



# СОЦИОЛОГИЯ И СОЦИАЛЬНЫЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ

УДК 316.7

## ПРЕДПОЧТЕНИЯ СТУДЕНЧЕСКОЙ МОЛОДЕЖИ В ОБЛАСТИ ЗАПАДНОГО МЕЙНСТРИМ-КИНЕМАТОГРАФА

### WESTERN MAINSTREAM CINEMA PREFERENCES OF THE STUDENT YOUTH

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*Аннотация.* Целью данной статьи является исследование предпочтений студентов вузов в области западного мейнстрим-кинематографа. Для сбора первичных социологических данных использовались следующие методы: во-первых, метод анкетного опроса молодежи; во-вторых, экспертное интервью сотрудников кинотеатров, ученых и преподавателей вузов, в сферу научных интересов которых входят проблемы социологии культуры; в-третьих, контент-анализ рейтингов, размещенных на специализированных сайтах, на которых представлены зарубежные кинокартины. В результате проведенного исследования было выявлено, что среди студенческой молодежи предпочитаемыми киножанрами являются боевики и комедии. Дополняя друг друга, они репрезентируют особый тип личности, игнорирующей интеллектуальное знание и апеллирующей, в первую очередь, к волевым эмоциональным актам. Юноши и девушки в процессе просмотра кинофильмов не просто познают и усваивают транслируемые социальные нормы и культурные ценности общества, но и преобразовывают их в собственные интересы, ценности и потребности.

*Resume.* The purpose of this article is to study the Western mainstream cinema preferences of university students. To collect the primary sociological data the following methods were used: first, the method of questionnaire survey of the youth; second, expert interviews with cinema employees, scientists and university professors whose sphere of scientific interests includes sociology of culture; third, the content analysis of ratings posted on specialized web-sites, presenting foreign films. The result of the study revealed that the students' preferred genres are action films and comedies. Complementing each other, they represent a special kind of personality, who ignores the intellectual knowledge and in the first place appeals to will and emotional acts. A boy and a girl in the process of watching a film do not only learn and acquire transmitted social norms and cultural values of society, but they also transform them into their own interests, values and needs.

*Ключевые слова:* молодежь, кинофильм, социология кино.

*Key words:* youth, film, cinema sociology.

**Introduction.** The modern age demonstrates the intensification of the unification processes of social and cultural patterns that contribute to the formation of a special personality type, a "mass person." Mass culture provides a legitimization of the "mass person" as a norm, leaving science, religion, elitist art at the background. One of the institutions of socialization of today's youth are mass communication media operating as carriers and translators of the mass culture products, including mainstream cinema.

**Literature Review.** In this research we use the theory of cultural turn, that affected the development of the Humanities and Social sciences and is manifested in the formation of interdisciplinary researches of German scientists D. Bachmann-Medick [1, p. 23], T. Beschorner, D. Fischer, R. Pfriem, P. Ulrich [2, p. 43]. In the context of this topic the concept of representative culture by German cultural sociologist F. Tenbruk [3, p. 107] is used, revealing the problem of the sociological understanding of contemporary culture. The American sociologist N. Palmer analyzing modern cinema concludes that the Hollywood action films are filled with stereotypes more than other genres. Films show who possesses the real power in contemporary society. For example, N. Palmer writes that Hollywood released the film "Red tails", telling about the actions of strong and brave Afro-American men who participated in the Second World War as fighter pilots and followed orders of their superiors [4]. Brazilian sociologist S. Gomes



Leme, in her work "Cinema and society: about the military dictatorship in Brazil," noted that even today the military dictatorship is a subject of a significant number of films. The analysis of the filmography involves studying of what the audience associate in connection with the past, what aspects are erased, and what ambiguities and contradictions form the basis of interpretation of the represented socio-historical process. S. Gomes Leme researched feature-length films that relate to the theme of the military dictatorship in Brazil. And, in her opinion, films like "cultural products" can be considered legitimate and differentiated sources for the study of the whole society because they are a kind of peculiar social reality and produce meanings and values and offer ideology. All this is expressed through verbal and nonverbal codes embedded in the specific film [5]. Such features of mass communication influence on the formation of value orientations and stigmata among adolescents and young people are considered by P.T. Lipaj, O.A. Volkova, O.A. Zhilenkova [6, 71-75], noting the interconnection between the content of broadcast video products and values formed in boys and girls.

A. Alamon speculates on the possible problems of film production in which the main character can be, for example, a sociologist. A. Alamon suggests the idea that most of the time, the actor will stroke a chin, staring off into space, contemplating and interpreting social events unfolding in front of him. There's a problem, how to make a film interesting for the most of the audience. So A. Alamon tosses a challenge of sociological researchers to typical modern film characters, "passionate soldiers", and urges scientists "to remain committed to their humanistic ideals" [7] while analyzing films.

**Methods.** The research aimed at identifying the students' preferences in the sphere of Western mainstream cinema, was held in 2016 in 4 universities of the Belgorod region. First, we used the method of questionnaire to collect primary sociological data. Respondents were full-time university students (N = 840). We used quota, multistage sampling. Second, the method of interview was used to obtain information from experts, who were cinemas employees, scientists and university professors, whose sphere of scientific interests includes sociology of culture, cultural studies and art theory (N = 35). We used cluster sampling. In the framework of this dissertation research the cluster was the particular University (the unit of a high level selection), consisting of the institutes and faculties (smaller units of a lower level).

Third, we used the method of content analysis of ratings posted on specialized web-sites, presenting films (<http://www.kinopoisk.ru>; <https://www.film.ru>; <http://www.imdb.com>; <https://www.rottentomatoes.com>; <http://www.kinoexpert.ru>) [8, 9, 10, 11, 12]. The sampling is targeted. The criterion for selection of web-sites: the content of films ratings.

**Results.** The most of the respondents' (students who participated in the survey) favourite western movies that they mention were produced in the United States. There were 120 U.S. movies in total. In the second place there are 8 films from the UK. 7 films from Germany are in the third place. In the fourth place there are 6 films from France. The fifth place is occupied by 5 films from Australia and 5 films from Canada. 2 films from Italy are in the sixth place. Finally, in the seventh place there is 1 film from Spain, and 1 from Argentina. These results are also confirmed by the data of the expert survey. Among the films experts named there were 31 American; 1 British; 1 of Spanish production; 2 of the films were shot in France.

All among the 125 western films students selected 122 relating to English-language mainstream cinema. Thus, cultural globalization is not a process of the dialogue of cultures, but on the contrary, it demonstrates the overwhelming predominance of mass culture in the world in its English-language, and mostly American version.

The results of student's survey were supplemented with expert interviews. Experts pointed out such blockbusters (students' favourite, in the experts' opinion) as "The Matrix" (21 choices), "The Fast and the Furious" (19 choices), "Titanic" (16 choices), "Cruel Intentions" (14 choices). During the expert interviews we asked about the students' attitude to the 3D movies. It turned out that, according to the experts, this format is the preference for only a few students and only because the tickets for those movies are more expensive.

Among the films mentioned by the experts during our interview (similar to the students' survey results), the first place is taken by the action films that can be classified as "action", characterized by spectacular visual effects (picture 21). The comedy is in the second place (18 films), and the horror movies and the thrillers are in the third place (15 films).

In general, the range of films available for viewing in the cinemas of Russian cities is much broader than in rural cinemas. Perhaps that is why our analysis of secondary data showed that the percentage of clubs, sections, and public organizations participants is three times higher among the rural population than among the representatives of small cities and towns. 43 % of the villagers and 5% of urban citizens are members of clubs in culture centres; 10 % and 2 % respectively go to sports clubs; 13 % and 5 % belong to public organizations. 56% of the villagers and 20% of urban citizens participate in the cultural life of the village; 43% and 20% respectively read books; 23% and 10% go in for sports [13, p. 154-160].

Talking about genre preferences, the audience presents rating of film genres among the favorite western films in a hierarchical view, where first, action films are leading, and second, comedies. In fact, they form a unified picture of the world, which is based on the dynamic activity without any hesitation (action film) and specific view of the world, with the mockery of traditional and modern values (comedy).



The lower places were taken by historical and biographic films, and some others that somehow represent a more or less traditional world.

**Summary and Conclusion.** The result of the study revealed that action films and comedies complementing each other, represent a special kind of personality, who ignores the intellectual knowledge and in the first place appeals to will and emotional acts. These particular attitudes and values are distributed among students under the influence of the mainstream cinema. Types of personality promoted by action films and comic mainstream movies become invisible patterns, which, often unconsciously, are sought by the representatives of the youth, and in particular student audience. A boy and a girl in the process of watching a film do not only learn and acquire transmitted social norms and cultural values of society, but they also transform them into their own interests and needs.

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