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MYTH AS FORM TO PRESERVE HISTORICAL MEMORY IN CINEMA-TEXT

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Abstract

The semiotic content of modern visual culture is a form of worldview, a part of historical memory, a form of social adaptation helping to interpret the historical content in evolution of civilization. Myth as one means of civilization identity serves as significatum in the history of nation, historical memory, and social identification. An important part in self-identification is the visual entropy of the surrounding world. The semiotic phenomenon of historical memory is a key to visual types of 20th century art. The visual semiotics of the cinematic language has specific principles. These principles are different, for example, from the visual language of stage images. The basic principle of organizing the visual space in a film-text is not contemplation, but the presence, immersion into the space of the image. The transition to the visual type of culture suggests the emergence into recipient's mind some mechanism to a visual artistic text perception as real. Transferring the ways on how the world is perceived and seen in the sphere of visualization not as an artistically rethought reality of a historical event. The historical text cannot be transformed into an artistic text without subordination to the laws of typification, semiotic generalization. In this case, an invariant of historical reality arises in the film text as an alternative historical situation. Mythologization acts in this sense as a way of structuring the world in which a person exists as part of it; he is a participant being interested in creating an alternative world.

Keywords: Visual semiotics, cinema-text, historical memory, myth.

1. Introduction

The human society has been existing for a long time and realizes its social needs not in the space of the real world, but in the space of the alternative world, alternative history, visual culture that has been artificially modeled and game-based. The society representatives manipulate the semiotic systems, being under their influence, and reveal themselves as actants who are forming a certain attitude to reality.

The study on the semiotic systems and the conditions under which this formation is going (Arnheim, 1988; Eco, 2006, 2016) helps people navigate the modern game space, create and study their alternative history.

The semiotic system has no limitations in its conceptualization. Therefore, there are no limitations in its perception and use. At present, semiotics is a codifying language with which the models of cognition and reality structures are built. Semiotics allow to interpret some world aspects as text-based ones in order to create a general theory towards identification and analysis of the social reality, using the knowledge gained as the identification model.

People in the modern culture space act out as interpreters of the virtual, alternative reality. The myth about a virtual person is part of the modern ritual that is associated with the knowledge about the world, with the parameters of survival and evolutionary laws. The image of a person loses its individual characteristics and is becoming a subject influenced by entropy. A view and a word should be an action that is felt physically. Otherwise, the image of an individual, the image of the world and the historical event disappear and the fact is becoming part of a game-based semiotic reality, adapting to the modern culture.

2. Problem Statement

The concept of a mythological system as an interpreter in understanding the social reality is a key to studying the modern visual space expressed in a film text. The modern society is a society of visual perception and visual culture. Awareness and understanding of the world are going in the process of ritual contemplation. The gaming reality of the culture is the process of visualizing a person's desire to master the reality, to make it be a part of person's inner world. In the process of visual gaming, a player is manipulating the reality and often he is losing objectivity in contemplation and perception. Facts of the historical reality can be rethought in the form of a mythologized reality, subject to the laws of the mythological world order. The scientific problem in this case is the description of a structure and some parameters applied in perceiving the historical reality in a film text as a new mythological method of socialization and preservation of information that is relevant to modern publics mentality.

3. Research Questions

Understanding of the semiotic system existing in the visual space is the ability to analyze any subject area as universal, hypertext and, therefore, accessible for any adequate description. This is the experience of communication, the experience of understanding the world, its description.

The semiotic phenomenon of historical memory is a key to 20th century visual art and its types. This concept is implemented as a content-logical diagram describing a historical event as being rethought individually and creatively from the standpoint of the author's individual style, which is expressed in the

framework of the epistemological paradigm as a way of reorganizing the historical event with adapting the structure of the event to historical reality. Historical memory is expressed structurally and meaningfully as a game, semiotic holistic mythological space. The valuable components in the idea of power description, the image of the country, the social structure of the world are the event structuring process as true description of an action as a game ritual, the axiological anthropic filling that is considered as the sign-based nature of the visual image.

4. Purpose of the Study

Representation of the visual defined space and game-based one is beyond the doubt. Therefore, the study addressing visual semiotic systems seems relevant and socially significant. It is necessary to clearly indicate by what means and in what ways a mythologically defined alternative reality is formed in a film text.

5. Research Methods

The methodological principle the work lies in a set of philosophical traditions, mythology, cultural studies, phenomenology, semiotics and hermeneutics. Scientific search is carried out in accordance with the general logical methods, basic concepts of the dialectical cognition method. The interpretation of the subject matter of the study is going in accordance with the methodological principles of determinism, complexity, and the approach involving historical and logical knowledge. The philosophical-semiotic understanding of a film text place is traced in the framework of some philosophical studies. The modern understanding of semiotics as a way of interpreting the reality and creating an alternative world allows to speak about the formation of a bass mentality, a socially significant common mythological past. Methods of sociological research are reflected in the theory of modern semiotics of the visual arts by the various authors (Danesi, 2006; O'Halloranb, 2012; Kolodii, Kolodii, Chayka, & Goncharova, 2015; Galan, 1986; Thurlow, 2017; Jensen, 2015).

6. Findings

The meaning of any ritual is to reproduce some general cosmological scheme, consisting in the movement from the fundamentally disordered reality of Chaos to the fundamentally ordered reality of Cosmos, "the possibilities of the ritual ... were determined by the fact close in meaning to the act of creating, reproduced it with its structure and sense and revived again something that emerged in this acting" (Toporov, 1988, p. 8). Hence, there is the fundamental importance with which people always approached the question of cosmogenesis; hence, there is the abundance of plots telling about the beginning of creation within the framework of one cultural community.

The myth does not strive to objective reflection of the reality, and certainly does not strive to any explanation of how it was 'in fact'. The point that the creators of the myths are less concerned with the question, and how 'in reality' things were going, is quite natural, since their thinking continues to be myth-centrist thinking.

Artistic film - is a form of representing a historical event, designed conceptually with regard to a particular political position. This form bringing the adaptation to the historical reality is a means of mythologizing social space. In the form in which the holistic artistic thing is expressed, the historical space of the world is reinterpreted or re-created. The national identity and socio-psychological infrastructure of the society development is impossible without myths.

The visual semiotic reality actually creates an imaginary object that uses the reality of the world as a background to form an impression, as a basis of creating a new myth about the end of the world, about an alternative reality, about an alternative history. In this way, the prototext, the prototype of the world and human life in a movie, is formed as a prototype for subsequent identifications. This myth is a description of finiteness, discreteness, and variability of the world, in which the editing technique, the scenes change, the multidimensional camera work act as the grammatical laws of the text paradigm organization. The narrative space of the cinematography at the beginning of the century forms the illusion of reality, the reality of similarity, an alternative historical event that becomes basic for interpretation of some laws dealing with sustainable existence of the modern society.

Instead of true reflection of the reality (which was the purpose of cinema, according to the official version of those whose tasks was to shape the public mentality), an eschatological myth about a world striving for entropy was created. Myth as a sense-bearing reality creates the protoscheme of cinema semiotics in the modern culture: the more unrealistic an image, the more techniques helping to create the non-linearity of the described time-space, the more unreality created in acting is taken by audience as the reality. Non-human face masks in the strike, the energy of the movement of the anthropomorphic crowd, the shadow theater in 'Strike' formed the main typological features and techniques by which the space of the world is identified at the moment of its emergence from chaos. At the same time, the birth of the new world with the youth of this world is seeking to be completed through self-identification, understanding the structure of the processes taking place in the world: the dominant meaning among the masks of the characters that are seen in the movie is misunderstanding and a question, surprise and anger. The death of the old world and the birth of the new one encloses the heroes of acting in the circle of reality, in which the path of the new world development will end up with death, transition to a new form of existence. The same thing happens with the characters of the movie: throughout the text, their faces change along the reality scenes are changing and return to their original state, confirming the cyclical nature of time-space.

S. Eisenstein accumulates the knowledge of all world cultures in order to put them into the polyphonic theory of cinematography. Mythology, folklore, attempts to systematize the pragological thinking of primitive tribes allow Eisenstein to recognize as acceptable the conclusion made by Marr, the representative of the Soviet linguistic school, according to which the works of art are socially shaped and solely defined by production relations of archaic mythological frames (as cited in Uhlenbruch, 2002).

Therefore, Alexander Nevsky as a character of the ancient Russian chronicles and as a hero of the movie by Sergei Eisenstein these are two completely different myths, undoubtedly, ascending basically to the same historical person, but represented in the texts in completely different ways, because each text is created in its specific epoch, and its task is to combine the torn reality of the myths belonging to the past and present. "Moscow cinema" proposal to shot a movie about Alexander Nevsky comes to Sergei Eisenstein in 1937 at the height of the Spanish Civil War, in which the Soviet military experts and

volunteers first encountered a 'new crusade' by the nationalists Franco, the Italian fascists and the German Nazis. The tense Soviet-German relations of 1934-1938 became an excellent reason for reviving the idea of the century-old struggle of the Slavs against the German expansion (Drang nach Osten) and in general against the Western invaders, which led to a positive attitude towards Alexander Nevsky heroism and was the stimulus to include him into the pantheon of the Soviet heroes.

The important role here was played by the Roman Catholic Church, which openly supported the Spanish nationalists. Frames of the Catholic prayer of the crusaders in the movie by Sergei Eisenstein appear far from not occasionally. Even the final phrase in the movie, in which Alexander Nevsky, admonishes the allotted bollards, paraphrasing the Gospel of Matthew: 'Go and tell everyone in foreign lands that Russia is alive! Let no fear favor us to visit, but if someone comes to us with a sword, he will die from the sword! The Russian Land stands and will stand on that!'. Etymologically it goes back to the Stalin's speech, which he took on January 26, 1934 at the XVII Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (b), where he spoke about Germany and Japan: 'And those who will try to attack our country, - will receive a crushing rebuff, so that in the future it will be disgusting for them to stick their pork snout into our Soviet garden. That is our foreign policy'.

The movie 'Alexander Nevsky' appeared in cinemas in 1938 and sought a huge success, comparable only to 'Chapaev'. It had even more booming success in 1941, after fascist Germany attacked the USSR. It should be noted that the myth of Alexander Nevsky, used by the Soviet cinema in the midst of the Soviet-German crisis caused by the civil war in Spain in 1937-1938, would have been somewhat different if the movie had been shot in 1939, after the victory of the nationalists Franco in Spain and the signing of Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the USSR and Germany.

The historical text cannot be transformed into an artistic text without subordination to the laws of typification and semiotic generalization. In this case, an invariant of historical reality arises in the cinema-text, as an alternative historical situation. Mythologization acts in this sense as a way of structuring the world, to which a person who perceives this reality belongs, a participant who is sending a message, being interested in creating an alternative world.

A habit, a spectator's reception towards a text or a historical event, an expectation scale leads to understanding the fact that the semantic content of texts corresponding to the ideological reality, the conviction that a written word can be considered to be the ultimate truth. This was the reason that the concept of alternative history, dictated by the form of the modern mentality, is objectified in the visual culture (Laruelle, 2012; Vázquez-Liñán, 2017; Koshkina, 2018).

The movie 'The Iron Stream' is the stage version of the same-name novel of Serafimovich (1924) 'The Iron Stream'. In the movie by E. Dzigan, some artistic mechanisms are used to form an emotionally saturated, and, therefore, convincing artistic image. So, for example, the round composition of the movie (likening to a mythological, therefore, a priori eternal, archetypical reality), extrapolation of the symbols of the nation's faith as the mechanisms of spiritualizing a struggle, building a new world, goal-setting (replacing the concept 'house' with such concepts as – peace, field, country - by means of symbolic accentuation of such objects as 'samovar', 'machine gun', 'riffle').

Another characteristic cinema-myth of the modern era was presented by director Guillermo del Toro in 2017 in the fantasy melodrama 'The Shape of Water' nominated for 'Oscar' in 13 categories. And

although the actions of this movie were deliberately postponed by the director in 1962, the movie's mythology is absolutely modern and corresponds to all the latest trends in the American cinematography. Negative characters - a typical WASP (English White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant), working for the special services, was a Soviet agent who disguised as an American scientist, oppose the positive - a disabled girl, her black friend and her gay neighbor. In 1962, in the USSR, the mythological movie 'Amphibian Man' was come out. The character of cinema- novel was embodied in the movie del Toro: such a set of socially and historically meanings for shaping the civilization identity of the characters is implementation of very significant issues - the struggle against racial, sexual and any other segregation. In other words, the mythological plot, obviously surreal, not related to the objective reality, includes a compulsory planned set of characters — social roles (there must be a disabled connotation, a person of a non-European race, a person with a non-standard sexual orientation).

In this vein, the British-American drama directed by Martin McDonagh 'Three billboards outside Ebbing, Missouri' is very remarkable. It is noteworthy that 11 years before 'The Shape of Water', Guillermo del Toro, shot the movie about the Spanish Civil War 'The Labyrinth of the Faun', that was nominated for Oscar, in which the grim reality of the Spanish war interweaves with no less gloomy magical world surrounding the main character of the movie.

7. Conclusion

The transition to the visual culture (and its perception as real, identical to the real situation) suggests the emergence into the mind of a recipient some mechanisms able to perceive the visual artistic text as real. Transferring the ways of the world perception into the sphere of visualization makes it possible to talk about cinema-text as a historical document, and not as an artistically rethought reality of a historical event. The mythologization of the memory space, the symbolization of the past experience, the historical reality is the only way to form an identical civilization space, a way to form and preserve the national idea.

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