personal data protection, associated with the actual lack of formation of a national information security policy, personal culture, associated with a complete lack of training and skills development in the educational field as well as in the family and the society.

The study of media experts that has been undertaken in last five years has shown that virtual communication has become a common environment for the information exchange for millions of people. Anybody can turn into a media when "passing through himself flows of information, transforming them and becoming a source of new information" (Zhilavskaya, 2014).

Scientists focus on the changing roles of the audience associated with selectivity in the choice of the content and the individualization of the choice (Fateeva, 2022). "Information is increasingly acquiring the properties of consumer goods, the main sectors of the economy are integrated with the ICT sector and information and telecommunication networks. Consumption itself is moving into the sphere of digital services, information products and communication" (Vartanova, 2018: 32; Kruglova, 2019).

Changes in the production of the information product caused changes in the problem-thematic range and formats (Ivanova, 2020; Simakova et al., 2020). Taking into account the changes in the perception of information, the editorial boards began offering texts for different consumption on different platforms (mobile applications (Melnik, 2019), for example, for reading in transport (lean forward) and leisurely reading on the "sofa" (back lean). In the information environment, the behavior of the audience is modified, its consumer habits are changing. Target audiences are offered different traffics (Crompton, Burke, 2018).



At the same time, these studies are still fragmentary, although they affect different aspects of the functioning of modern media.

## 2. Materials and methods

Both reviews and fundamental articles of a number of foreign and national authors concerning the problem of innovations in the media industry and media education, published in the last 5 years, have been critically analyzed (Berezhnaya, Korkonosenko, 2021; Burgess et al., 2020; Byundyugova et al., 2021; Fateeva, 2017; Fedorov et al., 2018a; Fedorov et al., 2018b; Fedorov et al., 2020; Fedorov et al., 2022; Gladkova et al., 2020; Hubetsova, 2019; Steensen, Westlund, 2021; Vartanova, 2019; Vermeer et al., 2020).

When preparing these articles following research methods have been used by the authors: search, generalization, analysis and synthesis of scientific information on media education in universities; generalization and classification.

## 3. Discussion

Russian researchers mainly focus on the qualitative originality, the current state and problems of improving journalistic education in Russia in their articles (Blokhin, 2020; Byundyugova et al., 2021; Gladkova et al., 2020; Hubetsova, 2019).

Singling out the school of journalism as an independent object of study, identifying and emphasizing the features of originality in it, members of the research team thereby refer it to models that deny global standardization and reflect diversity in the training of specialists. The authors of the article "Schools of Journalism in Russia: experience of professional expertise", recognizing the variability of approaches to education under the influence of fundamental shifts in practice and momentary conjuncture, at the same time emphasize the importance of permanent characteristics of the phenomenon of the school. The article is based on the materials of expert interviews (Berezhnaya, Korkonosenko, 2021; Korkonosenko, 2018; Korkonosenko et al., 2018).

In the book "Mass media education in the CIS countries " by Russian authors who are at the origins of the Russian media education, a comparative analysis of journalistic education around the world is given and retrospect, conceptual, theoretical, empirical and practical understanding of its present and future are considered (Fedorov et al., 2020). In the fundamental study, the goals, objectives and concepts of the media education project in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are identified, innovative forms of media education in the general education system are considered.

A profound review of publications of specialized professional journals is of great importance in promoting the theories of journalism and mass communication. Thus authors of the article "European Countries from 2010 to 2020.MDP" (Meier et al., 2020) analyze texts of 5 specialized journals: "Digital Journalism", "Journalism", "Journalistic Studies", "Journalism. Practice", and "Journalism and Mass Communication", where the development of diversity is evaluating, comparing and forecasting.

The researches reveal the problem of a high level of inequality in the field of media and communications, point to the line of the global gap between the North and the South, where 93 % of all publications in this field account for the North. Data from other studies have also shown how the heritage of colonialism goes on influencing the development of academic science in Africa (Schoon et al., 2020), Asia (Ullah, 2014) and Latin America (De Albuquerque, 2019).

Western approaches especially that of the USA and Great Britain, have become dominated ones among the theories of journalism and mass communication over the past five years. Studies of African journalism rarely come into the field of researchers. The publications of the Chinese journals "Journalism and Communication" and "Communal Car" are also not widespread enough. Meanwhile, these journals have a strong regional focus and play an important role in promoting journalistic education.

Attention is drawn to the fact that regional scientists of the humanitarian sphere should be able to defend their (regional) peculiarities in conceptualizing and defining approaches to media analysis (Zeng et al., 2019; Zeng, Chan, 2023). Despite the fact that the mainstream ignores the theoretical and methodological developments of the "peripheral" South, these concepts are quite viable and scientific, as indicated, for example, by the author of the article "Digital Methods in Africa and beyond: A View from down Under." African Journalism Studies" (Burgess et al., 2020). Some representatives of Western schools still emphasize their desire for inclusivity, pay attention

to the rapidly changing demands of journalistic research, and the need to understand diverse local contexts, diverse and innovative methodologies, which, unfortunately, are still not very developed and remain fragmentary (Steensen, Westlund, 2021).

Some Western media experts focus on the difference in approaches to the analysis of media content among male and female researchers. The authors are convinced that gender diversity can lead to higher research results and innovative discoveries (Nielsen et al., 2017; Søråa et al., 2020).

Some studies, including national ones, devote to journalistic education in the context of a COVID-19 pandemic (Grabelnikov et al., 2020).

A number of media studies use a computational method. The results of their analysis show that the vast majority of studies on computational methods come from the countries of the Global North. Semi-quantitative research methods, especially manual content analysis, are going on dominating in the publications of media journals (Steensen, Westlund, 2021). However, modern programs allow the use of data mining and methods of processing millions of news articles on the Internet. Tracked online activity also allows researchers to study the consumption of news by individuals without relying on data provided by users themselves (Vermeer et al., 2020; Zorin, 2018).

An important remark of the researchers concerns the predominance of the technological factor over the content, which leads to a deterioration in the quality of the information offered. The so-called computational turn "risks contributing to normativity, which devalues other methodological traditions, which, in turn, leads to a distorted assessment of institutions and individuals with technological resources" (Steensen, Westlund, 2021). Blind normalization of computational approaches – point out media experts – can't satisfy neither practitioners nor theorists in the field of media (Agudelo-González et al., 2022).

Nowadays a database of numerous surveys of journalists and bloggers has accumulated, showing international diversity at the level of authors. "In total, researchers have identified 1,275 unique corresponding authors in the data set. For example, the final information was extracted about countries from the address field of the websites of specialized publications" (Meier et al., 2020).

The fundamental work was presented by scientists who conducted a comparative analysis of innovations in journalism in several European countries (Meier et al., 2020). The media of Austria, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom have been in the focus of the researchers' attention in the last decade. The main research method is expert interviews with journalists, which allowed experts to identify more than 50 different types of innovations and identify the 20 most relevant ones.

A number of studies have rethought the phenomenon of journalism as a profession and commercial and social activities. Digitalization has posed new challenges, changing the system of access to information, as well as the habits of information consumption by the audience. Technological capabilities have made it possible to increase the affinity between news producers and consumers and increase the personalization of content (Liao Sheng, Luo Yicheng, 2016).

The problem of the predominance of the technological factor over the content factor is raised. On the one hand, problems generated by the automation processes, as well as an improvement of tools, the appearance of infographics and multimedia elements have opened up opportunities for creating a high-quality information product. On the other hand, in conditions of competition and economic instability, representatives of the media industry are forced to balance between the obligation to promote certain values and the need to earn money for production and therefore simplify the information product, following the unassuming interests of the audience.

The commercialization of the press has been vividly expressed in the monetization of journalism, changing the models of functioning, where membership is combined with paid access and donations or crowdfunding.

An important observation of researchers is that innovations manifest themselves in changing formats (Zubko, Klyuev, 2022), media production organization processes (Gladkova et al., 2020; García-Avilés et al., 2018; 2021), fact-checking and audience involvement (Meier et al., 2017).

Media experts comprehend new phenomena in news production – data journalism, diversification of online platforms, new digital narratology, "slow journalism" (Barabash et al., 2021), adaptation to the tastes of the audience.

The problem of audience coverage on all channels and devices represents the main interest for researchers. In this regard, innovations such as audio and podcasts, streaming and processing of user data to increase engagement are analyzed.

Among the popular innovations, researchers include the distribution of journalistic content in social media and the mobile-first strategy, mobile journalism (Melnik, 2017), the development of native advertising, Full Fact as a monitoring and control system.

The publications emphasize the distortions in the research sector – Americanocentrism, especially in the journal DJ, where researches related to the USA account for about 76 % of publications (Meier, 2020). Regional studies are significantly less represented. Of interest are the studies of African humanities scholars who notice the powerful incursions of Western theories into Africa. Scientists contribute to the conceptualization of the theory and practice of journalism (Pratt, Isine, 2023). In the context of global initiatives that led to deep invasions of the ideas of the Western world into the African continent, the transformations of the modern mass communication system in Africa are considered. One of the chapters is devoted to reports on China's Maritime Silk Road initiative in four African newspapers.

The authors predict an inclusive future for digital journalism, state the growing number of discussions in media discourse about self-reflection, hegemonic structures and inclusive participation in the media (Allen et al., 2020; Soldatova, Rasskazova, 2014; Zeng, Chan, 2023; Zorin, 2018). In this regard, an article of Turkish scientists T.S., Gorpe and B. Oksu should be considered very interesting. Nowadays, media organizations – as for-profit organizations – conduct corporate social responsibility. (In this way, they contribute to society and strengthen and/or establish relationships with their stakeholders. “One of the reasons they are doing CSR is because of the impact of CSR on their reputation, CSR projects and media organizations are aware of this result; they are also doing 'business'“. The authors study the concepts of media responsibility and CSR of media institutions in Turkey from the point of view of journalism teachers and their understanding by journalism teachers (Gorpe, Oksuz, 2023).

#### 4. Results

We've analyzed two types of research articles – *concerning media production and media education*.

In the last five years, there has been an increase in scientific discussions about the inclusive participation of media and communication bodies in the development of the world (Zeng et al., 2019; Zeng, Chan, 2023). They evaluate the diversity of journalistic research in the books and their authors foresee a more inclusive future for digital journalism.

Experts in the field of theory and practice of mass media are increasingly associated with the concepts of "journalism", "technology" and "truth". Presenting his view on immersive journalism, Robert Hassan, for example, writes that these are inextricably linked idealized components that shed critical light on immersive virtual reality (VR) (Hassan, 2023).

The analysis of cases of scientific research on communications conducted in Latin American countries shows their rapid growth and integration into European trends. The indicators of articles published in 2018–2022 in the *Scopus* databases are steadily growing. However, as J.F. Munoz Uribe notes in the article “The importance of scientific publications in the discourse of communication: the case of Latin America”, the works of Latin American authors are not properly evaluated. The author of the article believes that media science "has the opportunity to have a positive impact on social progress and constructive development in various fields of science and the production. A study of the scale of scientific output in high-impact journals (quartiles 1, 2, 3 and 4) shows that Latin America and the whole world have increased not only research, but also scientific output in the field of communication in the period from 2018–2022. (Hassan, 2023).

The Industry Report "The State of Mass Media in 2021" notes that similar processes have occurred in Europe, South America, Israel, Turkey.

A critical review of the research literature devoted to the study of approaches to journalism education of the XXI century is offered in the book by L. Solkin (Solkin, 2020). The problems of transformation of the media industry caused by the new reality are invariably associated with the need to *restructure media education*. A.V. Sharikov, in his article "On the relationship between media culture and media education", quite rightly writes that "Media education is a necessary element "that ensures the reproduction and production of media culture samples, as well as a mechanism for quality control of produced media products through an assessment tool for people educated in the field of media, which contributes to further development of the media sphere" (Sharikov, 2014: 57). The structure of media education should reflect the structure of the media

sphere. Technological, semiotic, and communication aspects should be present in this structure, which are now being added by institutional and economic aspects.

The opinion of St. Petersburg scientists about the state of media education in Russia is also important. "In the conditions of information turbulence, political and social instability, uncertainty at the regional and global levels of the future state of social development, the need for systematic and interdisciplinary training of highly qualified professionals in the communication industry is increasing, the requirements for training communicators for different fields of activity are becoming more complicated" (Zubko, Klyuev, 2022: 106).

Contemporary media market needs specialists with new communication competencies, critical thinking, comprehension and interpretation skills, and the ability to work with various sources. In a report by LinkedIn, owned by Microsoft Corporation, "Classical journalists who can only put words into sentences and not delay the delivery of texts are in less and less demand today. Now the winners are those who not only understand the preferences of the audience, but also what influences decision-making and attention to information. Basic knowledge of neuroscience is increasingly in demand, as cognitive sciences are developing at a rapid pace towards understanding any human reaction to any message." The requirements for competencies in big-data have increased, the need for new technologies offering unique information products" (Rossijskaya..., 2021: 11).

Media research is actively developing in post-soviet countries. An important problem is considered to be the achievement of media literacy of the population, which becomes the basis of media security in Uzbekistan (Abdullina, Bekbosynova, 2021). At each stage of the proposed educational model, a "creative" component is laid, then this factor, along with basic skills and a new educational policy, which guarantees a competitive specialist by the end of the faculty. The result of the study by L.I. Abdullina and G.A. Beksynbaeva can be considered the study of the model of formation of journalists in the system: university-creativity-practice, based on multimedia and the principles of effective communication.

In modern researches, the authors address the problem of the use of artificial intelligence in education, as an example, projects and programs of faculties of journalism in Russian universities are given (Boaters, 2021; Botarev, 2021; Grove, Mare, 2020; Herari, 2019; Nerets, 2020; Rykov et al., 2017; Seizhtililova, 2022; Zeng et al., 2021). This was the consequence of the active implementation of AI-based technologies in the work of journalists in last few years. There has been even appeared a special concept of "automated journalism" or "data journalism" that means the use of different AI-based algorithms especially recurrent neural networks (RNN) to seek the information in the information space, to interpret input flows of text symbols, analyze them, rewrite and distribute original texts already ready for publication in the style of this or that outstanding journalist.

The above mentioned technological novelties lead to the need for the complete modernization of the system of media education that should combine both professional journalistic and technical skills in order «to train journalists who, due to their understanding of the basics of machine learning, would be able to formulate tasks for technical specialists to write appropriate computer algorithms; and subsequently could effectively use them in their daily work related to the textual design of news and the interpretation of large amounts of data and information» (Pantserev, 2021: 512).

Following problems are being raised: 1) adaptation of the media education system to the requirements of the media industry; 2) development of theory; 3) formation of new standards and curricula. The works show a radical transformation of the conceptual and methodological foundations of higher education, project-based learning as a new educational concept in the teaching of journalism. The author reveals a great potential for the development of intellectual, creative abilities and professional skills of students, offers educational programs that stimulate their cognitive activity with multimedia formats such as longrid, podcast, text, and a special project. "Project-based learning as a new educational concept in journalism teaching" "Application of forms and methods of artificial intelligence in journalism" (Chutcheva, 2019; Fateeva, 2017; Golovko, 2019; Gubanova et al., 2020: 280; Melnik, 2017; Zamkov et al., 2017). Elements of game realization are being actively introduced into the teaching of academic disciplines in journalism (Fedotova, 2018).

The authors identify the main types of digital competence: a) information and media competence — knowledge, skills, motivation and responsibility related to the search, understanding, organization and archiving of digital information and its critical understanding,

as well as the creation of materials using digital resources (text, visual, audio and video); b) communicative competence – knowledge, skills, motivation and responsibility necessary for online communication in various forms (e-mail, chats, blogs, forums, social networks, etc.) and for various purposes; c) technical competence – knowledge, skills, motivation and responsibility that allow you to effectively and safely use a computer and appropriate software to solve various tasks, including the use of computer networks; d) consumer competence – knowledge, skills, motivation and responsibility that allow you to solve various everyday tasks using a computer and via the Internet, related to specific life situations involving the satisfaction of various needs" (Zhizina, 2013: 159-160; Zhizina, 2016).

They've underlined following key technological trends of media education in the report of the Institute for Advanced Technological Research (IPTS) at the Joint Research Center of the European Commission:

- "development and application of open content and opensource software (e.g, Wikipedia);
- creation and implementation of software enabling unlimited storage of digital information in terms of amount and time;
- webblogging, SMS and MMS; – distribution of podcasting (video and audio) for mobile use of educational information;
- increasing the number of Web 2.0 services for their application in the organization of educational interaction" (Punie, 2007).

Researchers at the Jose Simeon Cañas University in El Salvador are putting forward interesting and pragmatic proposals for the study of digital competencies in the curriculum for the training of bachelor journalists, based on the model proposed by the European Commission, which takes into account the distance learning associated with the pandemic. Content analysis of digital competencies showed the insufficiency of content related to "copyright, collective intelligence and especially Internet security as forms of protection of identity and personal information in social networks, abuse and/or dependencies created by technology, and personal concern about the abuse of technology" (Agudelo-González et al., 2023).

The article shows all aspects of digital competence, including technological, informational, multimedia and communicative aspects that contribute to the critical, responsible and creative use of practical media technologies).

**Table 1.** Categories of educational analysis of digital competencies

<b>Curriculum content defining the category</b>	<b>Curricular content that defines the category</b>
Language, communication and collaboration	- Information practices that focus on various systems and digital content in accordance with the communicative function and the interlocutor. Digital image analysis and semiotics. Analysis of new narratives and digital platforms. Media ecology analysis. Ethical use of information. Mass media, democratic participation and social development. Forms of expression and languages used in digital relations.
Technology, digital content and creation	- Creation of digital content and construction of information fragments in multimedia languages. Knowledge and application of copyright. Developing and reimagining digital content. Analysis of multimodal and multimedia interactive audiences. History of the Information Society.
Digital production and distribution	Using software to create content and digital information. Information production in digital media and the role of a digital communicator. Copyright. Production processes and infrastructure for digital news production. Analysis of content production on digital platforms. Collective intelligence and work on the web.

<b>Curriculum content defining the category</b>	<b>Curricular content that defines the category</b>
Interaction and critical data analysis	Skills to browse, organize, store, manage, and evaluate digital content and information. Critical analysis of content and digital information. Analysis of digital messages and audience.
	Production of multimedia pieces with a social focus. Management of editing techniques and re-editing of messages. Selection of information and types of messages. Collective intelligence and work on the web. Society technologies and their effects. Relationships in hypermedia, transmedia, and multimodal environments. Assessment of the positive and negative effects of interaction with screens.
Identity, values, and security	Criteria for the selection of an infodiet or content. Personal information on social networks, online/offline identity, and control of own or others' private data. Analysis of the problems of abuse in social networks. Personal and group care actions against excesses in the use of ICT. Contextual analysis in interaction processes. Assessment of the impact of digital platforms on the learning process.
Aesthetics, digital content and creation	Production of content and digital information. Managing editing methods and republishing content and digital information. Copyright. Creating digital content with aesthetic and artistic elements.

Source: [Agudelo-González et al., 2022](#)

The teaching of journalism, according to the authors, should include data journalism. This category includes content with topics that are related to information practices in different systems and digital content, analysis of the digital image, new narratives and digital platforms of media ecology, content on the use of social networks, forms of expression, and languages used in digital relationships, digital theory, ethical use of information, the media, democratic participation, and social development.

The authors of the article evaluate, on the basis of Russian and foreign publications, the experience of introducing media education into modern higher education, characterize the main directions of integrating media education into extracurricular activities of modern university students. Tasks – to teach "to think, to master argumentation, to strengthen the evidence base of their own reasoning, to create texts for the media) ([Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2021](#); [Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023](#)).

In the large-scale work of Elizabeth G. Rojas-Estrada, Rosa Garcia-Ruiz, Ignacio Aguaded, "Media Competence in the curriculum of Latin American countries: a systematic review" ([Rojas-Estrad, 2023](#)). A systematic review of scientific developments on media competence (MS) in the curricula of 33 Latin American countries, which were identified in the databases *Web of Science (WoS)*, *Scopus*, *ERIC (ProQuest)*, *Dialnet (Plus)* and *Redalyc*, is given. The study covers a long period (January 2012 to December 2021). Scientists have revealed that: 1) "research dominated, the purpose of which was to determine the presence of mass communication in the curriculum; 2) there was no course in any of the countries, the main purpose of which was mass communication, nevertheless, the wide dissemination of its aspects implies its inclusion as an interdisciplinary component; 3) there are no studies in the region focused on primary education, adult education and the educational basis of education for indigenous peoples." The authors spoke about the need to develop critical, operational and social competencies that will help future journalists meet the socio-cultural requirements and phenomena of the new media system.

## 5. Conclusion

The study of the practice of media production has shown that modern convergent editorial bodies are looking for new ways to create texts, are engaged in monetization of an information

product in a competitive environment, for which they use marketing tools, print media simultaneously maintain pages in social networks. The latest study describes in detail the process from divergence to convergence in the media sphere.

Russian media literacy schools offer fundamental models of the high school educational system, reject untenable technocratic (rationalistic) paradigms, believing that universal values have priority over technical means. Unlike Western ones, universal values prevail over means in the Russian educational high school). The most attractive in terms of innovation for representatives of this school is the synergetic paradigm, which assumes open education in combination with the entire amount of means of cognition.

The main theoretical and methodological concepts of media education that can become a promising basis for further successful development in Russian conditions have been identified in the article.

As innovations, media experts indicate:

- contact with content creators through likes, comments, search queries, involvement in the story;
- strengthening the position of edutainment — the presentation of educational content in an entertaining and interactive form;
- targeting is about accuracy and individualization;
- Associated Press neural networks process information in seconds, which previously took many hours for journalists to analyze, continuously monitor the company's economic indicators;
- strategic planning of media enterprise activities;
- collecting a database of readers;
- prompt and high-quality access to media audiences, technological focus of the media industry: automation of external communications, use of the latest social and technical platforms, strategic focus on partnerships with large tech companies;
- use of artificial intelligence in the media industry and media education.

In the definition of innovation and innovation activity in modern science, the process approach prevails, considering innovation not from the point of view of the final result, but as a technological process.

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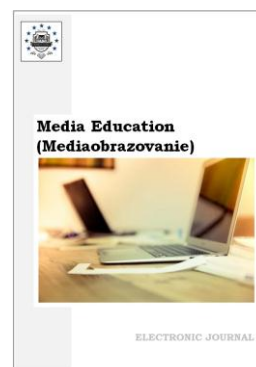
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## Representation of Players' Experiences in Fanfiction: A Case Study of Gacha-game Genshin Impact

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### Abstract

The world of Genshin Impact, an open-world action role-playing game, has gained immense popularity among players since its release in 2020. Along with the game's updates, the fan fiction works have been growing exponentially on various platforms. In this article, we explore the correlation between the quality of the updates and the number of created fan fiction works. Our hypothesis suggests that when the update is filled with interesting characters, in-game mechanics and events, players become fully immersed in the game world and do not feel the need to create new fan content. Conversely, when the update is unsatisfactory, players attempt to fulfill their desires by creating new fan fiction works. To prove this hypothesis, we conducted a study of the updates and the corresponding fan fiction works. Our findings suggest that there is a significant correlation between the quality of the updates and the number of fan fiction works created. The study also highlights the significance of fan fiction in creating a community around a game and shows how it can reflect players' perceptions of the game's updates. Overall, our article sheds light on the relationship between fan fiction writers and in-game updates, and its implications both for the gaming and literary industry. This study and its results can also be used as a case study in media literacy courses and or lessons.

**Keywords:** digital media, videogames, fan communities, fan fiction, user generated content.

### 1. Introduction

Fan studies have become a popular area of scientific research. It is an interdisciplinary field, with links to culturology, sociology, media studies, etc.

Fan communities, as an integral component of media consumers, have evolved their own unique methods of interpretation, modes of social interaction, and styles of cultural production. These practices have emerged from the shared passions and interests of the community, establishing a distinct identity that is both recognizable and meaningful to its members. It is widely acknowledged that these communities play a critical role in shaping the discourse surrounding popular culture and are often responsible for driving new trends and innovations in media (Jenkins, 2018: 16).

Fans make their interpretations and express their evaluation of media products, in addition to open discussions on various online forums, through fan art in the broad sense of the word. It takes many forms: fan videos, fan comics, fan videos, fan songs, fan art, and finally fan fiction. Fans could also influence media production by their activity expressed in some kinds of collective and individual creativity. Fans show a clear liking or disliking of a media product, and thus the media producer understands what is worth editing and what the user likes unconditionally.

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Fanfiction, also known as fanfic or FF, is a type of fictional writing that is often created by fans of some work and is based on existing works of fiction. The author of fanfiction uses existing characters, storylines, or other intellectual property owned by the original author as a foundation for their work. Fanfiction can range from a few sentences to entire novels, and may either stick to the original creator's characters and settings, or introduce new ones. Fanfiction is a type of fan product that can be based on any fantasy theme, with many writers using movies, cartoons, comics, or video games as inspiration for their works.

K. Prasolova defines this type of creativity as “a peculiar, textually expressed passion; ... an emotional, visible and tangible interpretative response of the mass culture consumer to media products” (Prasolova, 2009: 3). Other scholars claim that it is fanfiction that performs “the function of demonstrating the multitude of individual reader interpretations of a work” (Timoshenko, 2015: 91).

Many fan studies involve the study of fan fiction in film or literature fandoms. We decided to focus on video games, in particular one of the most popular in recent times. Officially Genshin Impact is an open world action RPG game, however, most of its players call it a “gacha game” because at its core it has the same mechanics as most gacha games. Gacha is a video game that implements the gacha (slot machine game) mechanism. Similar to loot boxes, gacha games challenge players to spend in-game currency to obtain random in-game items. The developer of Genshin Impact is a Chinese video game developer and studio called miHoYo based in Shanghai, China. miHoYo both developed and produced Genshin Impact themselves. The target audience of the game is mainly young people from 19 to 22 years old. According to a study about motivations for virtual rewards in online F2P Gacha games this age group makes up to 52.3 % of the total number of players (Dong, 2020: 10).

With Genshin Impact being an online game, with a live service support model, it receives constant updates that add content to the game. As it is a gacha game, the added playable characters act as a content that players can explore and interact with. This game, as most others in the same genre do this with the help of the so called “banners”.

In gaming, banners refer to collections of items such as characters, maps, and loot, which can be obtained through “rolling”. These banners can either be permanently available or have a limited time offer. Games often feature a combination of both types of banners, with in-game advertising and retention efforts highlighting the exclusivity of the latter's components. To compensate for the limited availability, game companies sometimes make “reruns”. Reruns are just a repeated addition of the previously limited banner. In addition to the mentioned above types of content addition, sometimes developers hold in-game events. These events, and banners, all affect both the interest in the game and the interest in making content dedicated to that game.

According to the Player Counter service, players from Russia make up 6.52 % of all players. Russia is thus in the top 3 countries by active daily participation. Therefore, the authors focus on the Russian-speaking segment of the Genshin Impact fandom and consider Russian-language fanfiction in their analysis.

We are interested in players' reactions to updates, to marketing and advertising moves that attract user attention, the reasons for these reactions and how they are expressed. Our goal is to trace the correlation between fan activity and the publication/release of game updates, as well as the interdependence of the main themes and motivations of fan derivative and professional original content. In other words, the authors seek to determine the strength and direction of this correlation.

As we have said, the main target audience for both video games and fanfiction (its producers and consumers) is the younger generation. This new digital generation has competencies and skills not only in independent writing, but also in interpreting the other's writing, which are little mastered by the generation that teaches media literacy to them. As we know, “one of the most important tasks of media literacy education is to develop the audience's ability to analyze media texts of different types and genres, including fiction texts” (Fedorov, 2019: 244). Therefore, this study is useful for these educators. Learning about such cases equalizes the different generations in the media space.

## 2. Materials and methods

We took works (texts) posted on the platform Ficbook.net (“Fanfiction Book”, “Ficbook”, KF) as a source of our analysis. In 2007, a resource was established with the primary objective of catering to the creative endeavors of movie, TV series, and book enthusiasts. This platform allows

fans to share their literary work, utilizing characters, storylines, the art world, and other elements from their favorite works. By providing a space for these creative endeavors, the resource offers a unique opportunity for fans to explore their passions and showcase their talent to a wider audience. This has led to the emergence of a vibrant and diverse community, united by their shared love for popular culture and their desire to engage with it in a meaningful and creative way. At the time of our research, according to an analysis by SimilarWeb, Ficbook has 83.5 monthly visitors. This resource is the most popular not only in the field of fan fiction, but also in the field of books and literature in general.

If we talk about the principles this website works on we can say that registered users can publish both fan fiction works and original works written by them directly; translations of fanfiction and original works from foreign languages (most often only with the original author's permission); articles and research about fanfiction as a whole or a particular fandom. "Articles" are texts of a publicistic nature, and are divided into two types: in some particular fandom "Originals" - are articles about fanfiction art and writing (e.g. "Tips for a Beginning Author", "How to Take Criticism Properly", "Why Do We Want to Write Fanfiction?", "Copyright Problems When Writing Fanfiction", and so on); in other fandoms, these articles are written as a character analysis, reflections on a book or series, humorous notes (e.g. "Why Naruto Behaves Unlikely", "Death Note: Light Yagami – Villain or Hero?", "What to Do If You Got Trapped In the World of Hitman Reborn?", and so on).

Each fanfic being a way of expressing fan appreciation for a particular media product can also be appreciated. The author's work (as well as the author himself) receives feedback in various ways: the reader can simply put a "like mark" next to the work, write a review, this website also provides an award function, which users give to their favorite authors to endorse them and their work (an award is worth 25 coins, which without stock terms equals 25 real rubles), can subscribe to it if it's "in progress", can add it to his personal collection. In addition, fiction writers can track the number of views (this is visible only to authors) - the number of times the work has been opened in the browser. The views displayed by this number do not mean that the reader has read the text to the end or that they have started reading it at all - they have simply downloaded the page in their respective browser.

From fanfiction evaluations expressed in such a way, researchers and media producers can determine how many users (which equal fandom members) support a particular interpretation or opinion. In our case, we are going to determine the fans' evaluation of Genshin Impact based on fanfiction evaluations. Therefore, we use such metrics for our analysis.

First, we tried to calculate all of the fanfiction works published in the span of two years after the game's release (October 2020 - November 2022), but, as our research showed, some months were impossible to calculate properly, due to the website limitations. ("Results beyond page 100 are not available"). Therefore, the authors decided to filter the works suitable for analysis. Thus, we selected works according to the following criteria: it must be an original work – written originally in Russian, not a translation, and at the same time have the "completed" status. In total, more than 29056 works have been published ("more" - because in July 2022 the exact number of fanfics posted on KF was not possible to determine, the site still gives the "Results beyond page 100 are not available" response).

Having made a table with the distribution of works by months, we compared the results with the schedule of game updates.

### 3. Discussion

According to our research, there are no major studies on user interest and fan response, which would be expressed in textual creativity, not only in Russian, but in other languages as well. Foreign scholars focus on the analysis of playthroughs that guide other players through the action and story of a game, and argue that gamers "should be considered active creators of game meanings, as they exhibit many of the characteristics of traditional media fans" (Consalvo, 2003: 321). However, a large number of researchers had articles that are indirectly connected to our arguments (Algavi, Kharchenko, 2020; Algavi et al., 2021; Fedotova et al., 2023; Friess, 2021; Johansson et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Fuentes, Ulloa, 2022; Sapuridis, Alberto, 2022; Widjayanti, Anwar, 2020).

As previously stated, our main hypothesis is that the number of fan fiction works is directly connected to the "success" of the game updates. As we can see further in the results section of our

research, it proves to be true. However, it is important to note that correlation does not necessarily imply causation. In other words, just because there may be a relationship between the two variables, it does not mean that one is causing the other.

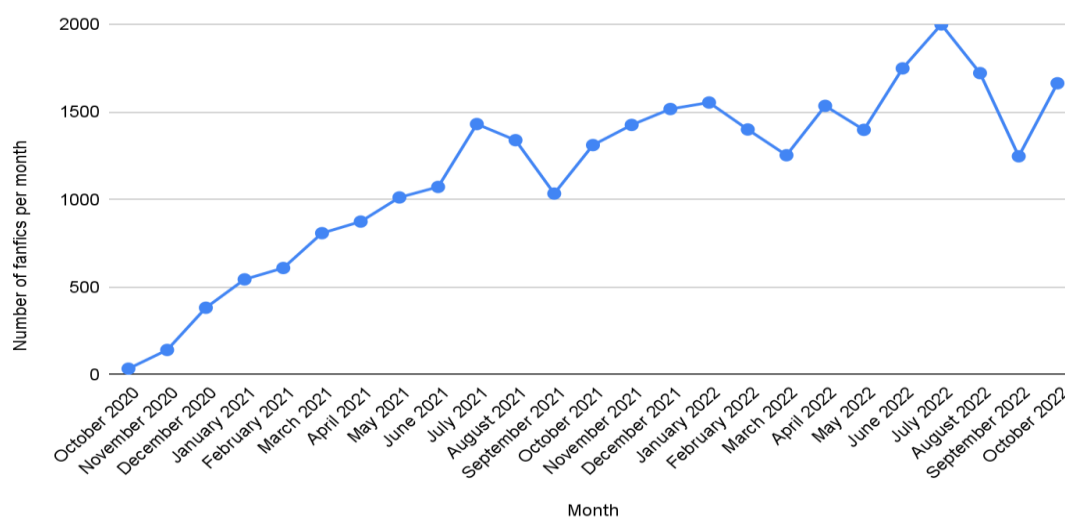
When discussing our findings, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of our study and potential alternative explanations for our results. For example, it is possible that the number of written fanfiction works is influenced by other factors such as the popularity of the game, the size of the fanbase, and individual preferences of fans and not only the direct connection to the success of the game's updates.

Moreover, future scholars who may be researching the same topic can expand on it by providing such valuable data as surveys or interviews.

#### 4. Results

As we described in our methodology, we took works (texts) posted on the platform in the span of 2 years and created a graph (Figure 1) according to our collected data.

Total number of works created in a taken period



**Fig. 1.** Total number of works created in a taken period

We found out that there were several dramatic jumps:

- July 2021: a sharp increase of 359 pieces of fanfiction works compared to the previous month.
- September 2021: a sharp drop of 305 fanfiction works compared to the previous month.
- October 2021: a steep increase of 277 pieces of fanfiction from the previous month.
- April 2022: a fast increase of 282 fanfics compared to the previous month
- June 2022: a jump of 351 fanfics compared to the previous month.
- July 2022: an increase of more than 251 pieces of fanfiction compared to the previous month (not possible to determine the exact number)
- August 2022: a precipitous drop of more than 278 pieces of fanfiction compared to the previous month (not possible to determine the exact number)
- September 2022: a steep drop of 475 pieces of fanfiction compared to the previous month
- October 2022: a month-on-month sharp increase of 417 pieces of fanfiction.

From the gathered data it is logical to assume that in the months when we recorded a sharp increase in published works, there were no in-game updates - the interest in the game faded, the monotonous game process quickly became boring, and one of the fan's coping mechanisms was to create their own content based on the game. Accordingly, during the months of sharp decline in the number of fanfics, on the contrary, updates with a lot of in-game content were published, which forced fans to forget about their writing hobby for a while. But after analyzing the updates, we found the following (Table 1):

**Table 1.** In-game updates

Month	In-game updates
July 2021	1 New Banner; new game region
September 2021	1 New Banner
October 2021	1 Rerun
April 2022	0
June 2022	0
July 2022	1 New Banner; summer event
August 2022	1 New Banner; new game region
September 2022	1 Rerun
October 2022	0

We found that not always a decrease in fanfiction was associated with an update, and vice versa, that an increase is associated with an absence of updates. In 6 cases out of 9, our expectations were confirmed: in April, June, and October 2022, the absence of updates was associated with an increase in fanfiction, while in September 2021, August, and September 2022, the presence of updates led to a decrease in published fan works.

L. Goralik, exploring the media fandom's propensity for creative writing and identifying the motives of fic writers, suggests that the "serial nature" of information flow plays a significant role in fanfic creation according to this or that canon: "while waiting for a new series or a new season, he may experiment with his own of foresight, adding an extra layer of thrill to his life by comparing his assumptions to the next phases of the original; he may comprehend and play each individual piece". According to the author, the main traditional approach of fic writers is "to interpret details and fill in plot voids left by canon authors for one reason or another" (Goralik, 2003). In the case of fandoms grown around gacha games in general and Genshin Impact fandom in particular, we see the same trend: in the absence of updates (which equals new series by Goralik's definition) fans are interpreting canon, making sense of new plot twists, new characters and game environments. This is what we see as the reason for the increase in the number of fanfics in the months of updates. In these cases, the number of fanfics is completely dependent on the release of updates. The correlation is direct.

Our assumption about the connection between the sharp drop in the number of fanfics and the proportional increase in the interest of the game and its updates is also confirmed by the officially published monthly revenue of character banners announced as part of the updates.

Thus, in September 2021 players spent \$33,020,905 to try to obtain a new character (Baal, or Raiden Shogun, Electro Archon, Guardian of Eternity, Immortal Shogun), in August 2022 – \$19,068,372 (Tighnari, or Avidya Forest Watcher), in September 2022 - \$26,780,298 (Ganyu, or the general secretary of the Liyue Qixing).

In only 3 of the months we reviewed, we found an inverse correlation: in July and October 2021 and July 2022, the updates that came out led to an increase in fanfiction. In these months, new characters were added:

- July 2021: Naganohara Yoimiya (The Queen of the Summer Festival, the Owner of Naganohara Fireworks) and Kamisato Ayaka (Shirasagi Himegimi, the Princess of the Kamisato House);

- October 2021: Tartaglia (Childe, Ajax, the Eleventh of the Eleven Fatui Harbingers);

- July 2022: Klee (Slippery Sun, the Spark Knight).

Interestingly, the developer revenues from these characters were also significantly lower: Naganohara Yoimiya and Kamisato Ayaka: \$8,615,144, Tartaglia: \$7,785,438, Klee: \$24,808,479. The latter figure stands out from the others because in addition to the introduction of a banner with the character itself, a major season-long in-game event was tied to his release, which was directly dedicated to that very character and his story.

We took a closer look at the fanfics published during those months and found that members of the fan community really didn't like the characters. We counted the number of fanfics in the selected 3 months where the characters that appeared in the update were the protagonists.



**Table 2.** The characters that appeared in the update were the protagonists

Month	Character	Number of fanfics
July 2021	Naganohara Yoimiya	2
	Kamisato Ayaka	23
October 2021	Tartaglia	292
July 2022	Klee	45

Thus, the number of fanfiction works with Naganohara Yoimiya accounted for 0.1 % of the total number of fanfics in that month, with Kamisato Ayaka - 1.6 %. In October 2021, fanfics with Tartaglia accounted for 22.3 % of the total number of fanfics published this month, and in July 2022, fanfics with Klee accounted for approximately 2 % (approximately, because it is technically impossible to determine the exact number of fanfics published this month).

We also discovered that in these published works the predominant theme is the presence of a love line. There are far fewer fanfics in the "gen" category (from "general audience," the story is centered on action or plot without an emphasis on a romantic line) than there are in the "het" category (from "heterosexual," romantic and/or sexual relationships between male and female characters), "slash" (focuses on romantic or sexual relationships between male characters) and "femslash" (focuses on romantic or sexual relationships between female characters) categories combined.

Thus, out of 2 fanfics with Naganohara Yoimiya 1 was written in the "slash" category, 1 in "femslash". Kamisato Ayaka's fanfics are divided as follows: 23 works total – 2 "gen", 2 "slash", 8 "femslash", 10 "het", and the rest represent "other types of relationships" and "a mixed category". Of the 292 fanfics featuring Tartaglia, 20 are written in the "gen" category, 172 are "slash", 84 are "het", the rest are "other types of relationships" with "a mixed category". Of the 45 works featuring Klee, 15 are written in the "gen" category, 13 are "slash", 5 are "femslash", 9 are "het", the rest represent the "other types of relationships" and "a mixed category" categories.

The cause of such distribution is the absence of a romantic line in the game itself: representatives of the active fandom (which equals fanfiction writers) cannot find such content in the game, so they transfer their expectations into fanfiction stories.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study explored the relationship between Genshin Impact updates and the creation of fan fiction works. We hypothesized that the quality of the updates would influence the number of fan fiction works created, and our findings supported this hypothesis. When the update was of high quality, players were more likely to become fully immersed in the game and less likely to feel the need to create new fan content. Conversely, if the suggested content has not fulfilled players expectations, players were more likely to try to fulfill their desires by creating new fan fiction works. And although our hypothesis was not completely true, the significant correlation can be seen.

Our study also highlights the significance of fan fiction in creating a community around a game and shows how it can reflect players' perceptions of the game's updates. Fan fiction can be seen as a way for players to express their creativity, explore their favorite characters and storylines, and ultimately, keep the game experience alive beyond the updates.

Finally, our findings have implications for the gaming industry as a whole. They suggest that updates should strive to meet players' expectations and provide a high-quality experience that fully immerses them in the game world. By doing so, game developers may be able to reduce the need for fans to create their own content and instead encourage them to engage more deeply with the game itself. Overall, this study sheds light on the complex relationship between fan fiction and game updates and provides insights into how they can both be used to enhance the gaming experience.

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## Brand Slogan and Tagline with Masculinity Role in L-Men Platinum Advertisements

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### Abstract

The study focuses on the construction of gender roles in L-Men advertisements. Using a cultural studies approach and a modified circuit of culture as a methodological and theoretical framework, this study aims to identify how gender roles are associated with production, representation, identity, and consumption. Furthermore, it can facilitate a broad contextual understanding of the Indonesian male identity's complexities and contradictions. L-Men is an Indonesian brand that produces a protein-rich drink that is intended to assist men in gaining muscle mass. The gender roles in L-Men Platinum advertisements are investigated in this study. The study reveals that advertising constructs the identity of ideal masculinity in Indonesian society through representation. L-Men advertising builds a toxic mindset in society, especially for males, by consistently using muscular models or actors in the advertisement. Also, it is stated in every L-Men advertisement from time to time that it still consistently uses the tagline "Trust me, It works", which implicitly instils a perception of its achievement in accomplishing a body goal for its customers. Thus, advertising has become an effective medium for commercializing products and constructing gender roles in society, particularly for men.

**Keywords:** advertisement, brand slogan, tagline, masculinity role, toxic traits.

### 1. Introduction

In the digital era, advertisement is an excellent technique to generate interest, engagement, and sales for a product, brand, or service. A brand slogan can become well-known to those interested in it through advertising. Because of the broadcast range and regularity of exposure, TV and internet ads have become the new highlights in mass media advertising. Behind the advertisement, the marketer must present the product to the public and interest those who see it. In an advertisement, the main factor that influences the consumption of processed food and beverages is the way of marketing it to potential consumers and creating an image of a brand (Andreyeva et al., 2011; Kemps et al., 2014; Stacey et al., 2017). In addition, they need to think creatively to develop better advertisements. Thus, the potential consumers have a reason to use a product from that commercial, as well as the objective of it.

Commercials are essential since they represent a society's current cultural trend and political environment and, most of the time, adapt the content to stay mainstream because the audience's impression of a commercial directly impacts their willingness to consume. In presenting the commercial, several construction patterns that allude to gender roles are common. Creating a new structure that can get the audience to agree on how this gender relates or what it should be like in

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society. In Indonesian advertising, for instance, L-Men Gain Mass defines how men should look and unconsciously constructs persistent toxic masculinity traits.

As opposed to the actual gender ascribed to a person at birth, gender roles are socially defined to fulfil and preserve specific cultural, religious, or political objectives. Advertising provides a framework for how gender roles are defined, perceived and affects viewers' perceptions of what is desirable and normal (Bandura, 2009; Bussey, Bandura, 1999; Karsay et al., 2019). Traditional gender roles put people in a binary system with a clear distinction between masculinity and femininity, in which men are expected to be rough, aggressive, and dominant. At the same time, women are meant to be meek and also submissive. A prevalent misconception is that patriarchal gender norms exclusively damage women, yet men are also victims of societal pressure and excessively high standards. According to research, men are straining to adhere to the hyper-muscular role and the meaning of men's social roles, and they want to be free of hegemonic limitations (Elliott, 2005). Besides, women in Western societies found men with a high muscle or waist-to-chest ratio attractive, and some evidence in non-Western cultures showed that women prefer men with strong bodies, so in parallel, men in societies that spread across four continents believe that women are attracted to men who are more muscular than average (Frederick, Haselton, 2007).

Men and women appearing in an advertisement can act as role models for viewers, thereby modelling their behaviour according to their observations and learning what it means to behave as "girls" and "boys" (Bussey, Bandura, 1999; Karsay et al., 2019). Advertisements shape society by using stereotypical images to build shared experiences among consumers. Advertisements reflect society and culture by promoting stereotypes, biases, and dominant values of patriarchal society so that they become a representation of the gender role of an advertisement (Cortese, 1999; Entman, Rojecki, 2000; Mastin et al., 2010; Wiles et al., 1995).

L-Men is a supplement designed specifically for men with ingredients that can put the body in an ideal shape (L-Men Official, 2021). It consists of different types of supplement protein for men specifically used, such as in L-Men Platinum, Gain Mass, Amino Bar, High Protein 2 Go, and so on. All of them are supplements that are intended to shape the male body for it to be more fit. Whey protein, which is contained in L-Men, is often used for weight loss purposes, both in men and women, based on the reason that protein consumption has a muscle-sparing effect and increases muscle mass and also a more significant satiety effect than carbohydrates and fats as well (Giezenaar et al., 2018).

This brand slogan consistently advertises its products using athletic-bodied models or actors. In the L-Men advertisement, a male representation may be considered a role model for other males. As a result, viewers adapt their behaviour after their observations and learn what it means to be a "man." It is also considered that similarities to media models and same-sex media models enhance the chance of the behaviour seen being replicated. Moreover, the toxic trait represented on the advertising constructs a mindset in males' behaviour to gain a muscular body not for the health matters but rather for attracting the opposite gender's attention. Masculinity has gradually been connected to hierarchy, which is linked to gender inequality in society (Ma et al., 2021). The researchers are interested in how advertisements construct male gender roles and develop a mindset in their audience through this portrayal of how men should look. The L-Men advertising entitled *Iklan L-Men 2021 | 20th Kepercayaan* is utilized as a source of information to obtain the necessary analysis findings. It was published on YouTube Channel L-Men Official on February 25, 2021.

Gender ideology is a constant hot issue, and the portrayal of gender roles in commercials as a marketing technique always evolves as social conventions develop. In a recent study, J.S.A. Falaq and D. Puspita (Falaq, Puspita, 2021) used critical discourse analysis to expose masculinity in L-Men advertising. The study discovered three layers of discourse structure (textual, discursive, and social-cultural). The L-Men advertising exposes society's creation of ideal masculinity. Furthermore, A.S.A. Prasetyo (Prasetyo, 2019) studied masculinity in selected L-Men advertisements. The research depicts masculinity as based on a man's aesthetic look, while the other depicts masculinity as based on a man's physical power. In another study, S. Florenta et al. (Florenta et al., 2022) researched the representation of masculinity in advertising text on YouTube as teaching material for Indonesian class VIII. The study reveals that masculinity and male image are contained in the ad text from 16 advertisements, one of which is the L-Men advertisement.

The researchers will focus on the construction of male gender roles in L-Men advertisements entitled *Iklan L-Men 2021 | 20th Kepercayaan* and how it builds toxic traits in society. The Circuit of

Culture by Stuart Hall is applied to this study to explore the four interrelated elements, production, representation, identity, and consumption.

## 2. Materials and methods

This study used Descriptive Qualitative method of L-Men advertisement in the YouTube video channel entitled *Iklan L-Men 2021 | 20th Terpercaya*. Therefore the writers choose the Descriptive Qualitative method to analyze L-Men advertisement to contextualize the gender role within the advertisement combined with a cultural study approach and work within the framework of the Circuit of Culture by Stuart Hall and another source about gender roles. This methodology is beneficial for the researchers because it can support the researchers in finding a clear description of this phenomenon (Magilvy, Thomas, 2009). The circuit of culture identification is the construction of identity and the marking of differences in production and consumption, as well as in the regulation of social conduct (Hall, 1997). This framework consists of representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation in no particular order. According to this view, these structures are envisioned and given meaning through processes of culture (Champ, Brooks, 2010). In summary, the framework guides our methodological and theoretical analysis as a particular cultural artefact moves around and through various articulatory moments in the context of a specific gender role.

## 3. Discussion

This study is designed to investigate the representation of gender roles represented through the advertisement of L-Men on YouTube using the framework of Circuit of Culture as presented in Figure 1. L-Men is a high-protein drink with the tagline "Trust Me, It Works" (L-Men Official, 2021). Furthermore, those elements are implemented in the L-Men advertisement, specifically in the advertising entitled *Iklan L-Men 2021 | 20th Terpercaya* to explore gender roles and their implications of toxic masculinity traits. Gender has made the distinction of roles, positions, duties, and division of labour between men and women based on the nature of women and men. It is regarded as suitable according to societal norms, practices, beliefs, or habits (Molony, 2020). Males are expected to be strong, aggressive, and dominating (Liu, 2022). In the context of advertising, language is manifested through texts that promote the relevant advertisement. These texts can be in the form of model selection, promotional sentences, and placement of all structures that build an advertisement. Through this, producers produce meaning, which consumers then read and consume.

The four processes in this circuit of culture (representation, identity, production, and consumption) can be used in analyzing L-Men product advertisements which are the corpus of this research. Promotional activities remain one of the most common strategies used in the consumer market, with the traditional goal of influencing customers' decisions and behaviour (Fan, 2022). From here, it can be seen what is represented by advertising, to whom it gives identity, how advertising producers produce meaning, how consumers capture the production of meaning, and what is behind the production of meaning - that processes synergistically create meaning in a context. Meanwhile, regulations are also not discussed because they do not have a significant relationship to the meaning or advertising representation process. Moreover, regulation relates to the rules set by those in power, whereas in advertising, there is no significant intervention in determining how an advertisement is produced.

### *Production*

In this study, the production refers to the cultural practice presented by the L-Men in advertising. L-Men constructs a concept of how the male should look and how it is depicted in every L-Men promotion through advertising. In the advertising, L-Men features models or actors with athletic and muscular bodies, with the implication that those who take these products on a regular basis, along with exercise, would be able to achieve body goals. L-Men is attempting to create a successful product by showcasing athletic models or actors in advertisements, implying that the product helps men attain the desired athletic figure. The goal of producing the advertising is expressed by saying a statement to engage potential consumers to buy the products.

Production, according to S. Hall (Hall, 1997), is the process of creating a communication message, product, or campaign, with an emphasis on tactical levels of public relations practice. As the interconnected elements within the cultural circuit are highlighted, this production is regulated by society's regulation, which plays an essential role in developing the mindset in the society.

In Indonesia, society is being constructed by a mentality of having a good body shape for males, which may attract females' attention and be seen as more appealing and confident, as it is represented consistently by L-Men advertising from time to time. Furthermore, the tagline being used is quite intriguing and makes it more attractive for their potential customers to consume the product.

#### *Consumption*

Power, ideology, gender, and socioeconomic class circulate and shape one another through consumption (Rosida, 2021). In this study, the notion of consumption refers to the brand or product and its involvement in the identity and representation of the brand. Those who try the product from that brand are considered active consumers interested in such brands.

L-Men markets its products to the public, particularly men who wish to have an athletic body. It is claimed that by taking high-protein milk drinks daily, along with regular exercise, they will be able to accomplish men's ambitions. The advertising reveals the creator's ideology and assumptions by representing the body goals of men that can be beneficial for the target marketing. Consumption of a single cultural product or practice will be empowering, degrading, rescinding suffrage, liberating, essentializing, and stereotyping (Rosida, 2021).

*"To be reliable cannot be instant. It takes time and proof. Achieve an athletic body with the trusted L-Men Platinum. Trust me, it works."* (L-Men Official, 2021)

The tagline implies that the product of L-Men Platinum is believed to assist males in gaining a good body shape. The advertising uses the model or actor with an athletic body to convince the viewers the product works. L-Men claims the product provides the most comprehensive ingredients to assist peak physical performance in any activity (L-Men, 2022).

Advertising is a powerful influence on how consumers negotiate gender daily (Zayer et al., 2019). The significant relationship between protein drink consumption and protein drink advertisement exposure in L-Men described in this analysis indicates that advertising targets those who have consumed or are being used to stimulate consumption among those who do not consume because of the representation and identity that is built.

#### *Representation*

Representation is a technique for preserving ideas or knowledge (Widodo, 2022). According to S. Hall (Hall, 1997), representation relates meaning and language to culture. It is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. Representation works through thought, representation systems, and language (Rosida, 2021). Both creating identity and stereotype are inextricably connected to the contestation area in which power is dominating.

Language is used in representation to express anything meaningfully (Hall, 1997). Language representation also implies that it plays a vital role in developing masculinity value; visual imagery is not the only one that may express the importance of represented manliness (Harti, 2019). Representation may be expressed in visible and culturally understood signs (Florenta et al., 2022). The form might be words, phrases, or stories that reflect principles and facts. In this study, to reveal the representation of the L-Men Platinum advertisement can be seen in the following expression:

*"Achieve an athletic body with the trusted L-Men Platinum."* (L-Men Official, 2021)

In this line, L-Men tries to construct the representation of masculinity by mentioning the phrase "athletic body". The term refers to a body form that is muscular, less curvy, and less body fat. Someone having a muscular body is frequently used to describe someone with a strong personality (Florenta et al., 2022). Athletic also refers to a man with a solid and muscular body, though women can be athletic. However, the term is more commonly accustomed to men, while women are more attracted to thin bodies with a curve.

By stating the line *"Achieve an athletic body with the trusted L-Men Platinum."* (L-Men Official, 2021), the advertisement tends to represent men's masculinity while also constructing an ideal identity of how men should look, which is muscular or athletic. Men and women in advertising may act as role models for viewers. As a result, viewers model their behaviour after their observations and learn what it means to be "feminine" and "masculine" (Karsay et al., 2019). In addition, a man with a muscular body seems more masculine in society because they have bigger muscles.

In Indonesia, jobs that require a lot of energy are usually done by men. That makes women, on average, have lower energy requirements than men. In addition, most men crave muscle more. If muscle is a fitness cue, women should be more attracted to muscular men than non-muscular

men. Based on the support of scientific statements and representations of men, L-Men builds an image that is more focused on men, starting from naming a brand to the model or actor who already has an athletic body used in their advertisements, which often show muscular bodies of men who exercise in the gym or sports centre. Furthermore, in another quotation:

"Trust me, it works." (L-Men Official, 2021)

In this quotation, the tagline of L-Men implies that their protein milk product successfully builds muscular bodies for men. The ideal body stereotype in society is expanding due to media representation, such as L-Men advertising, which depicts the perfect body as having an athletic or six-pack.

#### *Identity*

In this circuit, the representation of this brand through advertising has led to the construction of identity closely related to identity and stereotyping. Also, it is a cultural practice because, to sell, it must first attract, and to be interesting, it must engage with the meanings that the product has accumulated, and it must try to establish an identification between us, as consumers – and those meanings (Du Gay, 2013). The power of gender roles, especially in masculinity, builds toxic traits in society and how L-Men's brand stereotyped toxic masculinity in Indonesian males' identity. In studies, male bodybuilders pursued a muscular body mainly because they believed that, like cars and motorcycles, a muscular body was a status symbol (Marshall et al., 2020). S. Hall (Hall, 1997; Rosida, 2021) has shown that stereotypes tend to reduce, disrupt, experience, and insulate differences, particularly in the gender roles in advertising.

Muscles have long been a symbol of male dominance and have long been important for constructing a hegemonic masculine identity (Marshall et al., 2020; Wamsley, 2007). As the brand of high protein drinks, L-Men articulates its brand identity as a masculine brand that shows more muscular male characters, which shows the beauty of his body and is accompanied by heavy exercise. In fact, the L-Men brand is recognized that it can be consumed by both men and women while requiring a large amount of protein and depending on the physical activity performed. However, the role of women in advertisements for this brand is rarely seen, thus demonstrating the toxic trait of gender roles.

In particular, advertisements can reflect and reinforce that sexist and racist attitudes, opinions, and behaviors embedded can be attached to society, as represented in the L-Men advertisement (Mastin et al., 2010). In this study, the researchers found that the L-Men advertising tries to construct an ideal of masculinity in Indonesian society, leading to toxic traits of males and building a mindset of how men should look.

#### **4. Results**

The product from L-Men only gives the consumers support from the supplement to gain muscle. The ingredients of L-Men consist of some protein to help the consumers in daily effectiveness on building muscle. Besides, the consumers still need to do some exercise as well after drinking L-Men. If customers merely drink and do not exercise, it is the same as if they gain nothing and only taste a flavour from L-Men. The construction of gender roles in L-Men advertisements perceives an identity of toxic masculinity that is represented in the advertising. Most advertising showed half-naked muscular men exhibiting their bodies to the viewers.

Furthermore, L-Men construct assumptions of how men should look in society which gains toxic traits for males in Indonesia. In addition, L-Men tries to build the representation of masculinity in advertising. Moreover, ideal masculinity in L-Men Platinum advertising is constructed through representation. The advertisement attempts to describe an ideal representation of a male's body by employing actors or models with a perfect bodies and muscularity.

#### **5. Conclusion**

With technology's rapid advancement, advertising has become one of the most powerful marketing techniques. For brands, this marketing technique has become a great platform to promote their products to reach their target market broadly. In addition, while promoting the products, the brands such as L-Men bring up social issues like gender roles and toxic masculinity. This advertisement indirectly illustrates that men, especially those with an athletic and muscular bodies, are more reliable and can increase their self-confidence. The advertisement is also attempting to pique more people's attention to persuade them to purchase the product. In a creative advertisement, the other gender of a man, a female, appears to be interested in the product

and has a target market of bodybuilders. L-Men constructs an ideal of masculinity through the representation in the advertising. Besides, a toxic mindset of how men should look, which is portrayed in the advertisement as having a muscular body, becomes nurtured in Indonesian society. For further study, this kind of advertisement can be investigated through the lens of other theories, such as Semiotics by Roland Barthes, toxic masculinity, or sexism.

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## Social Media's Impact on Academic Performance of Higher Faculties During Covid-19 Pandemic in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan

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### Abstract

Social media become the dynamic tool of communication among academicians during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, a lack of research examines the impact of social media use on academic performance by higher faculties. In this study, TAM was applied as an analytical model and employed a survey as a quantitative research method. A total of 242 higher faculties from multi-disciplines of the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Hyderabad, (Sindh) Pakistan were chosen from 1st August 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021. The data was analyzed by SPSS version 26, based on the technology acceptance model, applied Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , regression, and Pearson correlation techniques. This study revealed the moderate correlation  $r$ -square = .674,  $p$  = 0.000, which indicated the use of social media, perceived usefulness, and teacher satisfaction have a significantly positive impact on the academic performance except perceived ease of use among higher faculties in the university. Therefore, this study concluded that the impact of social media usage on academic performance by teachers have shown significant pattern and transformed the traditional approach towards online for development of academic performance. However, social media can assist in better academic performance by promoting collaborative learning, and discussions. Hence, for further analytical evaluation, similar research must be conducted at private universities.

**Keywords:** social media impact, social media uses, academic performance, higher faculties, communication.

### 1. Introduction

The Corona-Virus disease was one of the world's most severe pandemics. Covid-19 has a harmful impact not only on faith, but also on every aspect of human life, including social, economic, and educational outcomes (Das et al., 2022). Schools and universities were also shuttered, affecting the activities, obligations, and responsibilities of millions of teachers and billions of pupils. In March 2000, the universities were shuttered in Pakistan, and transformed million of educational institutions systems on social media (Keeley, 2021).

In the global world a total 4.80 % social media user were identified, more specifically, in academic settings, social media has emerged as a popular topic of conversation (Willems et al., 2018; Jeffrey, 2022; Digital, 2023). In Pakistan, there were 71.70 million active social media users in January 2023, and 30.1 % of the total population and the users were equivalent 71.70 million in

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January 2022, 46.00 million in January 2021, and 37.00 million in January 2020 (Digital, 2023; Digital, 2022; Digital, 2021; Digital, 2020).

In the current context, the incorporation of technology-enabled higher education institutions to instruct distant learning education strategy (Mulenga, Marban, 2020). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the research reveals that proper use of social media fosters a new era of social learning, and teaching performance (Sobaih et al., 2020). Social media makes a successful association between teachers and students, where teachers put a lot of effort to integrate students (Taimur et al., 2021). Researchers have shown the social media's uses increase the collaborative learning and performance at academic institutions (Manca, 2020). Social media has been employed for collaborative learning, which significantly affects the sharing of knowledge and performance at institutions (Ansari, Khan, 2020). Researchers have also shown that social media has not only impact on instructors' performance but also on their effective communication in educational institutions (Zachos et al., 2018; Vandeyar, 2020). In addition to this, social media encourage learners to collaborate with their peers and share information (Greenhow, Lewin, 2016). Through, the use of social media, instructors engage in ongoing collaborative learning in which they share ideas and opinions (Shen et al., 2021; Phuthong, 2021).

The social media's uses for learning and teaching is still being resisted by faculties, who prefer to use only for networking than education purposes (Manca, 2020; Chugh et al., 2021). Although, in the case of teachers, who use social media have voiced concerns about its drawbacks and inadequate assessment and evaluation (Moran et al., 2011). Researchers also found social media usage may cause of distraction while study (Van et al., 2020). In the higher institutions, with limited technical adaptability, low competencies, exam anxiety and management of time were the higher discrimination between the higher and lower academic performance at universities (Talib, Sansgiry, 2012).

Nonetheless, at global level, the social media platform has had enormous impact on teachers' academic performance during the Covid-19 pandemic entails using social media as the sole and official platform for academic-related purposes, in accordance with the academic progress as determined by the TAM model. In Pakistan's higher universities has inadequacy studies on this subject. In order to fill this gap in the literature, current study is to examines impact of social media uses on maintain higher academic performance in universities institutions during Covid-19. The TAM model were adapted and modification in the constructive framework.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis of the Study: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is one of the most widely used research models for adapting and acceptance of information systems. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been thoroughly examined the individuals technology acceptance behavior in different information systems designs (Ajzen, Fishbein, 1977; Davis, 1985). The model (i.e. Technology Acceptance Model) was proposed to understand the causal relationships between internal attitudes, intentions, and beliefs of users in the acceptance of computer-based technology (Davis, 1989). Particularly, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has gained a lot of theoretical and empirical support (Davis, 1989). The explanation and forecasting of user acceptability of Information Communication Technology (ICT) at work (Davis, 1989). Its practical usefulness in the context of Information Communication Technology (ICT) (Chuttur, 2009).

It can be more clearly explained the variables that might impact teachers' academic performance by looking at social media use (SMU), perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), and teachers' satisfaction (TS). this study focused on TAM model to better understand the impact of social media uses on the development of the academic performance of higher faculties at universities.

In this study, the reviews of the literature have required to develop new theoretical insights by new constructs Social Media Uses (SMU), Perceptual Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease Of Use (PEOU), Teacher Satisfaction (TS), and Academic Performance (AP) in the Technology Acceptance Model. Hence, four hypotheses were tested the presence the findings as given below.

Social Media Uses (SMU): Social media uses contribute to the enhancement of academic performance, when it comes to standardizing the sustainability of education, which is positively related to instructors' academic performance (Al-Rahmi et al., 2019; Al-Maatouk et al., 2020). Therefore, this study examined the relationship between social media use and academic performance in the context of Pakistan's faculties of higher education. Social media is useful for improving academic performance (Ajjan, Hartshorne, 2008). Social media is used by higher education faculties in teaching (Moran et al., 2011). The instructors and learners tremendously use

social media. Therefore, this research supports the following hypothesis.

H1: Social Media Use (SMU) has a significantly positive impact on the Academic Performance (AP) of higher faculties.

Perceptual Usefulness (PU), and Perceived Ease Of Use (PEOU): Perceived usefulness (PU) defines as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his/her job performance" (Davis, 1989). Perceived ease of use (PEOU) refers to "the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would be free of physical and mental effort" (Davis, 1989). The study by N. Park, M. Rhoads, J. Hou, K.M. Lee (Park et al., 2014) institutional instructors were found to be substantially associated with perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) in performance. They showed that users rate the usefulness and simplicity of the systems higher when they judge the relative advantages. Perceived usefulness is the degree to which people feel using technology ultimately improves their performance (Liu, Huang, 2015). There were statistically significant satisfaction indicators for the reported usefulness and ease of use (Mostafa, 2020).

Hence, the hypothesis H2 and H3 have been proposed in this study.

H2: Perceptual Usefulness (PU) has a significantly positive impact on Academic Performance (AP).

H3: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) has a significantly positive impact on Academic Performance (AP).

Teacher Satisfaction (TS): Teacher satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which someone is satisfied with technology use (Alamri et al., 2020; Lee, Lehto, 2013). According to research, when instructors feel they have achieved their desired results, they are satisfied (Lee, Lehto, 2013). Hence, this research suggests the following hypothesis.

H4: Teacher Satisfaction (TS) has a considerable positive impact on academic performance of higher faculties.

Academic Performance. The term academic performance was constructed in the context of the acquisition of knowledge, and development of skills for the accomplishment of objectives in higher education (Alamri et al., 2020). Previous literature has analyzed social media's impact on academic performance (Krasilnikov, Smirnova, 2017). However, there is insufficient research on social media and academic performance in the context of Pakistan. As a result, this study attempted to determine the impact of social media on higher faculties' academic performance employ Technology Acceptance Model. In this study, academic performance was chosen as the dependent variable, and the independent variables are social media use (SMU), teacher's satisfaction (TS), whereas perceived usefulness (PU), and perceived ease of use (PEOU) are mediator variables (Figure 1).

## 2. Materials and methods

Survey Technique. A cross-sectional survey method has been used in this quantitative study. A questionnaire was designed with close-ended questions and included six sections. Section I asks for the demographic profile of the faculties of higher education, and sections II, III, and IV were designed on a five-point measurement of the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was adapted and modified to consist of Social Media Use (1 indicator), Perceived Usefulness (2 indicators), Perceived Ease of Use (3 indicators), Teacher's Satisfaction (4 indicators), and Academic Performance (5 indicators). During the screening of the data, four questions were excluded due to incomplete values. The remaining 49 questions were utilized in data analysis. The study was conducted from 1st August 2021 to 30 August 2021, when the situation with the Covid-19 pandemic was slightly better. Nonetheless, the sampling of this study were higher faculties of the University of Sindh, Jamshoro (main campus) in the Hyderabad city of Sindh province of Pakistan. According to the calculation used in the table sample size of R.V. Krejcie and D.W. Morgan (Krejcie, Morgan, 1970)  $n = 242$  teachers were selected out of  $N = 650$  from the multidisciplinary faculties of the University. The information gathered from the survey has been coded and entered data in the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The data was analyzed in the form of frequency distribution, Cronbach's alpha was applied for analyzing reliability and validity. Secondly, multiple regression and Pearson correlation were employed to determine the association between various variables of model, as undertaken in this study.

### 3. Discussion

Social media is a kind of communication tool that enables teachers and students to online collaborate learning while adhering to social distance norms (Vordos et al., 2020). In other words, social media is a subset of computer-mediated technology that spreads ideas, fosters social awareness, sparks interest in careers, facilitates in sharing information, social networking, and creates online academic communities (Abbas et al., 2019).

However, social media has a significantly faster pedagogy approach than the traditional one (Karimi et al., 2020). According to research conducted in France proved, social media has considered a teaching tool and appears to be a successful strategy for teachers (Erhel et al., 2022). Many teachers have perceived, social media as a valuable tool in teaching activities, such as communication with peers, students, and scholars, sharing lectures, notes, and other content among them (Bold, Yadamsuren, 2019). As part of this, academicians usually use micro-blogging, facebook, documents sharing via Google Docs, Research Gates, Google Scholar, blogs, audio-video sharing, and YouTube, these channels of communication are generally utilized by teachers (Gruzd et al., 2018). Besides this, teachers have frequently used Whatsapp and Pinterest to meet the requirements of higher education in Indonesia (CJM Lake et al., 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic was a natural calamity that influenced all people, especially, from the perspective of education. Nevertheless, teachers continued their services via social media and communication skills increase teacher's likelihood of interacting with peers and students, which enhance academic progress (Ahmad, Murad, 2020). Furthermore, higher faculties have managed their teaching, which has a higher impact on teachers' satisfaction, motivation, integrity, and performance (Putrawan et al., 2021). Besides this, teachers' mobile learning and technological expertise highly impact on their online lectures (Jie et al., 2020). In addition to this, wikis, podcasts and Whatsapp are valuable resources for sharing lectures among students (Sharma et al., 2022). It also encourages to use of social media for learning and interaction with professors and scholars (Alshwiah, Alaulamie, 2022).

On the other side of the fact, researchers have recognized that due to hindrances in using social media, lecturers in higher education have not fully grasped it (Fedock et al., 2019).

Higher faculties learn how to deal with social media as it continues to develop (Nouri et al., 2020). Social components of technologies are most frequent used in education. Those persons, who use social media regularly can communicate with one another and share information on a worldwide scale (Dwivedi et al., 2020).

Social media can help students, teachers, and educational institutions achieve their academic goals (Shafiq, Parveen, 2023). A. Alshalawi (Alshalawi, 2022) indicated 58 % more than an average of faculty members frequently users of social media application in their classes (Alshalawi, 2022). In addition to this, P.K. Boruzie et al. (Boruzie et al., 2022) study discovered that social networks were a helpful tool for enhancing higher education performance. In order to quickly and easy communicate with students, 49 % of teachers used social media in their classes (Sutherland et al., 2020).

In the context of Technology acceptance model Troussas et al. (Troussas et al., 2021) has shown indirect or direct significant impact on individual and concluded the social networking is a learning tool that can help learners to better perform and learn more.

Additionally, social media paint a more complete picture taking into account not only the variety of media used but also the range of goals connected to the use of social media in modern teaching initiatives (Gruzd et al., 2018). Respectively, the use of social media by teachers, such as Facebook, forces them to consider and position their preferred teaching role in these new social contexts (Jeffrey et al., 2022). In order to communicate with students quickly and easily, 49 % of teachers used social media (Sutherland et al., 2020). There are some factors have taken into account to develop digital literacy skills and evaluating performance (Willems et al., 2018). From previous studies indicate that using Facebook for academic purposes is beneficial, receives positive feedback, and researchers advise, its inclusion in teaching and learning (Niu, 2019).

On another side, E. Japhet et al. (Japhet et al., 2018) found in their study it offers chances for more adaptability, accessibility, and interactivity for motivating teaching and learning at the societal, groups and individual levels. S. Abdullah, Alshalawi (Abdullah, Alshalawi, 2022) indicated 58 % of academic staff members incorporate social media tools into their teaching. Further depicts that behaviour intention was strong predictor of the integration of social media applications in the teaching process.

#### 4. Results

*Respondents' Demographics Characteristics:* This section has provided descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

As can be seen in [Table 1](#), out of the 242 respondents, 133 (55 %) are male, and 102 (45 %) female teachers of university. On the age of the respondents, [Table 1](#) shows that 35 (14.5 %) of the respondents are aged from 26 to 30 years, 94 (38.8 %) are aged from 31 to 35 years, while 80 (33.1 %) are aged from 40 or older years. precisely, all the respondents are adult teachers above the age of 30 years.

**Table 1.** Respondents' Demographic Characteristics (n = 242)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	133	55
Female	109	45
Total	242	100
<i>Age</i>		
26-30	35	14.5
31-35	94	38.8
36-40	80	33.1
40 or older	33	13.6
Total	242	100
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Single	72	29.8
Married	127	52.5
Divorced	25	10.3
Widow	04	1.6
Not Answered	14	5.8
Total	242	100
<i>Respondents based on their Levels of Study</i>		
Master	48	19.8
Master of Philosophy	86	35.5
Postgraduate	108	44.6
Total	331	100
<i>Respondents designation</i>		
Professors	25	10.3
Associate Professors	106	43.8
Assistant Professors	56	23.1
Lecturers	26	10.7
Research Assistants	29	20.0
Total	242	100

Regarding respondent's marital status, [Table 1](#) shows that 72 (29.8 %) of the respondents were single and that 127 teachers (52.5 %) were married. 25 (10.3 %) teachers were divorced, only four was widow while 14 teachers did not answered.

Regarding the teachers' level of studies, [Table 1](#) shows that 48 (19.8 %) teachers are Master qualified in the study with 86 of them (35.5 %) Master of Philosophy and 108 (44.6 %) postgraduated. Regarding the respondents' designation, [Table 1](#) (above) shows that 25 (10.3 %) professors, and 56 (23.1 %) assistant professors from all faculty of disciplines. The remaining high percentages include 106 (43.8 %) respondents associate professors, 26 (10.7 %) lecturers, and 29 (20 %) research assistants.

*Measurement for the Reliability:* In order to make sure that the study measurements can accurately measure the target variables, it establishes important requirements related to their reliability of construct in Technology Acceptance Model. Regarding establishing reliability among variables [Table 2](#) shows significant tests is one of the procedures' key tests ([Hair et al., 2017](#)). In the article "PLS-SEM or CB-SEM: updated guidelines on which method to use", the authors defined reliability is part of the evaluation process ([Hair et al., 2017](#)).

The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  a value of social media use, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, teacher's satisfaction and academic performance all are more than 0.6. According to the researchers if the indicators are higher than 0.6, the findings are considered to be reliable (Hair et al., 2017; Moran et al., 2011; Ajjan, Hartshorne, 2008; Lee, Lehto, 2013). See Table 2 for details.

In addition to this, the measurement model's outcomes supported all hypotheses and confirmed the validity and reliability of the constructs. The results of the study indicated the acceptable range of >0.50 and >0.70 respectively (Fornell, Larcker, 1981). Since the construct's reliability and validity are acceptable (>0.50 and >0.70). Thus, the measurement model's initial run did not exhibit any poor indicators. See Table 2 for details.

**Table 2.** Reliability Analysis by Cronbach's Alpha Model Based Variables

Variables	Constructs	Items	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Authors Source
Independent	Social Media Use (SMU)	16	>.665	(Moran et al., 2011; Ajjan, Hartshorne, 2008)
Mediator	Perceived Usefulness(PU)	08	>.796	(Hair et al., 2003)
Mediator	Perceived Ease Of Use (PEOU)	11	>.752	(Hair et al., 2003)
Independent	Teacher's Satisfaction (TS)	03	>.793	(Lee, Lehto, 2013)
Dependent	Academic Performance (AP)	11	>.872	(Lee, Lehto, 2013)

*Determining the Correlation between social media use, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and teacher's satisfaction:* Table 3 shows that social media use is moderately correlated with its academic performance, where Person's  $r = .56$  and the significance level is  $p = .01$ . Hence, we can say that H1 was accepted. This result is also reflected in Figure 1 (Adapted and Modified Framework of Technology Acceptance Model in the study). F. Davis published an article "A technology acceptance model for empirically testing new end-user information systems: Theory and results" in 1985 the researcher tried to analyse the significant impact of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness on academic performance, because, all being equal, an easier-to-use system will result in higher job performance (Davis, 1985).

**Table 3.** Correlation between Variables

Variables	P	r
Social Media Use → Academic Performance	.01	0.565**
Perceived Usefulness → Academic Performance	.01	.758**
Perceived Ease Of Use → Academic Performance	.01	.590**
Teachers Satisfaction → Academic Performance	.01	.729**

Notes: \*\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed)

Table 4 shows the model fits as the model has tested significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) with  $F(4, 237) = 122.660$ ,  $p < .000$ ). The regression test presented a strong inference with an  $r$  square of .674. Approximately 67 % of variations of the dependent variable (Academic Performance) can be explained by independent variables SMU, TS and mediator variable PU, PEOU, and dependent variable AP. The adjusted  $r$  square value is 0.669. See Table 4 for details.

**Table 4.** Model Summary, Predictors: (Constant), SMAU, PEOU, PU, TS.

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	Standard Error of the Estimate	F
1	.821a	.674	.669	.38167	122.660

**Table 5** examined dependent, independent and moderate variables have highly significant at  $p < 0.01$ , with a 99 % confidence level. The standardized coefficients value (beta) of SMU ( $\beta = .212$ ), PU ( $\beta = .451$ ), and TS ( $\beta = .278$ ) implies that the independent variables have highly correlated with the dependent variable academic performance. However, the beta value of PEOU ( $\beta = .034$ ) appeared insignificant. F. Davis published an article “Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology” in 1989. The perceived usefulness had a much stronger association with the usage behavior of social media than perceived ease of use. See **Table 5** for details.

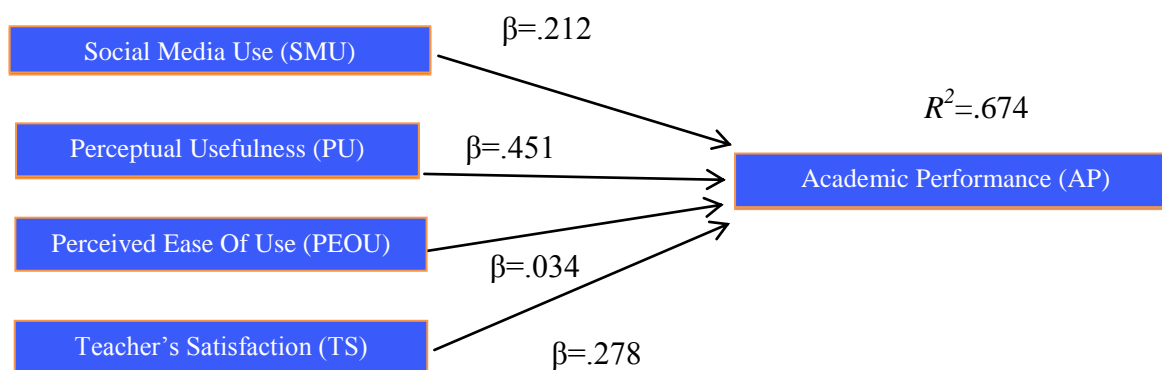
In addition, coefficients have assessed to ascertain the impact of each factor on the dependent variable. H1 evaluated the SMU has a considerable impact on the faculties AP ( $\beta = .212$ ,  $t = 3.016$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $VIF = 1.545$ ); H1 endorsed. Besides this, H2 supported that PU has a significantly positive impact on the AP of the faculties ( $\beta = .451$ ,  $t = .451$ ,  $VIF = 2.192$ ); H2 endorsed. However, the result of Hypothesis3 has evaluated the PEOU insignificant relationship with the AP ( $\beta = .034$ ,  $t = .460$ ,  $VIF = 1.993$ ); H3 non-supported. The last structural Hypothesis4 tested the TS significant positive impact of TS on AP ( $\beta = .278$ ,  $t = 6.211$ ,  $VIF = 2.249$ ); H4 accepted. The value of F-statistics is significant in the structural model. Overall, the t-test presented a strong bond between the SMU, PU, and TS with AP variables except for PEOU. See **Table 5** for details.

**Table 5.** Regression Analysis

Variable	B	$\beta$	t	P	Sig.	VIF
Constant	-.037		-.221	.825		
SMU	.212	.139	3.016	.003		1.545
PU	.451	.435	.451	.000		2.192
PEOU	.034	.024	.460	.646	.000*	1.993
TS	.278	.345	6.211	.000		2.249

Notes: Dependent Variable: AP

\* $p < .05$



**Fig. 1.** Adapted and Modified Framework of Technology Acceptance Model in the study.

## 5. Conclusion

Finally, it can be stated that the impact of social media usage on academic performance by teachers have shown significant pattern and transformed the traditional approach towards online for development of academic performance. However, social media can assist in better academic performance by promoting collaborative learning, and discussions that support their academic performance. The study was conducted from 1st August 2021 to 30 August 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic, when every institution transformed the teaching methods to online platforms. The academicians of public universities have accepted the digital platform for education purpose. The main purpose of the study is to examine the impact of social media use on academic performance of higher faculties at universities during pandemic Covid-19. According to the findings, virtually every faculty in each discipline have used social media extensively for academic promotion. Furthermore, The findings of the study ascertained some faculties perceived the use of



social media as an instrument to share, download, and learn resourceful educational material among their students. Moreover, universities teachers utilize Learning Management System (LMS) portal, which is web-based technology, use to design, implement, assess learning and teaching process. It has designed for the administrations, teachers, and students in all university's web page.

This research shows an adaptability of social media among higher faculties of University of Sindh, Jamshoro (Hyderabad) Pakistan in the framework based on the TAM led to these conclusions. Adaption of social media platforms in the perspective of learning and teaching tools are absolutely crucial for academicians. In this manner, teachers can effectively purpose new ideas, and collaborations and communicate knowledge among others. Nonetheless, faculties used to kept in touch with their colleagues and administration. Higher faculties have adapted the availability of social media as an instrument of learning and teaching. The results of the present study demonstrated the high impact between the use of social media and the teacher's academic performance at universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on the study's findings, some practices are suggested. When it comes to online learning via social media; necessary infrastructure, teacher's training, affordable internet packages, and proper resources should be provided by the universities and the government. The findings of this study would be a significant contribution to the higher education institutions for policymakers in developing policies that support technology integration. Furthermore, this approach could assist in useful benchmarks and preliminary references for technology integration during future university closures due to epidemics. There are a few limitations, despite the interesting findings of the study. The sampled area was the only public university, "The University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Hyderabad". Thus, the results of the study cannot be generalized to the overall Pakistan context. Hence, for further analytical evaluation, similar research must be conducted at private universities.

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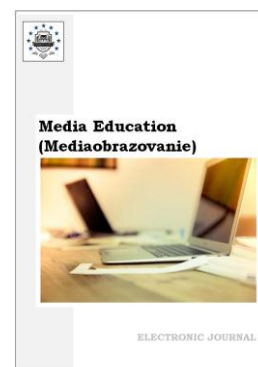
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## Content Forecasting and Assessment of Methods to Develop Teachers' Media Competencies

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### Abstract

The purpose of the article, to predict the actual content of teachers' professional competencies that ensure the productive use of media and digital resources in solving pedagogical tasks, to propose ways to form such competencies by media means. With regard to the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made. A modern educator needs competencies related to the search and selection of media products and digital technologies for solving pedagogical tasks (orientation-constructive), designing an educational process that allows them to realize their pedagogical potential (design), organizing individual and group educational and cognitive activities of students in a virtual environment (organizational), pedagogical communication in a virtual environment (communicative), the use of media- and digital resources in the educational process, taking into account individual requests and special needs of students (inclusive), ensuring the safety of the media and digital resources used by the teacher and students (health-saving), continuous formation and self-development of digital and media literacy and culture (developing), creation of new pedagogical practices by means of integration of traditional, media- and digital means (innovative), ensuring the humanistic orientation of the process of using digital and media tools to solve pedagogical tasks (humanistic). To develop such competencies, it is necessary to involve media: cinema, educational video content, electronic educational resources, etc.

**Keywords:** teachers, educators, media competencies, teachers' media competencies, forecasting the content of media competencies, formation of media competencies, cinematography, media.

### 1. Introduction

Information and communication, digital and media resources, technologies are increasingly penetrating both into the daily life of people and into the educational process implemented at different levels of education (preschool, school, vocational school, higher, additional education). Electronic presentations, textbooks, tests, learning platforms, online course designers, computer simulations, simulators, 3d models, virtual laboratories, teaching gadgets, distance learning technologies, pedagogical technologies based on artificial intelligence, blended learning and other assets are becoming an integral reality in education.

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Turning to digital technologies and media resources changes the content of a teacher's professional activity. New pedagogical functions and tasks are emerging: search and selection of digital and media resources, tools, electronic educational resources; design (pedagogical design) of their application (for example, designing online courses); organization of independent activity of students with such resources; automation of monitoring learning outcomes, establishing feedback; ensuring the safety of the use of electronic resources, etc. Some authors point to a new type of teacher's activity – media educational (Izotova et al., 2022). Digital tools are beginning to identify the logic of learning. Such areas of pedagogical science and practice as film pedagogy are developing (Dorofeeva, 2021; Kolokolnikova, 2021; Sitnikova, 2020; Zheltova, 2021), media education (Fedorov, 2013; Plotnikova, 2019), digital didactics as a "scientific discipline about the organization of the learning process in a digital society", complementing and transforming traditional concepts and principles of didactics in relation to the conditions of the digital environment (Oreshkina, 2021: 70) and as an educational practice.

At the same time, it should be understood that media and digital technologies are just the means, and their didactic and educational effect largely depends on the teacher, on his personal and professional qualities, charisma, willingness to use these resources and technologies for pedagogical purposes. On the one hand, digital and media resources and tools open up a huge field of possibilities in terms of personalization, individualization, differentiation of learning, adaptive education that adapts to the pace and abilities of the student, asynchronous, remote pedagogical communication, interactive interaction of students, instant feedback, automation of learning management processes, visual presentation of educational material, the use of various channels of perception of the educational information, the development of students' critical thinking, self-organizational skills, etc. On the other hand, inept, unprofessional, ill-considered use of media and digital resources by a teacher, their poor selection increases the risks of their negative impact on the development of the personality of students, their physical, mental and mental health; in this case, media and digital technologies only aggravate the teacher's unprofessionalism, enhance the undesirable effects of ineffective pedagogical practices and reduce the quality of education.

In this regard, it is important to understand which competencies a teacher needs today for the successful use of media and digital resources and technologies, which will be required in the future, which competencies are common (optional) for different levels of education, and which are specific for a certain level, which competencies are better developed by teachers, and which are insufficient, how teachers and students themselves assess the relevance of certain competencies.

The purpose of this article is to generalize the available experimental data, scientific research and expert assessments to predict the actual content of professional competencies of teachers, ensuring the productive use of media and digital resources and technologies in solving pedagogical problems, to propose ways of forming such competencies by media means.

## 2. Materials and methods

The following methods were used to achieve the goal:

- analysis and generalization of national and foreign studies, regulatory documents describing the competencies necessary for teachers to use information and communication, digital and media resources, tools, technologies and methods of their formation in the educational process;
- systematization of information and communication, digital and media resources used in education, tasks of using these resources by teachers and forecasting on this basis the content of teachers' media competencies, classification of such competencies;
- expert assessments of the content of teachers' media competencies.

## 3. Discussion

In national and foreign studies, regulatory documents, attempts are made to identify the competencies necessary for teachers to use information and communication, digital and media resources and technologies in the educational process.

Digital literacy is singled out as an actual quality of teachers and students in a digital environment – "the ability to safely and appropriately manage, understand, integrate, exchange, evaluate, create information and access it using digital devices and network technologies to participate in training" (Efremova, 2022: 77).

A number of authors substantiate the need for teachers to develop digital competence, which is understood as "a set of competencies for working in a digital environment and with digital products, including activities in creating and collecting data, processing and analyzing them, as well as automating processes using computer technology" (Davydov et al., 2017: 239-240).

The European Framework of Digital Competencies of Teachers (DigCompEdu) includes 22 competencies necessary to solve 6 key tasks:

- use digital technologies to improve teaching;
- select high-quality digital educational resources;
- develop, plan and implement digital technologies at all stages of the educational process;
- use digital tools to evaluate learning outcomes, establish feedback, analyze digital data in order to further support students;
- to expand the rights and opportunities of students by means of digital technologies;
- to promote the development of digital competencies of students (Redecker, 2017).

In the Professional standard "Teacher" (Professional Standard, 2013), approved by the order of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation No. 544n dated October 18, 2013 (with current amendments), the labor activity is titled "Formation of skills related to information and communication technologies". Among the skills required of a teacher, the following is highlighted: "to apply modern educational technologies, including information, as well as digital educational resources"; "conduct training sessions based on achievements in the field of pedagogical and psychological sciences, age physiology and school hygiene, as well as modern information technologies and teaching methods"; "use modern assessment methods in the context of information and communication technologies (maintaining electronic forms of documentation, including electronic journals and diaries of students)"; "formation of a material and informational educational environment that promotes the development of the abilities of each child and implements the principles of modern pedagogy"; "professional use of elements of the information educational environment, taking into account the possibilities of using new elements of such an environment that are absent in a particular educational organization"; "use of information resources in working with children, including distance learning resources, assistance to children in their development and independent use of these resources"; "formation of students' ability to use information and communication technologies in solving the problem where it is effective"; "formation of students' attitude to communication in the widest possible context, including in hypermedia format" (Professional Standard, 2013).

National authors refer to the components of digital competence as knowledge, skills, experience that ensure the successful solution of the following tasks by teachers:

- identification, evaluation, selection of digital resources and information and communication technologies (ICT) for solving specific didactic tasks;
- development of author's electronic teaching materials that take into account the diverse needs of students;
- the use of digital tools for organizing collaborative learning and self-education;
- improvement and automation of evaluation activities using ICT and digital tools;
- development of students' digital competencies, educating them as citizens of the digital world;
- continuous professional self-development using digital tools and technologies, networking (Puchkovskaya, 2020).

E. Izotova, T. Avdulova, M. Paramonova, O. Sorokina, E. Surudina (Izotova et al., 2022) introduced the concept of "media competence of a modern preschool teacher", which means readiness to search, create and exchange digital content and experience directly in the digital environment. In the structure of such competence, the authors distinguish:

- the central construct (knowledge and skills in the field of designing educational products in the media and digital environment and their application in practice, including in hybrid education);
- personal qualities contributing to the implementation of the central construct: emotional intelligence; personal and professional flexibility, adaptability in problematic and uncertain situations; the ability to solve several professional tasks simultaneously in conditions of persistent interference; knowledge and skills in the field of ensuring the psycho-emotional well-being of children in an educational organization; the ability to prevent emotional burnout and maintain emotional stability.



To study these qualities, the authors have developed a multifactorial questionnaire "Personal and professional qualities of a modern preschool teacher: perceptions and deficits".

The works of national and foreign authors substantiate the importance of teachers' development of certain relevant skills and personal qualities necessary for the successful use of digital and media resources in education, such as critical thinking, the ability to organize team learning in a virtual environment, etc.

R. Ubell (Ubell, 2010) emphasizes the relevance of the formation of teachers organizing online training, competencies related to the organization of teamwork for students in a virtual environment. The author identifies the following skills within this competence: to integrate teamwork into the online learning process; to select and apply the best methods of organizing virtual team interaction, technologies of productive cooperation; to organize the implementation of effective, competitive, working projects by teams; conduct electronic testing and apply other methods of pedagogical assessment, self- and mutual assessment; manage virtual teams; leadership skills, mentoring and conflict management in virtual teams.

Sh. Sen (Sen, 2023) notes the importance of the teacher's skills and qualities that ensure the involvement of students in the process of structuring the training course, its content, and the digital and media resources used.

R. Wright, J. Sandlin, J. Burdick (Wright et al., 2023) emphasizes the need to develop critical media literacy of teachers in the environment of total disinformation, i.e. the ability to analyze the content of media content from the standpoint of compliance with scientific concepts, humanistic values.

S. Schmidt (Schmidt, 2022) points out the importance of the development of critical thinking of teachers for the analysis of information presented in the media and Internet sources.

A. Oreshkina (Oreshkina, 2021) justifies the development of students' thinking as one of the main tasks of introducing innovative technologies, including digital pedagogical technologies.

Many scientists and practical teachers note that when using digital and media technologies, it is important to avoid a situation where such technologies will control the teacher and students, turn from a means into an "idol", fully automate, technologize the educational process, leaving no room in it for the expression of personal values and interests of the teacher and students, the transfer of cultural traditions from one generation to another through live communication, joint activities. In this regard, the importance of the humanization of digital education, the priority of humanistic pedagogical paradigms, norms and values is noted. Thus, J. Pacheco (Pacheco, 2021) notes the need for teachers to adopt a "new norm" of education in the context of digitalization, according to which the educational program is built as a "moving image", a "constant expression of subjectivity", a "complex conversation" that introduces students to diverse, contradictory ideas about the world, its problems and forms of knowledge to solve them; the emphasis is placed on the formation of mentality, identity, the formation of problem thinking.

Another important skill of teachers in the conditions of digitalization is ensuring the social and psychological well being of students and teachers, creating a psychologically comfortable climate, preserving the physical and mental health of participants in the educational process, preventing Internet addiction and deformations. The relevance of such skills is emphasized by a number of authors (see, for example, N. Chudochkina (Chudochkina, 2019)).

The content of media competencies should include the teacher's readiness to fulfill a number of norms and requirements for the use of digital and media resources in education. In particular, they are reflected in Federal Law No. 436-FZ "On the protection of children from information harmful to their health and development", in the Concept of Information Security of Children in the Russian Federation, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1105-r dated April 28, 2023, in the National Standards GOST R 53620-2009 "Information and Communication technologies in education. Electronic educational resources. General provisions", GOST R 57724-2017 "Information and communication technologies in education. The textbook is electronic. General provisions", etc.

In addition, it is important for a teacher to be guided not only by traditional teaching principles, but also by the principles of digital didactics. S. Filippova (Filippova, 2022) lists such principles in relation to professional education:

- the principle of student dominance: emphasis on independent search activity of students with electronic educational content;

- the principle of personalization: giving the student the opportunity to choose the speed and level of assimilation of educational material, its content, media and digital resources;
- the principle of pedagogical expediency of the digital and media resources used;
- the principle of social adaptability: the adaptation of the teacher to the peculiarities of the perception of information by specific students, the ability to quickly adapt;
- the principle of learning in cooperation: systematic establishment of feedback by traditional and network methods;
- the principle of practice-orientation: consideration of theoretical material using specific life and professional examples;
- the principle of saturation of the educational environment with electronic educational resources;
- the principle of multi-modality: the use of different channels of perception with the help of multimedia;
- the principle of rapid and objective assessment, including through electronic testing.

Thus, the researchers note that teachers, for the successful use of digital and media resources and technologies, need special competencies related to the identification, evaluation, selection, creation of such resources; their use for automation of pedagogical functions, organization of individual and group independent work of students with electronic educational content, pedagogical interaction in the digital and media environment, ensuring security of their application. The basis for the implementation of such competencies are personal qualities such as critical thinking, emotional intelligence, personal and professional flexibility, adaptability, multitasking, the ability to act adequately in conditions of persistent interference, as well as the acceptance and implementation of humanistic pedagogical values (development of subjectivity of students, personalization of learning, emphasis on the development of thinking, organization of search activities, etc.).

In a number of works, the idea is expressed that the formation of digital and media competencies of teachers should be carried out using digital and media tools and means. Thus, D. Prokhorov ([Prokhorov, 2023](#)) notes that the cross-course training and self-education of mathematics teachers in order to prepare them for work in the conditions of digitalization should be carried out using a web-based learning system. V. Toiskin, V. Krasilnikov, K. Korchak ([Toiskin et al., 2023](#)) substantiates the need for the formation of information and communication competence of teachers using the tools of digital didactics.

A team of scientists of Samara State Socio-Pedagogical University under the leadership of O. Bryksina, N. Kislova, S. Leonov, O. Pugach, S. Sushkov ([Bryksina et al., 2022](#)) has developed an open online course "Blended learning in school humanities education" within the framework of a state assignment in order to prepare school teachers of the humanities cycle for the use of mixed learning technologies. The course is hosted on the open education platform. The result of mastering the course is the creation by the teacher on the Stepik platform of his own online course for schoolchildren or the development of one of the models of mixed learning on the subject taught.

Volgograd State Socio-Pedagogical University has developed and implemented the practice of assessing the quality of students' pedagogical practice based on traditional forms of control and digital footprint ([Smykovskaya, Kryuchkova, 2023](#)).

The method of film pedagogy ([Sitnikova, 2020](#)), media practice ([Danilenko, Lopatina, 2022](#)), cinema-meeting, cinema technology, festival of educational cinema ([Kislyakov et al., 2021](#)), forms of creative activity based on the material and means of cinematography ([Konkina et al., 2021](#)), work with film cases are being actively introduced into the training of future teachers ([Mikhailova, Efremova-Shershukova, 2022](#)), student media club ([Chelysheva, 2022](#)).

#### 4. Results

The analysis of scientific research made it possible to assume that the basis, the matrix for predicting the content of teachers' media competencies can be:

- types of digital and media resources, tools, technologies used by teachers in the educational process, and pedagogical tasks solved with the help of these resources, tools, technologies;
- pedagogical functions performed by the teacher.

The level of technological progress achieved by mankind offers the teacher a wide range of information and communication, digital and media resources, tools, technologies that allow automating the educational process and creating new pedagogical practices. The named resources,

tools and technologies, based on the research carried out (Karlov et al., 2020), can be classified into three groups according to the pedagogical tasks of their application:

*Group 1. "Tools for automating educational process management"* – digital and media tools that allow automating individual actions of a teacher, pedagogical processes and functions, and managing the educational process: electronic (digital) educational platforms (Moodle, Skillbox, Yandex.Textbook, Uchi.ru, Yaklass, "Russian Electronic School", Foxford, Edu.Skyeng, Mobile electronic education, 1C: Education 5. School, Education, Lecta, "New Disk", etc.), means of electronic evaluation of educational results (electronic testing, electronic portfolio, digital footprint tracking, electronic survey using a chatbot, evaluation using virtual reality technologies, proctoring, etc.), systematization and analysis of assessment results (electronic diaries, journals, statements, spreadsheets, graphs, charts, the platform "Diary.ru", etc.), tools for designing individual educational programs, trajectories using artificial intelligence, designers of online courses ("AutoCreate" program, Stepik platforms, Open.edu etc.).

*Group 2. "Electronic educational resources"* that allow systematically presenting, storing and distributing educational materials (electronic educational content), organizing independent study of educational material: platforms of mass open online courses, libraries of video tutorials ("InternetUrok.ru"), electronic library systems, databases, educational gadgets, etc., as well as electronic educational resources created by teachers themselves or jointly with students (video lectures, instructional videos, electronic presentations, textbooks, workbooks, etc.), including using platforms ("Kahoot!", "LearningApps", "Stepik", etc.).

*Group 3. "Interactive visual aids in teaching"* – digital and media resources, tools, technologies that allow you to visually present educational material and create multimedia, interactive educational content: interactive educational videos (for example, thematic how-to channels on Youtube, Rutube, etc.), feature films, documentaries, programs for preparing electronic presentations (Power Point, Canva, etc.), electronic whiteboards (Miro, Padlet, etc.), virtual and augmented reality technologies (for example, programs for creating 3d models, interactive maps and their superimposition on each other (for example, geographical map and tourist sites or historical events), etc.

*Group 4. "Means of automation of pedagogical and educational communications"* – information and communication, digital and media tools that allow to organize educational interactions between teachers and students, both synchronous and asynchronous: messengers, e-mail, tools for organizing group work on documents, presentations and tables, webinar rooms, remote interaction environments (Webinar, Skype, Zoom, Discord, Microsoft Teams, etc.), social networks (for example, thematic Telegram channel), forums and chats, survey tools ("Questionnaire", "Testologist", etc.), platforms for organizing joint project work (joint implementation of educational and scientific projects by several participants located in different geographical locations), etc.

*Group 5. "Means of forming practical skills and abilities by means of virtual environment"* – digital and media tools that allow students to form and develop skills and abilities that they do not have the opportunity to develop in real life: computer training games, simulators, training applications, etc.

Tools and technologies based on the integration of traditional, digital, media tools and technologies and *representing new pedagogical practices* can be allocated to a separate group: technology of mixed learning (models "Station rotation", "Inverted classroom", etc.), media practice, digital portfolio, joint creation and editing of knowledge maps and communication diagrams, etc.

These tools and technologies are used by the teacher within the framework of performing the following traditional pedagogical functions: gnostic, constructive, design, organizational, communicative, reflexive (Kuzmina, 1970). However, the use of digital and media tools changes the content of these functions.

Based on the selected groups of digital and media tools and pedagogical functions, we predicted the content of the teacher's media competencies:

*Orientation and constructive competencies:*

- knowledge of modern information and communication, digital, media resources, tools, technologies that can be used for pedagogical purposes;
- the ability to navigate the variety of media and digital tools and tools to assess their pedagogical potential and the risks of using such tools for pedagogical purposes;

- the ability to quickly master new digital and media tools;
- the ability to search for media and digital means and to select the means necessary to solve specific didactic and educational tasks.

Orientation-constructive competencies ensure that the teacher successfully performs gnostic and constructive functions and solves the problems of searching and selecting digital and media tools.

*Design competencies:*

- the ability to design an educational process that contributes to the full realization of the pedagogical potential of digital and media means and reduces the risks of their negative impact on the quality of education;
- ability to set or design goals, content, stages of the educational process using digital and media tools based on humanistic pedagogical values (unconditional acceptance of all students, priority of their personality development, subjectivity in education);
- pedagogical design skills (lessons using digital and media tools, online courses, electronic educational environment);
- the desire and ability to involve students in the design of the educational process using digital and media tools (skills of joint design of the educational program, goals, content, methods, means of education and upbringing).

Design competencies ensure that the teacher successfully performs the design function in the conditions of digitalization and solves the tasks of planning the process of realizing the pedagogical potential of digital and media resources and tools.

*Technologizing competencies:*

- the ability to use digital tools in solving individual pedagogical tasks and functions: visual presentation of educational information, systematic presentation of educational material, the control of learning outcomes;
- the ability to automate pedagogical actions and functions using digital technologies;
- the ability to use open electronic educational resources.

Technologizing competencies contribute to the teacher's performance of design and organizational functions and solving the tasks of automating pedagogical actions with the help of digital tools.

*Organizational competencies:*

- the ability to create an understandable, user-friendly and attractive electronic educational environment for students, saturated with educational materials, digital and media resources corresponding to their age, cognitive interests;
- the ability to organize individual educational and cognitive activities of students with digital and media resources, including open electronic educational resources (electronic libraries, mass open online courses, video lectures, video tutorials, training tests and assignments posted in free open access), to motivate them to independently search and study such resources;
- the ability to organize real and virtual interaction of students in group learning activities, to organize project, educational and research activities, to form and motivate learning teams that educate children and adult communities.

Organizational competencies ensure that the teacher successfully performs the organizational function and solves the tasks of organizing individual and group work of students with digital and media resources.

*Inclusive competencies:*

- knowledge of the pedagogical potential and risks of using digital and media resources in inclusive education of students with special educational needs (students with disabilities, behavioral and emotional disorders, in difficult or socially dangerous situations, gifted, migrants and foreign language speakers, representatives of national, religious and other minorities, etc.);
- the ability to productively use digital and media resources in inclusive education, taking into account individual requests and special educational needs of students, to use their teaching, educational, correctional and developmental potential;
- the ability to reduce the risks of social isolation of students with special educational needs in the context of digitalization of education;
- create child-adult communities that promote the inclusion of all students in the school community, using digital and media tools for these purposes (for example, watching and discussing national and foreign films about people with special educational needs, their education and upbringing).

Inclusive competencies contribute to the successful implementation of the teacher's communicative and organizational functions and the productive use of digital and media tools in solving specific tasks of inclusive education.

*Communication competencies:*

- knowledge of information-communicational, digital and media tools that allow to organize pedagogical communication in a virtual environment (messengers, social networks, chatbots, etc.);
- understanding the risks of the negative impact of virtual communication on the formation of emotional, spiritual, moral and other spheres of personality; the ability to reduce such risks, observing the necessary balance of live and virtual communication, developing emotional intelligence, etc.
- the ability to organize productive pedagogical communication in both real and virtual environments;
- the ability to organize both synchronous and asynchronous pedagogical communication, feedback with students, motivating them to positive personal changes.

Communicative competencies contribute to the successful performance of the teacher's communicative function and the solution of the tasks of organizing pedagogical communication in a virtual environment.

*Health-saving competencies:*

- knowledge of the risks of the negative impact of digital and media means on the physical, mental and spiritual health of students;
- the ability to reduce such risks through the proper organization of students' work with digital and conventional media resources and the selection of the content at such resources;
- the ability to recognize, prevent, overcome the phenomena of cyberbullying, disinformation of students, propaganda of nationalism, violence, aggression, cruelty in Internet sources;
- the ability to critically comprehend the content of the digital and media resources used, to develop such an ability in students.

Health-saving competencies contribute to the successful performance of the organizational function by the teacher and the solution of the tasks of preserving the health of students in the conditions of digitalization of education.

*Developing competencies:*

- the ability to discover and use the developing potential of digital and media tools for the purpose of their own development and the development of students;
- the ability to ensure the orientation of the educational process with the use of digital and media resources to the zone of proximal development of students, to create problematic learning situations with the use of digital and media resources;
- the ability to create pedagogical conditions conducive to the development of students' self-organization skills by means of working with digital and media resources in an electronic educational environment;
- the ability to organize the spiritual and moral education of students by means of digital and media resources (education of the culture of communication on the Internet, the exclusion of cyberbullying, etc.);
- the desire for constant self-development of digital competencies and media competencies, self-education in the field of digital didactics, media literacy.

Developing competencies contribute to the successful fulfillment by the teacher of the organizational function, the solution of developing pedagogical tasks with the help of digital and media means.

*Humanistic competencies:*

- awareness of the priority of humanistic pedagogical values in digital education, the priority of "human dimension" (V.V. Kraevsky) over technologization, prevention of situations when digital tools, and not the teacher, begin to control the logic, the content of the educational process, pedagogical communication;
- education of students as citizens of the digital world, accepting and implementing spiritual and moral values;
- the ability to ensure the orientation of the educational process with the use of digital and media resources for the development of students' subjectivity by including them in the design and implementation of this process, in the development of electronic educational content.

Humanistic competencies contribute to the successful implementation of the teacher's communicative function and the solution of the tasks of personal development of students in the process of digitalization of education.

*Innovative competencies:*

– the ability to create new pedagogical practices by means of integration of traditional media and digital means when the use of digital tools is not limited to the automation of individual pedagogical functions;

– ability to create your own electronic educational content, electronic educational resources;

– ability to implement web design of created electronic educational resources;

– the ability to create educational digital and media products together with students (educational gadgets, videos, online courses, 3d models, online lessons and lectures, electronic textbooks, tests, assignments, exercises, cognitive maps) etc.

Innovative competencies contribute to the successful implementation of the teacher's design and organizational functions and solving the tasks of modernization, improving the quality of the educational process implemented with the use of digital and media tools.

The relevance and expediency of the selected competencies were evaluated by experts, who were leading scientists in the field of pedagogy, digital didactics. Experts were asked to assess the relevance of each group of competencies in the range from 1 to 3 points (1 point – low, 2 points – average, 3 points – high). 11 scientists took part in the expertise. During the analysis of the results, the arithmetic average score was calculated and a hierarchy of competencies was built according to the relevance and demand of the competence (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Hierarchy of media competencies of a teacher (based on the results of an expert assessment)

Rank	Group of Competence	Average grade assigned by an expert
1	Innovative	3,9
2	Humanistic	3,7
3	Developing	3,6
4	Health-saving	3,2
5	Communicative	2,7
6	Inclusive	2,5
7	Design	2,4
8	Organizational	2,3
9	Orientation and constructive	2,1

Analysis of available experimental studies shows that teachers are experiencing a shortage of innovative media competencies, and technologization and orientation and constructive competencies are developed at the highest level. Thus, N. Efremova (Efremova, 2022) showed that 97.7 % of teachers are able to work with digital information (create files, print texts, scan printed documents, work with tables, etc.). 80.9 % are able to manage information (find, perceive, analyze, memorize and transmit), 71.8 % carry out self-development using digital means, 69.6 % use digital technologies for teaching/learning.

The author noted a shortage of teachers of the following competencies:

– communications and cooperation on the Internet (59.5 %);

– critical attitude to information (58.2 %);

– creation of educational media products (44.8 %);

– creation of digital educational products and environments (41.4 %);

– organization of project activities in the digital environment (39.4 %);

– conducting an expertise of electronic educational resources (33.0 %).

## 5. Conclusion

An important factor in the success of the use of digital and media tools in the educational process is the formation of media competencies among teachers. The basis for predicting the content of such competencies are pedagogical functions and tasks solved by a teacher using digital and media means. Generalization of scientific research and regulatory documents, systematization

of digital and media tools used by teachers and pedagogical tasks solved with their help made it possible to identify the following media competencies of a teacher: innovative, humanistic, developing, health-saving, communicative, inclusive, design, organizational, orientation and constructive. To form such competencies, it is advisable to use digital and media tools.

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## Influencing Factors of Trust in Zibo Government in the Context of TikTok Use among Chinese Young Adults

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### Abstract

TikTok, as a newly emerging social media tool, has been widely used in China especially among Chinese young adults. After China has relaxed its controls of the COVID-19 pandemic policy, there are a great many comments from TikTok young adult users expressing their desire to travel to Zibo city (a city in Shandong), which shows their trust in Zibo government. Therefore, it is imperative to explore the influencing factors of trust in Zibo government in the context of TikTok use among Chinese young adults in this study. Snowball sampling technique was adapted in this study and eight interviewees who are TikTok users aged from 18 to 29 years old were selected. In-depth interview is used in this study to understand the influencing factors of trust in Zibo government from the perspective of eight young adult users. By employing social support theory, the finding indicates that emotional support, financial support and informational support all plays an important role in TikTok young adult users' trust in Zibo government. As a conclusion, in order to promote sustainable development and young adults' trust in government, policymakers are supposed to pay more attention to providing emotional support, financial support and informational support from the government.

**Keywords:** trust in government, TikTok use, young adults, social support theory.

### 1. Introduction

As a popular and newly emerging social media tool, TikTok has been widely used in most of the individuals' life (Kennedy, 2020). It is one of the fastest growing short video platforms in the world and is regarded as the international twin of Chinese mobile short video app Douyin (Zulli, 2020). Surprisingly, TikTok has had over 1 billion users globally by September 2021 while it has had over 600 million daily active users who watch and post short videos. This social media tool allows users to watch, share, create short-form videos, and comment on and live streams, satisfying their needs for recreation, socialization, and information seeking (Yao et al., 2023). Moreover, young adults are reported to use this social media platform most frequently (Smith, Short, 2022). Particularly, TikTok plays an important role in inspiring tourism, with 57 % of users using the platform as a channel for travel information and 52 % actively searching for information before traveling, according to the report released in August 2022 (Zhou et al., 2023). Therefore, TikTok, as a newcomer to social media, has an effect on tourism unmatched by previous social media.

Recently, there are a large number of comments from TikTok young adult users showing their desire to travel to Zibo city (a city in Shandong) because Zibo local government attaches great importance to the needs of tourists and makes every effort to provide them with a comfortable

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environment which increases their trust in government (*China Daily*, 2023). Zibo city is more and more popular with TikTok users and becomes one of the most Chinese hot cities that they are willing to travel after China has relaxed its controls of the COVID-19 pandemic policy (*China Daily*, 2023). In order to promote high quality development, Zibo government ensures and improves people's livelihoods, firmly grasp the most direct and practical interests of the people, take more measures that benefit the people's livelihoods and warm their hearts, and not give up small and long-term achievements which has led to the popularity and trust in government among TikTok users.

It is believed that trust in government reflects individuals' confidence in government (Paxton, 1999). Some research has indicated that people's trust in government is decreasing especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Shanka, Menebo, 2022). Due to the successful policies from Zibo government, there is an increasing number of young adults from TikTok platform showing their trust in Zibo government which results in subjective well-being (Nguyen et al., 2023). Trust in institutions or government plays a fundamental role in young adults' life and their subjective well-being (Li et al., 2019). However, little research has explored the influencing factors of young adults' trust in government after China has relaxed its controls of the COVID-19 pandemic policy (Li et al., 2022). This study addresses this research gap by exploring the influencing factors of TikTok young adult users' trust in government. By understanding influencing factors of TikTok young adult users' trust behavior, this study is useful for policymakers in promoting sustainable development and enhancing trust in government among local and international social media users.

## 2. Materials and methods

The participants were Chinese TikTok young adult users with the age of 18 to 29. The reason why the research chose young adults is that they are reported to use social media most frequently and 88 % of them are with the age from 18 to 29 using social media for a large portion of their daily time (Day, Heimberg, 2021) and there is no exception for TikTok young adult users (Smith, Short, 2022). Therefore, young adults make up the majority of TikTok users which is reasonable to be chosen as the target group.

Besides, snowball sampling was adapted in this study and eight interviewees who are TikTok users and meet the criteria were selected. In-depth interview (IDI) was conducted to collect data via WeChat. It is broadly used for Chinese people to communicate with others, which is similar to WhatsApp (Yang, Hamed, 2022). The interview questions were designed to uncover influencing factors of trust in government among TikTok young adults.

Responses obtained from the interview were analyzed and grouped by using a thematic analysis approach which is a common form of analysis widely used in a qualitative research (Jowsey et al., 2021). Besides, the data was categorized by the researcher based on social support theory from the perspective of emotional, informational and financial assistance of Zibo government.

## 3. Discussion

During the Covid-19 pandemic, young adults have engaged themselves more in social media use because of maintaining social distance and long-term quarantine (Anashkina et al., 2022; Djumanova, 2022; Yang, Hamed, 2022). Even after China has relaxed its controls of the COVID-19 pandemic policy, young adults tend to rely on social media tools to seek for more information related to health, daily information and entertainment (Demidov, Lomteva, 2022) and to study and interact with others (Muryukina, Gorbatkova, 2022). Due to the rapid spread of false information on various platforms in the context of new media (Ahmed et al., 2021), young people are not capable of thinking critically (Muzykant et al., 2023) which may lead to destructive consequences in the field of youth. However, social media has been regarded as a resource for the development of general competencies of young adults (Lomteva et al., 2022). Information released from official accounts on social media often helps people distinguish right from wrong, which provides people a sense of security and increases their trust in government (Li et al., 2023).

Other researchers have also reported that a high level of trust in government mirrors sufficient social support and available resources which prevent individuals from feeling powerless and helpless and meet their emotional demands (Li et al., 2022). In addition, trust in government may improve quality of life and mental wellness by encouraging social participation and decreasing people's depression, anxiety, and stress (Yamaguchi et al., 2019), which is positively associated with individuals' well-being. Although some influencing factors have been documented by researchers, it is imperative to

explore the influencing factors of TikTok young adult users' trust in government in the Chinese context after China has relaxed its controls of the COVID-19 pandemic policy.

On the other hand, it is believed that the level of economic development plays a fundamental role in people's trust in government (Li et al, 2019). Similarly, previous researchers have confirmed that the level of economic development also moderates the relationship between trust and life satisfaction (Jovanovic, 2016). A large body of literature has examined the effect of social trust on economic growth (Lyu et al., 2023), which shows that the economic development is an important influencing factor in terms of people's trust in government. Therefore, a good economy means the efficient work ability and achievements of the government. It will increase the authority and credibility of the government which results in TikTok users' trust in government.

Besides, it is mentioned by prior scholars that individuals' perceptions of the economic and political performance of government significantly predicted trust in government (Nunkoo, Smith, 2013). Meanwhile, other research also reinforces the need for researchers to consider trust as an important ingredient for cooperation among tourism actors and effective destination management (Beritelli, 2011). In other words, people's willingness to travel is because of the economic performance from the government and their trust in their government. Taking these factors into consideration, it is necessary to explore the influencing factors of TikTok young adult users' trust in government.

More and more official accounts release various information, including health knowledge, news, culture, and local tourism, through the Tiktok platform (Ostrovsky, Chen, 2020), which also attracts more and more young people to follow these accounts. There are even much fake news existing in social media platforms especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021). However, the information released on official government accounts is more authoritative and people are more willing to trust official information which can prevent them from fear of pandemic and enable them to have a sense of security (Li et al., 2022). TikTok platform provides a large amount of information for its users and people can easily express their idea on the social media platform including their political opinion (Akay et al., 2020). When more and more users praise Zibo city and Zibo government on the Tiktok platform, young adults will be more willing to trust and rely on the government.

Social support theory was applied in this study. It is the perception and actuality that one is cared for, has assistance available from other people, and most popularly, that one is part of a supportive social network. These supportive resources can be emotional, companionship, informational, tangible (financial assistance) or intangible (personal advice), which can come from many sources, such as family, friends, coworkers, and organizations (Orrick et al., 2011). According to this theory, communities that have less supportive structures such as social welfare programs, public education agencies and healthcare, tend to have higher rate of crime. By contrast, people tend to trust government when they have a sense of security and feel supported from the institutions. Besides, a range of frameworks has been employed to assess the primary mechanism through social support theory (Häuberer, 2011; Dubos, 2017; Leung et al., 2022). Some researchers have examined swift trust development and prosocial behavior (Leung et al., 2022). It is revealed by other researchers that community engagement and privacy concerns may affect some types of social support such as information or emotional support (Tseng et al., 2022).

#### 4. Results

In this study, in-depth interview was employed to explore the influencing factors of trust in Zibo government in the Context of TikTok use. It presents the findings from the interviews with the interviewees from Chinese young adults. Referring to Table 1, among the respondents, there are three male users and five female users with the age from 21 to 29 and they are coded from code 1 to code 8.

It is confirmed by most of the participants (code 1, code 2, code 3, code 5, code 6, code 7 and code 8) that the emotional support from Zibo government plays a significant role in their trust in government. As is mentioned by code1 and code3, the Zibo government has taken effective measures to provide convenience for people and attract more tourists. This sincere approach has moved young adult users and makes them more willing to trust and rely on the government. After China has relaxed its controls of the COVID-19 pandemic policy, people may feel anxious about the uncertainties.

However, people are more likely to trust and rely on the government when they can protect people from the pandemic enabling them to have a sense of security (Li et al, 2022). This finding is in agreement with a battery of previous studies (Leung et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). Based on social support theory, the emotional supportive resource from the society helps individuals to alleviate

their negative pressure and increase their sense of security and belonging (Orrick et al., 2011). By providing tourists with a comfortable environment and good services, Zibo government makes the tourists feel at home, which has made them win numerous praises on the TikTok platform, and also increased TikTok young adult users' trust in the government.

**Table 1.** Participants' Profiles

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Vocation
1	Male	21	A bachelor student
2	Female	22	A bachelor student
3	Male	25	A postgraduate student
4	Female	25	A bachelor student
5	Male	27	Financial assistant
6	Female	26	An English teacher
7	Female	29	A public servant
8	Female	23	A nurse

*I think the propaganda of the Zibo government on Tiktok platform gives us a sincere feeling and I feel they are very reliable (code1)*

*The Zibo government is doing its best to provide convenience for the people, such as parking our cars in the government compound when we travel which enables us to trust government (code3)*

Besides, most of the interviewees (code 1, code 3, code 4, code5 and code 7) expressed that economic support is one of the most important factors for Tiktok users to trust Zibo government. According to code 4 and code 7, he mentioned that the effective measure Zibo government has taken to reduce the local price is essential to their positive attitude towards and trust the government. Besides, it is also revealed that the interviewee code 7 that the government has provided people with shopping vouchers which attract more people to travel their and when they feel the sincere performance from Zibo government, they tend to have more trust in local government. It is consistent with previous research that institutional trust cannot be separated from economic development (Nunkoo, Smith, 2013). Based on social support theory, most research has also reinforced the notion that the primary operationalization of social support is based on the provision of economic assistance (Orrick et al., 2011). When the government attaches great importance to economic development, people's living conditions will become better and better, which enables TikTok young adults to understand the importance and reliability of the government. This suggests that in order to increase people's trust in government, policymakers are supposed to pay attention to economic support for people such as providing shopping vouchers and allowances.

*I think the reason why TikTok young adults trust the government and want to travel to Zibo is that the local prices are very cheap. The government has taken measures to prevent high prices (code 4)*

*The Zibo government has issued many shopping vouchers, which not only promotes economic development but also saves money for the people, so we have great trust in the government's management methods (code 7)*

In addition, half of the respondents (code 2, code 5, code 6 and code 8) also stated that informational support from Zibo government contributes to their trust in Zibo government. The local government provides people with all kinds of information they need through the official account on the TikTok platform such as local culture, scenery, and food which attract more TikTok users. This finding is in line with previous study which confirms the importance of official informational support (Ostrovsky, Chen, 2020). According to social capital theory, the information resources provided by the government can help people better cope with external challenges and improve their engagement of social activities (Tseng et al., 2022). With more helpful information released through TikTok platform, users can obtain the information such as travel guide through this platform which makes their life more convenient when people travel there. Therefore, when

TikTok users feel that the government tries their best to serve the people, they are more likely to trust the government.

*The Zibo government always sends some videos of local culture through the Tiktok platform, which makes us feel that this place is fun, people are friendly, which increases our trust (code6)*

*On the Tiktok platform, we can see travel guide released from the official institutions. It makes us feel warm and feel trustworthy (code 8)*

## 5. Conclusion

According to the finding of in-depth interview, this study revealed that there are three aspects including the emotional support, economic support and informational support all contributes to TikTok young adult users' trust in Zibo government in the context of TikTok use during the post COVID-19 pandemic. Based on social capital theory, this finding is consistent with theoretical perspectives highlighting the crucial role of the supportive resources supported from government can enable a person to have a sense of belonging and security, which contributes to their trust in government.

Therefore, first, it is necessary to promote young adults' trust in government through providing the emotional support, such as providing more friendly and beneficial services to people. Second, government should pay more attention to economic support such as introducing talents policy and more preferential policies for buying cars and houses. Third, informational support from the government should also be enhanced. For example, government can release more useful short videos through the TikTok platform including basic life skills in people's daily life, professional knowledge and cultural propaganda.

Such findings of this study are important because the results make it possible for policymakers to promote sustainable development and enhancing institutional trust in the context of new media use. This study also adds to the literature of social media consumption in China, which attaches great importance in filling in the gap in regard to information on the consumption of TikTok, particularly in terms of its use and government trust.

Besides, this study has several limitations. Firstly, this research mainly focused on TikTok young adult users. Future studies can involve in more people with different ages and from different countries. Secondly, this study employed qualitative approach to explore the influencing factors of government trust which may produce bias from subjective opinions. Future research may combine other methods such as questionnaire survey to test the influencing factors.

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