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## Schoolchildren's Family Values Formation in Russian National Cinematograph Works: Media Education Aspect

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### Abstract

The problem of family, family relations and basic family values formation is very essential nowadays. The difficulties and problems of the modern families lie in unreadiness and unwillingness of young people to take the responsibility for the closest people, inability to cope with even slight obstacles in life, provoke a great number of divorces and don't promote strengthening and saving of the best family traditions characteristic for Russian family relations culture.

In the article media educational abilities of schoolchildren's family values formation in works of Russian cinematograph are displayed. The problem is viewed in the context of modern students' audience preparation (future teachers, psychologists, youth work organizers) for professional activity with schoolchildren in conditions of media clubs' activity, work in media studios, school media centres and so on.

The basic directions of media educational activity, aimed at modern scholars' family values formation are based on the complex approach to the analysis of audiovisual media text, including sociocultural context study, basic plot lines characteristics, main and optional characters' family relations models investigation, composition of comparative characteristics of family happiness principles, manifested in films of different years, study and analysis of professional materials of media critics and media educationalists, devoted to this or that work of cinematograph and so on.

In the process of feature films analysis, the main goals of media education are viewed, consisting in self-directed selection, analytical evaluation and media text interpretation realization, and also audiovisual space creative expansion with the purpose of modern schoolchildren's horizon, creative abilities, critical thinking development.

**Keywords:** media, media education, cinematograph, feature film, sociocultural aspect, schoolchildren, students.

### 1. Introduction

Family values, as well as the goals of their formation remain essential for many years. The traditions of family upbringing in the context of values formation in Russian science were established by N.G. Chernyishevsky, N.A. Berdyaev, P.A. Florensky, V.S. Solovyov, L.N. Tolstoy, K.D. Ushinsky and other scientists. There are widely spread family education conceptions of foreign researchers such as F. Bacon, T. Hobbes, J. Locke, de Montesquieu, I. Pestalozzi and others. The problems of family, family education and family values formation on the modern stage of sociocultural development are one of the most important problems of government policy, are actively raised in works on pedagogics, psychology, culturology, philosophy, become the subject of interdisciplinary investigations.

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Nowadays, in the era of media communication, the problems of value orientation formation are actively transmitted in mass media, discussed in TV programmes, find reflection in the works of the cinematograph and so on. The problem of the values formation in the context of family education predetermines the interest to this aspect in media culture works of different kinds and genres. M.A. Mazuritskaya, giving the culturological analysis of the Russian youth's values orientation formation through the example of literature and cinematograph, determines them as "complicated system, including moral personality affirmations: ethical ideals, humanity, civic spirit and aesthetic taste, forming by means of drawing into national and world culture values. In these conditions the spiritual ideal is manifested in one's overview about personality, worthy of emulation" (Mazuritskaya, 2011). Preservation of the best family traditions, attitude to family values is sufficiently changed in modern society.

Media education aspects of schoolchildren's family values formation in works of Russian national cinematograph act as important educational factor, determining the branches of media pedagogical activity in the younger generation's upbringing, education and development. In media educational process the study, analysis and interpretation of cinematographic works, devoted to family values, not only promote analytical abilities, the audience's creative potential development, but also play the important part in valuable attitude to the family and family traditions formation.

## 2. Materials and methods

As the material for the investigation the scientific works on pedagogics, psychology, sociology, culturology on the problem of the research were used. The main methods of the investigation are analysis and synthesis of thesis works, abstracts, monographs, scientific articles, normative legal documents, having generalization, classification and content analysis.

## 3. Discussion

A great number of recent investigations deal with the problem of family values and orientations interpretation in different means of mass-media. Thus, in works of O.L. Lebed (Lebed, 2015), L.F. Adilova and V.A. Mishchenko (Adilova, Mishchenko, 2014) and others the problems of value orientations in mass-media are viewed, which to the great degree "determine the modern models of family behavior and create the significant family models which go along with a person throughout his/her life and basically affect his/her viewpoints" (Adilova, Mishchenko, 2014: 110). Moreover, as O.L. Lebed and V.A. Mishchenko point out, "the presentation of family-demographic events in press and other sources of MCT (Mass Communication Tools), work of culture and art is most notably connected with the change of the structure of traditional extended family, mainly its reduction to the nuclear family with one-two children" (Lebed, Mishchenko, 2015).

Today the most current problems of the modern society, connected with family problems, are the decrease of family value as the entity of like-minded people, correlated by common interests and ambitions. By the way, age boundaries for youngsters' readiness for family creation are shifted. If several decades ago young people created families in average before their 25-30 years old, on the modern stage many people think about it after achieving some particular success in career, acquire material welfare answering their personal ambitions.

All these problems find the reflection in films, resonating with younger generation. In works of scholars G.A. Abikeeva (Abikeeva, 2010), D.A. Davidenko (Davidenko, 2004), E.V. Zhelnina, L.N. Galiullova (Zhelnina, 2019), V.V. Tyulyunova (Tyulyunova, 2019) and many other Russian researchers it is emphasized that cinematograph as a great factor of socialization displays the image and the models of modern families relations. As G.A. Abikeeva puts it, this kind of media art "reflects the process occurring in the society, and also takes active part in moral-ethic values, behaviour stereotypes, citizens' cultural and national identity formation" (Abikeeva, 2010). Moreover, according to V.V. Tyulyunova, the great part in the most edgy social problems of family upbringing and family values coverage can be played by author cinematograph: "if commercial cinema uses the dominant among the audience models of thinking, thus, it is accused by film critics in the plot's predictability, the author cinema in contradiction to these limits opens the theme in an unpredictable and even shocking for the viewer way. As film directors themselves explain, this is one of the mechanisms of the audience affecting: its mood, norms, values. Consequently, the movies themselves can be viewed from the point of view of their family values affecting and forming" (Tyulyunova, 2019).

M.A. Mazuritskaya, characterizing the dominant vectors of youngsters' film preferences in different years, points out several stages. Thus, "dominating orientation of cinematographic and reading preferences of the youth from 1920-s to the first part of 1950-s reflected the significant for the Soviet society problems if Civil war (1920-s); collectivization, industrialization, struggle with "public enemies" (1930-s); the Motherland protection in the period of The Great Patriotic War (1940-s), that was manifested in the youth's interest to Soviet literature and film art. This orientation promoted the formation of such value system as altruism, patriotism, idealization of the current political formation. From the mid 1950-s till 1991 the greatest youth's interest was captured by movies and literary works, reflecting the characters' inner world and their moral strivings, in this connection the dominant values in the youngsters' value orientation were: the striving to political freedom, the search of the purpose of life" (Mazuritskaya, 2011). What about the contemporary state of the question, the author points out two key tendencies, one of them predetermines "the students' interest to the literary works and movies with deep psychological content, that is more peculiar for humanity students. The second tendency is to great extend peculiar to science students and consists in the focus to mass culture products and also westernization of the readers' and especially film viewers' preferences" (Mazuritskaya, 2011).

Media educational scope, connected with the cinematograph investigation is widely displayed in a great number of Russian and foreign recent works. Media educational aspect of media culture works of different kinds and genres usage acts as the subject of numerous Russian and foreign current investigations. Thus, the problems of investigation and analysis of the cinematograph in the context of media educational process are carefully studied in works of A.V. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018), in works of I.V. Chelysheva and G.V. Mikhaleva the practical aspects of media education integration into students and young researchers' class and extra-curricular activity are investigated (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2021; 2022). Particularly, the authors note the active development of media literacy in modern universities, register the new forms of their realization on the example of open media schools: "The transformation taking place today in these areas, the goals associated with the search for new forms, ways and methods of media education for the younger generation are being updated. Promoting and popularizing film and media education is an important factor in the success of this process at school and university" (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2022).

The researchers S. Kayal and R. Saha (Kayal, Saha, 2022) introduce the analysis of film images representation in the context of social theory of identity; the problems of civic qualities formation by means of cinematograph are revealed in the work of Ju. Hallam (Hallam, 2012). M.W. Franciscon (Franciscon, 2020) and O. Gradinaru (Gradinaru, 2017) in their works deal with the problems of western countries' images and symbols in Soviet cinematograph. In works of D. Buckingham (Buckingham, 2014; 2015), S. Gálíková Tolnaiová (Gálíková Tolnaiová, 2021), S. Gálík, B. Oprala (Gálík, Oprala, 2021), V. Kačínová (Kačínová, 2018), S. Livingstone (Livingstone, 2018), D. Petranová et al. (Petranová et al., 2017), A. Silverblatt (Silverblatt, 2018), C. Worsnop (Worsnop, 2004) different aspects of modern audience's media literacy development in media education process are described.

#### 4. Results

In the process of media educational cycle disciplines examination such as "Media culture and media education history", "Media competence basis", "Critical thinking development in the process of media education", "Creative-productive activity organizing on the material of media culture" and others, work with Russian cinematograph products, focused on family values formation, acts as an important aspect of future educators-psychologists and youth work organizers' professional preparation. It is caused by the sufficient decrease of family values importance in modern youth circles, by the change of enduring values, peculiar to traditional family, such as mutual trust, sympathetic understanding, common interests and so on. In this respect, it is necessary to provide future educators, psychologists, youth work organizers with range of tools for the work at young generation's family values forming, ones of the most efficient are lessons in cinema clubs, media studios, school optional classes and so on. For that purpose, in the process of media educational disciplines study this goal can be successfully included into professional preparation of modern students who are going to work with modern digital generation.

Working with the investigations of the Soviet period of family problems in audio visual media sphere, students come to conclusion that media texts of different kinds and genres were not free

from ideological keynotes of historical times of their creation, consequently, the theme of family and family values was viewed through the positions of the epoch political ideas coincidence.

The important part in this context is played by cinematographic material historic-pedagogical analysis accomplishment. For instance, the study of Soviet films of numb period on the family problems of 1920-s – 1930-s years of the XX century promotes the student youth's appeal to the analysis of propogandist function which was put high hopes on after the events of 1917. In the process of work with the films the audience pays attention at the fact that any topic of films of different genres is mostly viewed in the context of such notions as “revolution, Civil war and its consequences, the importance of young generation's inclusion into public and collective life and into the process of socialist construction” (Chelysheva, 2017).

Discussing the problem of family values in movies representation of the stage concerned, students are being convinced that the main accent of cinematograph creators is put on the relation of families to revolutionary events, that had become the basic family values of cinema works of those times. As the examples such feature films can be drawn as *Fedka's truth* (1925, directed by O. Preobrazhenskaya), *Mother* (1926, directed by V. Pudovkin), *Tanka – Tavern keeper* (1929, directed by B. Svetozarov) and others.

Working with key episodes of the pictures it is important to pay the audience's attention to the fact that the main conflict in major Russian movies is in contradiction of young generation and old-regime principles, which are reflected in family patterns. The settlement of this conflict often ends in children and teenagers' refusal of the existing old values, giving up the current family relations model. Thus, family and family values in this particular period are not viewed as the main ones in a person's life. This is proved by films where main characters sacrifice their families for the sake of professional or social goals, as, for instance, a young teacher from the film *Alone* (1931, directed by G. Kozintsev and L. Trauberg) or the chairwoman of collective farm Alexandra Sokolova from the film *A Member of Government* (1940, directed by I. Heifits and A. Zarkhi).

The work with films about families of 1930 – 1950-s on media educational classes is built according to the main principles of media education methodology, including different kinds of creative tasks. For instance, the analysis of mini-reviews on the problem of family values in fiction films reflection, prepared by students, confirm that the authors of the works distinguish ideological accents, as key ones which make sufficient impact on family representation, family relations and family values.

The study of statutory orders, executive orders and other regulatory documentation, devoted to cultural policy and this period establishment, which is realized on media educational classes, promotes the main idea accents revealing which were always present in audio-visual media texts. Thus, the main family values of that period were the family unity and its striving to be helpful to the society, especially during severe war years.

In the process of media educational activity, aimed at family values formation, the main factor is the investigation of children and teenagers' images representation in the context of family upbringing. The work with media material during literary-imitational tasks completion draws the students to the conclusion that the child in films of the 1930-s – 1950-s is represented not as the youngest member of the family, but as a fully established builder of a better tomorrow, coming together with other constructors of the communistic society.

The examples of these films are *Timur and his team* (1940, by A. Razumny), *First-grade Pupil* (1948, by I. Frez), *Guerrillaman's Children* (1954, by L. Golub, N. Figurowsky), *The Hero's brother* (1940, by Y. Vasilchikov) and so on. The great part in cinematograph of that period is played by the principles of socialistic realism, where the problem of grown up characters, turning into free and self-sustained people due to the revolution, is raised. Here we can include such films as *Path of Light* (1940), *Spring Stream* (1940, by V. Yurenev), *Big Family* (1954, by I. Heifits) and others.

In general, the work with images and symbols in films of different years, is an integral part of media text spatial-temporal structure analysis and synthesis. Doing the creative tasks in this direction, student audience gets acquainted with the notion of stereotype imagination, where the family problems, its values and models also find reflection.

In the period of the end of 1950-s and 1960-s in Soviet cinematograph the process of family values transformation can be observed. Now they are “characterized by typical for this time appeal to personality, moral and worldview problems” (Chelysheva, 2019, p.20). The themes of youth and growing-up, humanity and life establishment become central ones in films on the family problems.

Media educational classes are devoted to particularly these problems, including oral and written discussions, negotiations, key episodes of this or that film preparation and acting out.

In contrast to the films of former stages, where any family could be substituted by government (commune, orphanage and so on), in “thawing” films of school theme the family is represented in a different way. Moreover, the family is displayed not only as the reflection of relative connections, but as a group of people, having their personal views, problems, difficulties” (Chelysheva, 2019: 75). To assure the audience, they were suggested to prepare little media projects with the analysis of historical context and the reflection of the basic family values in any cinematographic work, chosen by students.

The analysis of the projects, prepared by the students, shows that in the period of “Thawing” the viewer observes different and sometimes diametrically opposite family values from the screen, found reflection in the films *Tree Poplars on Plyushchiha* (1968, by T. Lioznova), *It happened in Penkov* (1958, by S. Rostotsky), *Seryozha* (1960, by G. Danelia and I. Talankin), *Your Son and Brother* (1965, by V. Shukshin) and others.

The problem of family values is still very prominent in Soviet films of the 1970-s – 1980-s. This period feature films analysis conduction also includes the work with reviews and texts of professional media critics and cinema historians. Family values and the notion of the family as social unit, which unites people with similar views and interests is not so often seen in feature films of that time. More and more often the viewer sees on the screen incomplete families, people, living in one family without any gentle feelings to each other, children and parents having nothing in common. As basic material for the analysis the students can be suggested such feature films as *Woodpecker does not have a headache* (1974, by D. Asanova), *School Waltz* (1977, by P. Lyubimov), *Married for the first time* (1979, by I. Heifits), *You never dreamed* (1980, by I. Frez), *Quarantine* (1983, by I. Frez), *Find guilty* (1983, by I. Voznesenskiy), *Scarecrow* (1984, by R. Bykov) and other. Actually, in these films “one character sees the value in personal prosperity and achieving his/her goals by any means, the other – in ability to gain independence, do his/her thing, help other people. Spiritual dullness, pragmatism and hardheartedness, indifference and meanness come across trust, generosity, kindness and nobility” (Chelysheva, 2018).

In the process of work at audio-visual materials students also face the other representation of family values. Together with serious family problems of that period the theme of inviolability of family principles is still raised. Firm Soviet family on the screen has to be the role model for youth. The analysis of family values, where the timeless values of trust and mutual understanding prevail, should be conducted on the material of such films as *Once upon a time 20 years later* (1980, by Y. Egorov), *Step-mother* (1973, by O. Bondarev), *The adventures of a yellow suitcase* (1970, by I. Frez) and others.

The special students’ interest is shown to Russian feature films of “Perestroika” period and also to modern movies. The work with these films is also built on the complex approach to sociocultural context, basing on the main historical events, happening in the country and in the world. As the experience of media educational classes conduction shows, the audience is interested in psychological, interpersonal problems, raised in the films on family themes. The most actively the students are involved in discussion of films, where the problems of moral choice, best traditions of such family values as faithfulness, kindness, helpfulness preservation are viewed.

## 5. Conclusion

Thus, the study of media pedagogical aspects of schoolchildren’s family values formation in works of Russian cinematograph drew us to the conclusion that the aims, connected with the young generation’s focus on the problems, connected with family education, become extremely essential.

In the process of media educational work with Soviet and Russian films, devoted to family values and, in general, to family problems, the main part is played by the analysis of both the cinematographic material itself (investigation and interpretation of plot lines, main and optional characters’ description, revealing of basic key episodes, the film idea and so on), and the work with artistic and sociocultural context of that historic period, the plot was created and the film was shot in.

In the process of work at Soviet and Russian feature films it’s impossible to avoid investigation of Russian and foreign media educators and media critics’ works, which covered the key vectors of Russian cinematograph development of different years. The work with professional media critical and media pedagogical materials allows not only to circle the main problems, which

were more prominent in the cinematograph of this or that period, but also to represent comparative characteristics of family values representation on different stages.

During media educational classes the work with feature films should be built on symbiotic relationship with key tasks, which had been put in front of the films' creators. In the process of work with feature films of family themes, great prominence is given to the media text main and optional characters' description, their behavior models in the family, the problem of children-parents relationship. The most optimal methods of work are expanded characteristics introduction, storytelling method, psychological portrait presentation and so on. Interesting forms of media educational activity can also be represented by screen workouts changing genre preparation, writing an essay on the basis of the film watched, making rating of the best and the worst family couples, presented in the film, with the following argumentation of their point of view.

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