

CINEMATOGRAPHY AS AN ELEMENT OF THE IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEM OF KEMALISM

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Abstract

Purpose: The article deals with the politics of the Kemalists in the Republic of Turkey in the 1920s - 1930s, as well as the ways of indoctrination of the main political principles of this ideology. During this period, Turkey, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, began radical changes affecting all spheres of society.

Methodology: The research given is based on the principles of science, historicism, and impartiality; moreover, historical-genetic, historical-comparative, historical-systematic methods of historical research are used.

Result: Having declared itself a secular state, focusing on the European level of development of those times, the Republican Turkey at the same time created its own system of national education, culture, language, ideology. This was facilitated by quite radical, largely authoritarian transformations. However, it is worth noting that the goal of the reforms was not widespread westernization of society, but the creation of a national Turkish state.

Applications: This research can be used for the universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of Cinematography as an element of the ideological system of Kemalism is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: *Kemalism, westernization, the Republic of Turkey, Atatürk, ideology, cinematography, nationalism.*

INTRODUCTION

Since 1923, the Kemalists began to carry out the first transformations of the Turkish state. The creation of the Republic of Turkey, the creation of a state capitalism system led to a gradual modernization of the economy; the introduction of general state secular education, like all domestic policies, led to the consolidation of the nation on new basic principles.

In new conditions of existence of the national state, using nationalism as the main means of political mobilization of all social forces on the path of modernization, the Kemalists separated nationalism from Islam, which certainly became an obstacle to integration along all lines with the West ([Guseinov, 1978](#)).

The Constitution of 1924 enshrined the forms of the bourgeois-democratic state established during the national liberation movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. As a result, new transformations were won and legalized: national independence was won; monarchies, caliphates, religious courts, reform of the alphabet and the education system were abolished. Thus, Turkey began a real movement towards a modern liberal and democratic society.

However, society has not always favorably perceived new realities and metamorphoses. It is well known that at an early stage Kemalism as an ideology was rejected by the Turkish masses.

METHODS

The research given is based on the principles of science, historicism, and impartiality; moreover, historical-genetic, historical-comparative, historical-systematic methods of historical research are used.

The historical-genetic method allows us to trace the stages of development of the Kemalist ideology and the changes in the political propaganda of the 1920s and 1930s in the Republic of Turkey. Thus, the “Turkish centers” that emerged in the era of the Ottoman Empire, falling out of the Kemalist political field, were closed, and their place was taken by the “people's houses”.

The historical-comparative method allows noting the similarities of the ideologies of the Soviet Union and the Turkish Republic.

The historical-systematic method, aimed at studying political and cultural changes in the 1920s and 1930s, makes it possible to see not isolated events, but an integral ideological system, which was oriented towards the creation of a national state.

RESULTS

In April 1924, such socio-political institutions as the “Turkish centers” resumed their activity. Their history dates back to 1908 and is connected with the coming to power of the Young Turks. In May 1925, a decree was issued, stating that rendering assistance to the “Turkish centers” was the primary duty of the government. Funding “the centers” was at the

expense of the state ([Izmaylov, Fakhrutdinov & Galimzyanova, 2017](#)). As the Russian researcher A. A. Kolesnikov noted in his study dedicated to people's houses in Turkey: "the task of the "Turkish centers" was to propagandize the best examples of the modern Turkish language, to influence writers, publishing houses, and also to explain to the people the revolutionary transformations of the government and the significance of the reforms it carried out. Moreover, the interpretation of the ideas of Turkish nationalism by "Turkish centers" differed from the official. So, despite the fact that the "centers" themselves once declared that "as organizations of the Turkish nation, they worked only within national and state borders and rejected the policy of Pan-Turkism, their former leadership later determined the importance of the "centers" as organs of the Pan-Turkic propaganda" ([Kolesnikov, 1984](#)). In addition, there were often no references to the Republican People's Party or the name of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the publications of the "centers". The discrepancy between the stated goals and real activity, apparently, was the reason for the closure of "Turkish centers" in April 1931.

Despite the contradictory nature of the "Turkish centers", their contribution to the experience of the propaganda of Turkish nationalism is worth noting.

So, the empty niche of propaganda institutions is soon occupied by people's houses. The decision to create people's houses was made at the III Congress of the People's Republican Party in 1931.

The main document regulating the work of people's houses was the "Instruction of the people's houses of the People's Republican Party". According to this document, each people's house had to have nine sections in its structure: history, language, and literature, art, theater, sports, public assistance, libraries, rural life, and museums.

A new direction in the work of art sections was cinematography. This phenomenon certainly requires special consideration. This is largely due to the fact that literacy of the population in the early years of the Republic of Turkey was a disastrous 8%. In the conditions of the impossibility of the rapid introduction of universal education, the task of educating the masses, and introducing them to ideological attitudes, was given to the cinema.

The brainchild of the Lumière brothers, created at the end of the 19th century as entertainment, by the 30s of the 20th century it was firmly established among political means of influence. Simplification of perception, accessibility, full coverage of the audience and wide, systematic coverage of life - these characteristics allowed the "live photography" to enter the political sphere. "The cinema has two functions: to display the surrounding reality and create a new one" - the words attributed to Siegfried Krakauer most fully reflect the essence of the cinema. However, through the efforts of ideological doctrines, these functions more often merge into one, and the task of creating a new reality is partly given to documentary.

The Kemalists sought to introduce the ideology of Kemalism into all forms of art, including the cinema. This is largely due to the fact that the founder of the Turkish Republic, M.K. Atatürk attached great importance to the cinema: "The cinema is such a discovery that will eventually affect the world civilization more than the invention of gunpowder and electricity" ([Lunacharsky, 1965](#)).

In connection with this, new cinemas were being built in Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Bursa, Zonguldak and other cities. Most of them were counted in Istanbul, whereby the end of the 1920s more than 20 cinema halls had been built. The laws promulgated by the Majlis in 1930 also contributed to the increase in the number of cinema halls: the first is about municipalities that were charged with promoting the cinema development ([Özön, 1962](#); [Prozhiko, 2004](#)).

People's houses were ordered to open their own cinema halls. As a rule, there were shown educational films and chronicles of events. Feature film demonstrations were also held.

Analyzing the processes of the ideology of Kemalism and the variants of its indoctrination, we should mention Ismet Inönü's prominent phrase. Speaking in the Majlis in 1934, Prime Minister Ismet Inönü said: "The People's Republican Party has now grown from the narrow framework of a political party into the largest public organization opening its arms for all citizens" ([Antúnez, 2008](#); [Mendes, & Silva, 2018](#); [Lobão, & Pereira, 2016](#)). Perhaps this was due to the full-scale introduction of ideology into popular culture.

A big event for the social and political life of Turkey was a feature-documentary film shot by a Soviet director. In 1933, the creative team of artists headed by Sergei Yutkevich shot a Soviet-Turkish feature-documentary film "Ankara is the heart of Turkey", which reflected not only the ideologies of M.K. Atatürk on the modernization of the state but also the ideas of Soviet directors.

For the Turkish society, this film reveals the path of modernization, along which M.K. Atatürk directed Turkey: the path from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, from Istanbul to Ankara. Soviet directors, starting from the concept of the "communist decoding of the world" by D. Vertov, created the Turkish Republic "in the image and likeness" of the Soviet Union. The war against the Western powers, the overthrow of the monarchy, and faith in a bright future are mentioned here. As a result, visual images, eclipsing history, created friendship between two states that is timeless.

It is worth highlighting a feature of the work of S. Yutkevich and L. Arnshtam. "Ankara is the heart of Turkey" is a film telling about the capital of Turkey, about the festivals dedicated to the tenth anniversary of the Republic of Turkey. The first Soviet government delegation consisting of the Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council K.E. Voroshilov, a

member of the Revolutionary Military Council S. M. Budyonny, Commissar of Education, A. S. Bubnova, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs L. M. Karakhan and vice-president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, chairman of the State Power Company G. M. Krzhizhanovsky ([Yazdekhesti, Erfan, & Nazari, 2015](#)). Despite the fact that the picture of the new Turkey was, above all, informational, S. Yutkevich violates the canons of "pure" document list and introduces an artistic line. As he himself later writes in his memoirs: "in this film I dared to violate the canons of the cinema films: Arnshtam and I were attracted not only by the fixation of a truly significant political event - the first visit of the Soviet government delegation to Kema list Turkey but also by the chain of historical associations that inevitably occurred when meeting with such a topic... The plans for the conquest of Tzargrad (Constantinople), cherished by many, from the Russian autocrats to Milyukov, the bloody and exhausting battle for the independence of the Bulgarians, the sultan's empire in alliance with German militarism, are just a few stages of the long and grim history of Russian-Turkish relations, which Leninist national policy and the victory of supporters of the first president of the Turkish Republic, Kemal Ataturk, ended". As a result, two layers of the story are highlighted in the film: the stay of the Soviet delegation in Turkey and the new Turkey seen by the Turks themselves. To realize the second one, S. Yutkevich introduced two fictional characters into the film: an old peasant, a member of the national liberation movement of the Turkish people in 1918-1923 and his granddaughter: "I introduced two playable" characters - an old actor, who first arrived in the city for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Republic, and a girl, his granddaughter, and guide. Both of them served as "observers", through whose eyes I tried to show various events and layers of Turkish culture from unexpected angles ([Machado, Souza, & Catapan, 2019](#)). Indeed, such an author's ideas introduced into the documentary chronicle dramatic undertones that allow showing the changes that have occurred in the republic for over ten years. The role of the old peasant, a kind of commentator on the life of the country, the director assigned to the Turkish actor Ahmet Nuri. A partner of the old man in the film was a young Turkish girl.

The director shot the characters in a documentary style, giving them the opportunity to act freely and naturally. The old man and the girl looked as authentic as the events they witnessed. According to the plot of the film, the peasant and the girl moved from the Anatolian village to Ankara, meeting on their way both the old and the changing reality, and the Soviet delegation headed for the capital through Istanbul. The camera lens, following the path of the heroes of the picture, alternately reflects the traces of ancient civilizations and the resurgent Turkish Republic, entering the path of industrial development. All these should have emphasized not only the versatility of this country but also the readiness to embark on the path of social and political modernization. [Medina, R. \(2018\)](#).

This cognitive aspect of the film attracted both the Turkish and the Soviet audience. It is worth noting the artistic merit of the film, which the documentarists recognized: the montage, the visual method of filming. S. Yutkevich, shooting this film, understood that the picture of a foreign country, however, indirectly characterizes the Soviet Union.

It should be said a little more about the mounting of the picture. In the film, there are shots consisting of images already familiar to a Soviet citizen. They create the role of beacons that tie the Soviet reality to the events of 1933 in the Republic of Turkey and which form the kinship of two states in the minds of people. It partly depends on the fact that the audience perception is not passive, but is actively selective. A kind of effect of L. Kuleshov appears here when the second frame affects the perception of the first. These are marching children's groups, a kind of pioneer organization, and developing scientific institutions with young specialists, and a morning-training scene, as a symbol of the recovery of the nation. [Drieu, C. \(2019\)](#).

SUMMARY

The invasion of ideology into the documentality of this picture can also be observed in the fact that real sounds and documentary speech are mostly ousted by thundering music and the author's words. These factors lead the viewer along the way of thinking that was given by the state. It is through these measures that a change in the conceptual understanding of the "authentic display of reality on a documentary screen" is taking place.

A new world, which was based on «industrialization and cultural revolution», was being built. The denial as the pathos of life had the face of the enemy - the Old World; at that time for a creative program, it was necessary to create a model of the New World. [Medina, R. \(2018\)](#).

Hence, it can be concluded that the chronicle cinema also has a prognostic function. The nature of the "image of the world", its focus on reflecting not what is, but what will be in the near future. In fact, we do not live in the world, as it is every given fraction of a second, but in that world, as it will be after a certain period of time. This distance between the real and the expected world makes us creators of our reality. It is on this distance that the qualitative feature of the reaction to the documentary screen is based, and the cinematography acts as the force of influence on the formation of the "new" reality for the viewer. [Drieu, C. \(2019\)](#).

CONCLUSION

The efforts of the Kemalists in the field of culture and education brought Turkey closer to modern international standards, allowed to increase the political activity of people, to achieve changes in the economic and political spheres. By order of Mustafa Kemal, there were created national education systems at various levels, a network of "people's houses", as well as

the libraries and museums. Mustafa Kemal has always demanded the allocation of funds for education, science, culture, knowing that it is in these areas the foundations of the nation laid.

In turn, according to V. I. Lenin, “on real-life examples the cinema can clearly show what our revolution is, what its desires are, how it looks at the whole world around”.

In the new conditions of existence of the national state, using nationalism as the main means of political mobilization of all social strata for the implementation of a broad reform program, for modernizing the country, in order to succeed, the Kemalists had to liberate the society and the state completely from any influence of religion. All these allowed the Turkish Republic to break into a leading position among the other countries of the East, to proceed to the construction of a secular bourgeois-democratic state.

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