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New Research about Theoretical Film Studies Concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal

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Abstract

The “Information for All” editorial house published new monograph “Evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal (1931-2021)”. This book is one from a series of articles and books on cinema published in recent years as part of the same research collective.

New research “Evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal (1931–2021)” supported by the Russian Science Foundation (grant No. 22-28-00317), and devoted to the analysis of transformations of theoretical concepts and is based on a review of materials presented on the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal.

This analysis is very extensive and covers the period from the 1930s (when this journal first began to appear) to the present.

The material of this book might be of interest for higher-school teachers, students, graduate students, researchers, film critics, cinema scholars, journalists, as well as for the wide range of readers who are interested in the history of cinema art, problems of cinema, film criticism and film sociology. In connection with the publication of the monograph Alexander Fedorov gave an interview to Professor Marina Tselykh.

Keywords: theoretical film studies, *cinema art* journal, content analysis, Alexander Fedorov, film history, journalism history.

1. Introduction

The “Information for All” editorial house published new monograph “Evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal (1931-2021)” (Fedorov et al., 2023). This book is one from a series of articles and books on cinema published in recent years as part of the same research collective (Fedorov et al., 2017; 2018; 2019a,b; Fedorov, 2002; 2014; 2015a,b; 2016a,b; 2017a,b; 2019; 2021a,b,c; 2022a,b,c; 2023; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022a,b,c).

New research “Evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal (1931–2021)” supported by the Russian Science Foundation (grant No. 22-28-00317), and devoted to the analysis of transformations of theoretical concepts and is based on a review of materials presented on the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal.

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I would like to ask you as the scientific supervisor of the project, what tasks did you set for yourself and your scientific team at the beginning of the research, when the general concept of the project was formed?

In most cases, topics related to the film studies concepts of the *Cinema Art* were considered by researchers in fragments, without attempts at a full-fledged theoretical content analysis. Thus, the analysis of the transformation of the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* – from the year of its foundation (1931) to the present days – is very relevant, both in film studies, cultural studies, and in historical, scientific, philosophical, political and sociological aspects.

Of course, during the post-Soviet period, the circulation of the paper version of the *Cinema Art* journal decreased sharply, however, its influence and audience, taking into account the fact that the demand for cinema in the modern world remains very high (of course, taking into account its distribution on various media and platforms), have been preserved, thanks to the online version of this journal.

In recent years, in the scientific community there have been made attempts to analyze distinct time periods of the activity of the *Cinema Art* journal. As for foreign scientists, in their works devoted to Soviet and Russian cinematography, they mainly turned to the political and artistic aspects of cinema and quite rarely touched upon the topic of theoretical film studies in the USSR and Russia.

Thus, none of the researchers (neither in our country nor abroad) set themselves the task of analyzing the transformation of the theoretical aspects of film studies throughout the entire time interval of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal (from 1931 to the present time). This is the task that was set in our study.

In the course of study and analysis, we have identified the following main historical stages in the evolution of film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal from the moment of its foundation (1931, then the journal was called *Proletarskoe Kino*) to the present day: 1931–1955 (during the totalitarian period of the development of the USSR as a whole, editors-in-chief V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, N. Semenov, A. Mitlin, I. Pyryev, N. Lebedev, V. Grachev, D. Eremin, V. Zhdan), 1956–1968 (the period of the "thaw", editors-in-chief V. Zhdan, V. Grachev, L. Pogozheva), 1969–1985 (the period of "stagnation", editors-in-chief E. Surkov, A. Medvedev, Y. Cherepanov), 1986–1991 (the period of "perestroika", editors-in-chief Y. Cherepanov, K. Shcherbakov), the post-Soviet period 1992–2022 (editors-in-chief K. Shcherbakov, 1992; D. Dondurey, 1993–2017; A. Dolin, 2017–2022). And then we tried to consider how theoretical approaches in film studies were transformed during these periods.

What difficulties and problems did you encounter during the implementation of your scientific plan? Were there any revelations or discoveries that surprised you in the course of comprehending the extensive material that was published in the Cinema Art journal over the years of its publication?

Our research took a total of two years, during which we carefully studied the entire archive of the *Cinema Art* journal from 1931 to 2022, and analyzed the theoretical articles published there. There were no special surprises for us during the study. But the average reader may probably be surprised by the harshness of the approaches of Soviet film theorists of the 1930s – 1940s, who easily got personal in their works, sometimes accusing their colleagues of all mortal sins...

In general, what did your analysis of journal texts show? What are the main changes that were taking place in film studies? In your opinion, what research results are most significant for the scientific understanding of the problems of film studies in Russia?

First of all we turned to the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal in the first decade (1931–1941) of its existence, when its responsible the editors were: Vladimir Sutyurin (1931–1933), Konstantin Yukov (1934–1937), Nikolai Semyonov (1937) and Aron Mitlin (1938–1941).

Based on changes in political and sociocultural contexts, this ten-year period for the *Cinema Art* journal can be divided into a period of relative creative freedom within the framework of a

general commitment to “Marxism-Leninism” (1931–1934) and a stage of almost complete ideological unification (1935–1941).

And although the tendencies towards ideological unitarity were evident as early as 1932–1933 (the dissolution of the Central Council of the Society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo" (February 1932), the Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) "On the Restructuring of Literary and Artistic Organizations" of April 23, 1932, the publication of an article sharply criticizing the Society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo", the Resolution of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on the liquidation of the Society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo" of 14.07.1932; the renaming of the journal "Proletarian Cinema" to In 1931–1934, the discussion spirit of the 1920s was still preserved in the journal *Proletarskoe Kino/Soviet Cinema*).

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the first decade of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal (1931–1941) has shown that theoretical works on cinematographic topics during this period can be divided into the following types:

- ideologized articles by activists of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematography (1931–1932), emphasizing the dominant of "truly revolutionary proletarian cinema" and the irreconcilable struggle against the views of any opponents (at that time, an active process of collectivization was still under way, causing resistance from the peasant masses) (V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, N. Lebedev, and others);

- ideologically reoriented articles (1932–1934), written as a positive reaction to the Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks “On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations”, many of whose provisions (in particular, a clear indication that the framework of proletarian literary and artistic organizations – RAPP, VOAPP, RAPM, etc. – narrow and inhibit artistic creativity) have become a direct threat to the existence of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematography Workers. In their articles, the activists of the ARC (V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, and others), until the liquidation of this organization at the beginning of 1935, tried to prove their necessity and loyalty to the "general line of the party";

- articles containing sharp criticism of “groupism” (including among the ARRC), “leftism” and “agitprop”, “enemies of the people” (1935–1938) (K. Yukov, A. Dubrovsky, I. Krinkin, etc., although outside the *Cinema Art* journal – on the pages of central newspapers – many prominent writers and filmmakers, including S. Eisenstein, joined the call to severely punish “enemies of the people” in 1937–1938);

- theoretical articles attacking various types of formalistic phenomena (primarily in the field of montage) in cinema and culture (1931–1941) (G. Avenarius, E. Arnoldi, M. Bleiman, I. Weisfeld, L. Voitlovskaya, N. Volkov, M. Grigoriev, N. Iezuitov, N. Lebedev, A. Mikhailov, V. Nielsen, V. Plonsky, V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, S. Yutkevich, etc.). These attacks were not accidental, since as a kind of "islands" of creative freedom, experiments with form were alien and even dangerous for the spread of the ideology of socialist realism by the authorities in the USSR, as a unified method leveling the individuality of artists;

- theoretical articles opposing empiricism, “documentaryism”, naturalism and physiologism, vulgar materialism, aestheticism, “emotionalism”, defending Marxist-Leninist ideological and class approaches (1931–1941) (V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, B. Altshuler, E. Zilber, N. Jesuitov, I. Krinkin, N. Lebedev, N. Otten, etc.);

- theoretical articles defending the principles of socialist realism in cinema (1933–1941) (G. Avenarius, I. Weisfeld, S. Gerasimov, N. Lebedev, V. Pudovkin, S. Yutkevich, etc.)

- theoretical articles criticizing bourgeois film theories and Western influence on Soviet cinema (1931–1941) (E. Arnoldi, B. Balazs, G. Avenarius, etc.); to a large extent they were close to the fight against the above “...isms”;

- theoretical articles aimed mainly at the professional problems of mastering sound in cinema (in particular, the dramaturgy of sound, music), editing, imagery, film image, film language (for example, the cinematic possibilities of the Zeit-Lupe effect), film style, genre, entertainment, script construction (plot, plot, composition, conflict, typology of characters, typology of comic techniques, etc.), acting, etc. (1931–1941) (S. Eisenstein, B. Balash, N. Turkin, V. Pudovkin, S. Eisenstein, I. Popov, S. Skrynev, I. Sokolov, M. Tsekhanovsky et al.);

- theoretical articles balancing between ideology and professional approaches to the creation of cinematographic works of art (1931–1941) (B. Balash, S. Gerasimov, V. Pudovkin, S. Yutkevich and others).

Hereafter we analyzed the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal in the second decade (1945–1955) of its existence, when its responsible editors were: Ivan Pyryev (1945–1946), Nikolay Semenov (1947), Nikolay Lebedev (1947–1948), V. Grachev (1948), Dmitry Eremin (1949–1951), Vitaly Zhdan (1951–1955). Based on changes in the political and sociocultural contexts, this ten-year period for the *Cinema Art* can be divided into two periods:

1) a period of active intervention by the Government in the sphere of culture (including cinema) through strong ideological pressure on artists: 1945–1949;

2) a period of relative weakening of government intervention in the sphere of culture while maintaining general strict ideological dominants and political slogans: 1950–1955.

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the socio-cultural and political situation, etc.) of the second decade of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal (1945–1955) has shown that theoretical works on cinematographic topics in this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles written in support of the Resolutions of the Organizing Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) devoted to culture (including cinematography) and defending the principles of socialist realism, "nationality and party spirit" in cinema (1946–1955) (Y. Borev, A. Burov, A. Groshev, D. Eremin, A. Karaganov, D. Pisarevsky, V. Razumny, N. Semenov, V. Skatershchikov, V. Sutyryn and others);

- theoretical articles opposing "cosmopolitanism", formalism and bourgeois influence, contrasting them with communist ideology and class approaches (1949–1955) (A. Abramov, Y. Arbat, I. Weisfeld, Y. Vostrikov, S. Ginzburg, I. Grinberg, I. Dolinsky, D. Eremin, S. Freilich, V. Shcherbina, etc.);

- theoretical articles criticizing bourgeois film theories and Western influence on Soviet cinema (1945–1955) (G. Avarin, I. Weisfeld, and others);

- theoretical articles devoted mainly to professional problems: the development of color in cinema, genres, spectacle, film dramaturgy, etc. (1945–1955) (A. Dovzhenko, A. Golovnya, V. Zhdan, L. Kosmatov, V. Lazarev, A. Macheret, M. Romm, V. Shklovsky, S. Eisenstein and others);

- theoretical articles balancing between ideological and professional approaches to the creation of cinematographic works of art (1945–1955) (L. Belova, I. Weisfeld, S. Gerasimov, N. Morozova, L. Pogozheva, V. Pudovkin, V. Turkin, G. Tushkan, V. Frolov and others);

- theoretical articles calling on the authorities to ensure organizational transformations that contribute to the intensive development of film studies as a science (N. Lebedev).

Further, we analyzed the so-called "thaw" stage of the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal (1956–1968), when its editors-in-chief were: Vitaly Zhdan (1956), V. Grachev (1956), Lyudmila Pogozheva (1956–1968). Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the socio-cultural and political situation, etc.) of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal during the period of the "thaw" (1956–1968) has shown that theoretical works on cinematographic topics in this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles written in support of the Resolutions of the CPSU Central Committee devoted to culture (including cinematography), "thaw" trends, but still defending the inviolability of socialist realism, "nationality and party spirit" in cinema (A. Anikst, E. Weizman, E. Gromov, M. Zak, A. Zis, A. Karaganov, L. Kogan, N. Lebedev, G. Nedoshivin, D. Pisarevsky, V. Razumny, L. Stolovich, V. Tolstykh, R. Yurenev, etc.);

- theoretical articles opposing bourgeois influences, contrasting them with communist ideology and class approaches (N. Abramov, V. Bozhovich, I. Weisfeld, E. Weizman, S. Ginzburg, A. Zis, I. Katsev, G. Kunitsyn, A. Mikhalevich, V. Murian, G. Nedoshivin, A. Novogrudsky, L. Pogozheva, N. Semenov, L. Stolovich, Y. Sher, V. Shcherbina, etc.);

- theoretical articles devoted mainly to professional problems: analysis of the theoretical heritage of the classics of Soviet cinema, directing, screenwriting, genres, the specifics of television, etc. (S. Asenin, E. Bagirov, Y. Bereznitsky, M. Bleiman, I. Weisfeld, A. Vartanov, S. Ginzburg, E. Dobin, I. Dolinsky, V. Zhdan, L. Kozlov, V. Kolodyazhnaya, A. Macheret, S. Muratov, M. Romm, A. Svobodin, A. Tarkovsky, S. Freilich, R. Yurenev, S. Yutkevich et al.);

- theoretical articles balancing between ideological and professional approaches to cinema (I. Weisfeld, S. Gerasimov, R. Yurenev, etc.);

- theoretical articles calling on the Government to ensure organizational transformations that will contribute to the intensive development of film studies as a science, the sociology of cinema (N. Lebedev, Kh. Khersonsky, R. Yurenev).

In general, the course towards de-Stalinization taken by N. Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress led to a noticeable update in the content of the *Cinema Art* journal; in its materials there were noticeably fewer dogmatic approaches, materials of lively discussion appeared, and there was a revision of the former sharp critical passages addressed to “formalistic” theories of D. Vertov, L. Kuleshov, V. Pudovkin and S. Eisenstein. The journaline began to actively support the most artistically brilliant Soviet “thaw” films. The rude attacks on certain figures of Soviet cinema, which were characteristic of the journal in the 1930s and 1940s, have almost completely disappeared.

At the same time, our content analysis of the *Cinema Art* journal from 1956 to 1968 showed that after the removal of N. Khrushchev from power, support for “thaw” trends in the journal gradually decreased, and in connection with the Czechoslovak events of 1968, a series of materials directed against revisionism of socialist ideas and harmful foreign influence on Soviet filmmakers were published.

At the same time, the support of a number of artistically significant Soviet films that did not receive noticeable approval from the authorities, and a rather diverse panorama of the cinematic life of foreign countries on the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal ultimately led to sharply critical articles initiated “from above” directed against it (in magazine "Ogonyok"), and ultimately – to the removal of editor-in-chief L. Pogozheva from her post

Next, an analysis of the theoretical concepts of film studies was carried out in the *Cinema Art* journal during the era of “stagnation” (1969–1985), when its responsible editors were: Lyudmila Pogozheva (1969), E. Surkov (1969–1982), A. Medvedev (1982–1984), Y. Cherepanov (1984–1985).

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal during the period of “stagnation” (1969–1985) showed that theoretical works on cinematographic topics during this period can be divided into the following types:

- scientific and journalistic articles written under the influence of perestroika trends of changes in Soviet society, including the sphere of cinematography (E. Gromov, S. Dobrotvorskyy, S. Lavrentyev, V. Fomin, etc.).

- theoretical articles, discussions devoted mainly to professional problems: analysis of the theoretical heritage of the Soviet cinema classics, directing, the problem of "Cinema and the Spectator", etc. (Y. Bogomolov, M. Zak, E. Levin, I. Levshina, N. Klimontovich, L. Mamatova, M. Turovskaya, M. Yampolsky, etc.); theoretical articles on foreign cinema (S. Lavrentyev, V. Matizen, O. Reizen, etc.).

On the whole, in 1986–1991, the *Cinema Art* journal significantly departed from the former ideological stereotypes of Soviet film studies and took the position of a radical revision of the history of Soviet and world cinema and an objective assessment of the modern film process.

The post-Soviet stage of theoretical concepts’ development of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal became the next material for our study: 1992–2000, when its chief editors were Konstantin Shcherbakov (1992–1993) and Daniil Dondurei (from 1993 to 2000).

Despite all the efforts of the editors to publish sensational materials, which turned the *Cinema Art* journal in 1992–1994, rather, not into a film studies, but into a socio-political and literary journal (which published not only scripts and memoirs, but stories, novels and philosophical treatises, not directly related to cinema), the publication's circulation fell inexorably from 1992 to 2000. In 1992, it decreased from 50 thousand to 34.6 thousand copies. In 1993 – from 25 to 15 thousand copies. In 1994 – up to 10 thousand copies. Since 1994, data on the journal's circulation has ceased to be published at all, but according to data found on the Internet, from 1995 to 2000 it was approximately two thousand copies, that is, even lower than in the 1930s and 1940s.

However, at that time, the circulation of all Russian publications was falling. The "perestroika" surge of interest in the press was replaced by a desire among the broad masses to somehow adapt to the new conditions of economic shocks and instability.

After a sharp increase in film production in the early 1990s, a long decline set in by the mid-1990s, but the *Cinema Art* journal continued to publish dozens of reviews of films (though mostly foreign ones) and a lot of reviews of domestic and foreign film festivals.

Throughout the 1990s, the content of the *Cinema Art* journal depended quite significantly on political and economic events in the world and in Russia; theoretical articles on cinema very often occupied a very modest place on the pages of the journal. The journal also saw a change in generations of film critics and film experts: representatives of the older generation appeared on the pages of the publication quite rarely (and some, who previously personified the “state point of view”, disappeared completely), while the “middle generation” (who started in the profession mainly in the 1980s) e years) was widely and variedly represented.

The frequency of publications of theoretical articles in the *Cinema Art* journal in the post-Soviet 1990s ranged from 6 to 35 per year. At the same time, due to the sharp politicization and orientation towards non-cinematic texts, the minimum of film theory in journal texts occurred in the first three post-Soviet years.

Thus, during the first decade of the journal’s existence (1931-1941) 143 theoretical articles were published, during the second (1945–1955) – 194, in 1956-1968 – 220, in 1969-1985 – 264, in 1986–1991 – 66, in 1992–2000 – 132.

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal in the first post-Soviet decade (1992-2000) showed that theoretical works on cinematographic topics during this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles, discussions devoted primarily to the conceptual analysis of the theoretical heritage of the classics of Soviet cinema, directing, the problem of “Cinema and the Spectator,” film criticism and film studies, etc. (L. Anninsky, O. Aronson, Y. Bogomolov, S. Dobrotvorsky, E. Dobrenko, D. Dondurey, M. Zak, N. Zorkaya, V. Matizen, K. Razlogov, M. Turovskaya, etc.);

- theoretical articles about foreign cinema (D. Komm, M. Trofimenkov, M. Chernenko, N. Tsyркun, etc.).

In general, like in perestroika times, the *Cinema Art* journal in the 1990s, tried to rethink radically the history of Soviet and world cinema and to analyze objectively the development of the current film process.

In your monograph you write that theoretical concepts in film studies are changeable and often subject to fluctuations in the course of political regimes. The Soviet scientific film studies position was, as a rule, characterized by communist-oriented ideological approaches. You have analyzed them deeply and in detail in your monograph, highlighting the main historical stages in the evolution of film studies theoretical concepts. In this regard, it is interesting to find out what are the main theoretical approaches to the current film process today, and which of the film critics presents them most vividly in their work; what new interpretations of the history of Russian and world cinema have appeared recently, and whether they are reflected in the publications of the Cinema Art. What areas of film studies are the most relevant and ensure the development of film studies today.

The final stage of our research is devoted to the analysis of the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal in the 21st century, when its chief editors were Daniil Dondurei: 2001–2017 and Anton Dolin: 2017–2022 (from the spring of 2022 he was replaced by S. Dedinsky).

In 2001–2017, the circulation of the *Cinema Art* journal was not indicated in the issue data. According to data found on the Internet, the journal's circulation from 2001 to 2017 was approximately two to three thousand copies, that 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 fell to one thousand copies.

In the 21st century, the editors of the *Cinema Art* journal apparently realized that the attempts to turn it into a socio-political one, undertaken at the end of the “perestroika” era and in the 1990s, did not bring 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, the number of which in the 21st century has reached an average of eighteen per year.

Daniil Dondurei (1947–2017), who headed the *Cinema Art* journal until 2017, maintained the journal's course towards a sociological understanding of the media process, while attracting leading authors in this field. Anton Dolin, who replaced him in the second half of 2017, again emphasized political accents, on the one hand, and on the other hand, in journal texts also strengthened passages in opposition to the Government, and began to pay much more attention to the genres of mass culture in cinema. This line was continued further by the editor-in-chief S. Dedinsky who replaced A. Dolin.

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural, historical, political situation, etc.) of the *Cinema Art* journal in the 21st century showed that theoretical works on cinematic topics during 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 (N. Izvolov, N. Kleiman, O. Kovalov, E. Maisel, E. Margolit, A. Medvedev, N. Sputnitskaya, A. Fomenko, V. Shmyrov, A. Shpagin, A. Shcherbenok, etc.);

- articles in which it was made an attempt to understand the film process at a theoretical level (O. Aronson, D. Golyenko-Wolfson, E. Maisel, L. Manovich, etc.);

- articles devoted to sociological and culturological problems of cinematography, television and film distribution (O. Berezin, K. Bogoslovskaya, D. Golyenko-Wolfson, D. Dondurey, V. Zvereva, E. Maisel, I. Poluehtova, K. Razlogov and others); 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 cinematography (A. Artyukh, D. Komm, N. Tsyrukun, etc.).

In general, the *Cinema Art* journal 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.

In particular, the authors of sociological articles on cinema, through a thorough analysis of the film process, were able to identify the main trends characteristic of the period of the 21st century:

- the system of state support for film production in Russia began to have a negative impact on the situation with film distribution: the Ministry of Culture financed only the final result – film production – was reduced to a control, supervisory and regulatory process, to the implementation of an economic function in the interests of a narrow circle of film producers who earn money in the process of filming on (almost) gratuitous state financial support; to the fact that the producers do not care at all about either the artistic quality or the distribution fate of the films;

- there is a clear stake of the Russian media (in pursuit of audience attention ratings) on sensations, scandals, crime, vulgarity, etc.;

- content analysis of the plots of high-rated media formats allows us to identify the following system of content settings for the perception of media texts: the danger and aggressiveness of the surrounding world; the need to live in the moment; the sphere of a person's private life becomes a material capable of arousing tremendous interest among a mass audience, etc.;

- at the same time, the demand of a significant part of the mass audience to the producers of media texts is different: show us the society in such a way that we want to live in it;

- in Russia, there is (almost) no artistically prepared audience, so entertainment media texts predominate;

- mass media not only inform, enlighten, entertain; mass media is a powerful tool for the formation of taste, social patterns, patterns, feelings, moods, ideology, etc., and, as a result, national self-awareness in millions of people;

- the majority of Russian television viewers today constitute approximately two-thirds of the urban population and unites older, less educated groups (this is the most numerous and permanent audience dependent on television in information, value, and ideological terms) and relatively younger contingents, peripheral in terms of volume and nature of resources and the type of orientation. They are characterized by a relatively low level of education, a small amount of their own financial resources, and therefore dependence on more accessible and cheaper television;

- against this background, there is an increase in the volume and production projects of television series, including Russian online platforms; These products are largely subject to the following stereotypes: the feelings of the characters are presented in close-up, without halftones; key scenes contain suspense; the intrigue is tense and based on fairy-tale and folklore stories; socio-cultural and historical, patriotic significance of the topic;

- Russian viewers' trust in such media texts is due to their desire to return: from the disunity of recent years to unity, to the values of kindness and mutual assistance; from individual success to the "general" that continues the work of fathers and grandfathers; from the feeling of Russia's "second-rate" status to its primacy, to the multiplication of its wealth;

- against this background, the Internet has significantly transformed the media: a significant segment of the youth audience has been formed, which (almost) has no contact with television, being in the field of social networks and other products of modern information technologies; The most active representatives of this audience become authors of media texts, many of which, being very successful, attract advertisers.

What new challenges to previous traditional ideas about film studies are presented by the Internet, YouTube and other modern media resources? How is the face of film criticism changing today with the advent of the mass Internet? And is there a future for "folk" criticism, which is "not grounded" in academic knowledge?

The main challenge here (and film scholars also write about this in the *Cinema Art* journal) is that the availability of films of any kind, genre and country on the Internet has prompted articles by online film critics to reach an unprecedented number of ordinary people who do not have any special film education. While the circulation of *Cinema Art* in recent years has been about 2,000 copies, the audience of amateur film bloggers today can be up to a million people. As a rule, they write about cinema superficially, but in a brisk, accessible language. Such film bloggers also release their "TV shows" about old and new movies on their channels on the Internet, also gathering huge audiences... Many representatives of traditional academic film studies were clearly not ready for such a turn...

Is simple observation without knowledge of the laws of cinema sufficient to judge the quality of film production? How does the media education of viewers affect their perception and understanding of films? Is film education directly related to the high level of development of taste and aesthetic perception of film works? Or does education mainly develop the critical thinking of the audience?

This is a very complex question, a detailed answer to which will probably take hundreds of pages, so I will allow myself to refer readers to my monographs on media literacy education ([Fedorov, 2008](#); [Fedorov, 2015](#); [Fedorov et al., 2020](#); [Fedorov et al., 2022](#) and others books and articles), published over the past thirty years. I will only say that the relationship between the level of education and the ability to adequately judge works of cinema, in my opinion, does not fit into the framework of simple formulations (such as "well educated, which means an indisputable expert in the field of cinema"). But I am convinced that mass film/media education is a useful way to increase the level of perception and understanding of cinema and media culture in general.

You are quite right to say that the media not only informs, enlightens, entertains; Mass media is a powerful tool for shaping taste, social patterns, patterns, feelings, moods, ideology, etc., and, as a result, national self-consciousness among millions of people. You note that in Russia (almost) there is no artistically prepared audience, so entertainment media texts predominate. What is the demand of a significant part of the mass audience today for producers of media texts? What should be done in this regard?

The main demand of the mass Russian audience for the media (and cinema, in particular) is the same as in other countries of the world: entertainment. That is why spectacular genres are so popular with the mass audience (although, of course, I am not at all against entertainment genres as such; here it is important that the viewer strives to understand media texts of different genres, and does not narrow the range of his contacts with the cinematographer only to comedies and blockbusters). And, as I mentioned in my answer to the previous question, positive trends here can only be the result of media education, whether independent and/or within educational institutions.

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