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**Psychology of subculture: Phenomenology and Contemporary
Tendencies of Development**

**SUBCULTURAL FRAMES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR AS
PRESENTED IN RUSSIAN CINEMA**

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Abstract

The extent to which Russian cinema correctly analyzes criminal communities remains a subject of controversy. This article proves that modern Russian cinema, depicting criminal behavior or inclination towards it, shows not ethnographic interest, but attention to the dominant social dramaturgy. The heroes of the Soviet and Post-Soviet cinema are primarily carriers of a stable habitus in reality, and the conventions of the cinematic language serve to create the effects of reality. However, an individual approach to each character allows the criminal community to be studied not as a group, but as a subculture, which priorities come from the dramatic situation of each character. An analysis of a number of cases in a broad historical perspective made possible to reconstruct the basic properties of the psychology of the screened subculture. This is primarily a generational conflict, initiated not by “children”, but by “fathers”, with some regression in the development of the protagonist. Relations of domination or agreement are embedded in a more complex system of reproducing priorities, which allow the hero to be the center of attention, and moreover, require some narcissism from him or her. At the same time, both the criminal subculture and narcissism turn out to be open-loop systems, the characteristics of which are refined by a close analysis of films, taking into account the specifics of the director's approach in each case.

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1. Introduction

Criminal communities are one of the main themes of Russian cinema, from the era of Perestroika to the present day. In all cases, filmmakers are driven not by scientific ethnographic interest, but by psychological one, closely linked to cinema identity (Ezra & Rowden, 2006) and identity politics (Dennison & Lim, 2006). The criminal world turns out to be a prism through which characters are highlighted (Kolotaev & Ulybina, 2018).

Already in Soviet cinema, along with the type of a weak-willed, passive hero, drawn by fate (O. Yankovsky, O. Basilashvili, A. Myagkov, O. Dal, etc.), the type of active romanticist is formed. With particular clarity, the character of the romantic hero appeared in the image of Gleb Zheglov (V. Vysotsky) from the film S. Govorukhin “The meeting place cannot be changed” (1973). Unlike passive characters, he, the operative is active, takes responsibility and decisively acts himself, risking his life. However, in his actions of a fighter, the mentality of a generation formed in the era of the thaw is manifested. It refers to the type of person taking the initiative and responsibility (Kolotaev, 2018). But it is also obvious that in his actions the character of the subject, identified with the values of the social group with which the hero has an irreconcilable struggle, with thieves. Replacing the law by himself, he punishes criminals with force and cunning. In fact, the mentality of Gleb Zheglov is no different from the worldview of his opponents.

2. Problem Statement

We assume that the image of criminal subcultures in Russian cinema is determined not by studying the relevant customs, but by the position of the hero as an independent character. We give one example, according to the developed model of identity (Kolotaev 2007). In the mentioned Govorukhin's film, there are remarkable shots in which the hero of Vysotsky sings a song, trying on the uniform of the Interior Ministry officer in front of the mirror. The director told what efforts it was worth persuading Vysotsky to put on a police uniform. A paradox: an actor who plays a policeman does not want to put on the uniform of his hero. A replica was inserted into Vysotsky's text, from which it followed that it was his theatrical vestment. Vysotsky behaved as a representative of the highly individualistic criminal subculture, for which to put on a police uniform meant to renounce himself.

3. Research Questions

The Stalinist model of culture was based on an extremely rigid external control system (Kolotaev, Markov, & Schtein, 2018). After the Khrushchev thaw, the repressive model was modified. The era of communicative conventionality has begun. Behavioral norms and ideas about the boundaries that govern the wishes were put under question (Markov, 2018).

For the generation of sixties boundaries of conditional and unconditional, of games and realities, of feelings and duties began to loosen and disappear. Now, in the new millennium, the same problems of feelings and relationships between young people come to the attention of such directors as Alexey Uchitel. His film “The Walk” (2003) seems to be designed to solve, with aesthetic means, the task of freeing personal relationships, in general, feelings, from the power of the social context.

4. Purpose of the Study

The vacuum of politics gives rise to the unpretentious dominance of the criminal mentality, with its inherent impassability of the subject of social communication. This inability and unwillingness of the imputed presence at a certain, clearly distinguishable point from which speech is produced, determines the characteristics of Russian cinema as a mean to research criminal identity and corresponding subcultures. We prove that this feature of cinema was produced by peculiarities of the perception of the gestures of the characters, and not from general social observances.

5. Research Methods

In the 60s in Soviet society there was a need for words and images that are not related to reality. The young generation of twenty-year-olds is involved in the process of mastering different languages of a conditional nature. Khrushchev's realism modified Stalinist nominalism.

The system has ceased to be uniform, subordinating everyone and everything to one task as sublime purpose. The cold, alienating, inhuman dualistic ideal demanded an extremely serious attitude to the word and to the knowledge. Language served the ultimate goal of sacrificial service to the luminous gnosis. The word had the nature of a symbol and subordinated those who spoke to Stalin's laws of linguistic economy, words immediately followed words.

Now the uniform canon has broken up. The once serious was ridiculed (Ericson, 1960). In the place of a transparent and uniform world of symbols, appeared a multitude of darkened, obscure worlds with their opaque environments of languages (Ericson, 1968).

6. Findings

The spread of criminal identity in the late Soviet culture is shown in the film "Assa" (1988) by S. Solovyov. The main conflict of the film takes place in the characteristic vein of Oedipus. Criminal authority (S. Govorukhin), conditional father, confronts the son who implements the Oedipus script (S. Bugayev). The reason for the conflict, of course, were the feelings of two men to the same woman. Mistress of criminal authority falls in love with an extraordinary young man. It is noteworthy that in terms of age, the hero of Govorukhin belongs to the generation of the children of war. And his young rival belongs to the generation born in the early sixties. The ages match father and son. It is characteristic that the object of a criminal dad's mature love was a girl much younger than him, who was fit for him in her daughter. Africa intervenes in this incestuous novel.

In terms of a symbolic order of generally accepted cultural norms any notion of incest is not legitimate. But in the criminal fraternity, any desire is permissible and legitimate, if this is the desire of the thief-legislator himself. A thief can do anything he wants.

The official law and its representatives in the film look absolutely unconvincing. Agents of the power structures of the state appear at the very end of the drama, and then as classifiers, when the girl takes revenge on the thief for the murdered lover, arranging self-made-trial. During the film, the security services are constantly trapped. They fail to protect the Lilliputians (a metaphor for ordinary citizens),

they cannot prevent the killing of Africa, but they are trying to detain a shocked girl who does not even think of escape.

If the thief in “Assa” acts according to the criminal habit, denying the powerless law, then the generation going on stage, represented at the end of the film by the hero by Viktor Tsoi, heralds a different type of change. A new generation of criminals will oppose this criminal habit. The era of the criminal “fraternity” as new proto-subculture is coming.

We are returning to the conventional, contractual terms of the relationship system that emerged in the 1960s (Baumeister, 1986). The psychotic projection of such a world is given in the highest-grossing film of the 2000s in Russia, “Night Watch” by T. Bekmambetov. Here the foundations of the surrounding reality were given as a Manichaeic convention: the forces of good and evil agree, they work out the concepts on which an individual is invited to live. The world is divided into bright and black sides, good party and evil party. Man, himself is the result of such an arrangement. The complex and ambiguous world fits into a simple and consistent scheme. The hero of the film strives for the fulfillment of desire, now relying on a contract. This means that sense gratification does not imply an active subject principle (Lowe, 1989). Everything is predetermined by an agreement, a contract in which the dark forces assume the obligation to “help” the hero. Interestingly, the director Timur Bekmambetov, and screenwriter Sergey Lukyanenko belong to the generation of children of the sixties. The image of the virtual father of “Return” was transformed into the image of the illusory reality of “Night Watch”.

The film “Walk” (2003) by Aleksey Uchitel seems to be designed to solve, with aesthetic means, the task of freeing personal relationships, in general, feelings, from the social control. Obviously, for the Soviet directors of the 1960-70s it was not possible to get rid of the oppression of ideology and group ideas (Lowe, 1997). No matter how hard the sixties tried to talk about the private side of life, almost always, with rare exceptions, in their movies the subjective, personal, intimate was woven into the social.

If the cinematographer made a speech about the feelings of a man and a woman, then a surrealistic object appeared on the screen. Something similar is shown in the film “Sweet Woman” (1976) by Vladimir Fetin. If social problems were depicted, then most often the viewer would have a fantastic picture. The classics of the Soviet social fiction genre can be considered the “Premium” (1974) by Sergey Mikaelian based on the play of Alexander Gelman.

Aleksey Uchitel focuses exclusively on the problem of the feelings of his heroes, ultimately cleansing the image of, nevertheless, the ideology and social problems sticking to it. The camera keeps an eye on young people, it moves behind them through the streets of St. Petersburg. A new ideology opens up before the person the perspectives of emancipation from the socialist heritage (Goffman, 1963). But the stumbling block on the path of awareness of oneself as a subject in any ideological system continues to be recognition from the other (Goffman, 1959).

The heroes of Uchitel, like the heroes of Danelia, desire to be desired. They are given a chance to show their individual feelings. The camera snatches an object, from which one of the two characters can be recognized, from any social context. The girl for no apparent reason comes out of the car and goes down the street. She just walks because she likes to walk the streets of her native city. It couldn't be explained what the dialogue of this girl and man in an expensive foreign car with tinted glasses related to. Anyway, the girl, as an ideal erotic object, joins the flow of the urban crowd, appears on the street and

immediately attracts the attention of a guy. The flirtation begins, which can develop into a serious feeling (McNay, 2003).

The fact that in the first scenes was hidden both from the viewer and from unsuspecting young people, it turns out in the final part of the picture: Olga (Irina Pegova) made a bet with her lover Seva (Evgeny Grishkovets). The fact is that Olya and Seva get married in three months. He decides to go after the wedding to the village, where he has a good home, but she wants to go to the Himalayas and Tibet. According to his confession, Olya's daily route is a bar, a restaurant, a car.

For more, he thinks she is not capable. "Yes, she has forgotten how to walk! What is Tibet there? In the same mountain, there are no cars and bars. You really need to walk in the mountains". The future husband is outraged.

Olya offers Seva the following plan for an argument: she walks around the city all day, never crouching for a rest. Also, she brings to Seva two more witnesses who will confirm that she did not rest during the walk. These witnesses were Alexey (Pavel Brashak) and Peter (Evgeny Tsyganov). During their journey, young people fell in love with Olya and even managed to seriously ruin their relationship. There was a skirmish between them because Olya wins Seva as old-fashioned criminal. The guys are shocked. During the trip, she masterfully played them off, told them stories about herself, for example, that she has a sore backbone. She allegedly fell off her horse and hurt her back. Now she needs to walk. Or that her deceased rich grandfather left her a huge inheritance. But it turned out that she was inventing everything. "How could you believe her? - Seva amazes the innocence of the guys. - She has the brains of a five-year-old child. She will not tell you about that!"

The final scene of the film is remarkable. On the street near bowling, where the decisive explanation of all the participants in this adventure took place, two cars accidentally collided. On the opposite side of the street from the bowling are the stained-glass windows of the store, followed by two mannequins. The clash, the scandal of two drivers from different social worlds, luxurious Mercedes and chief Zhiguli, and figures that are indifferent to everything behind the glass. On the other side of the street, in the glass doors of a bowling alley, are two young men who are shocked by the truth they have just heard. Two mannequins and two people were used as extras.

The original message of the film is associated with the director's desire to isolate intimate relationships from the social context (Reicher, Halsam, & Hopkins, 2005). This sentimental journey clocks the appearance of love feelings. The fact that the characters are engaged in everyday life, who they are by profession, what their social status is not known. They are all ordinary people. The director safely escaped crime patterns. In Seva there is nothing of the brutal types, replicated in films about bandits. He is an intelligent, polite man. True, nothing is known about his social habits.

At press conferences, both the director and the actors said that this is a film about love, about simple, spontaneously arising feelings. Nevertheless, the artist fails to bring the intimate sphere of relations beyond the limits of social problems. For all the manifestations of Olga's loving-soul, who admits that she is good both with Peter and Alexey, that she loves everyone, there is quite a bourgeois deal. In the end, criminal money determines with whom the sex object stays with and who prefers, the girl with appealing forms. Young people have no money, Seva has it. If earlier, in the Soviet films of the 1960s. the collective principle absorbed the individual, now the accents have shifted towards new values.

7. Conclusion

The development of representations of criminals we may describe as drift from individual power to collective shared experience. It is not pure documented social reality, but open position of directors and screen stars. The appearance of money as a universal symbolic intermediary between the subject of desire and the object should obviously mean that the relationship between the participants of communication is at a qualitatively new level. The universal equivalent indicates the presence of a strong subjective principle capable of satisfying needs through the instrumental function of the law, the symbolic order of culture. The personality now independently, on the basis of a conscious choice, without resorting to the help of an authoritarian other, solves the problem of feelings and desires, fixing their truth with a contract. The parties to the agreement, concluding a convention, act as objects for each other. So the narcissism and criminal patterns of behavior are now embedded in the Russian cinema in the commercial framework of new subcultural habits. The Russian cinema is symptomatic for further studies of the question.

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