

Traditional Ceremonies and Rituals of Kazakh People as the Reflection of the Spiritual Culture in the Kazakh Cinematograph

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ABSTRACT

This paper covers the folklore and traditional nature of Kazakh cinematograph. A flexible manner was used for analysis of the specifics of cinematizing of ethnic and cultural values, and also, the cinematization of traditions and customs as the factor of spiritual development was studied. Systematical and scientific analysis of peculiarities and factors of national identity and culture in Kazakh movies was conducted. The paper is dedicated to the discussion of ancient traditions and rituals of Kazakh people which have a great importance for the traditional Kazakh society, for their spiritual development, for the formation of personality in the society and behavioral education. It was demonstrated that the very ancient traditions, as well as quips by predecessors, according to which the traditional Kazakh society lives, play the main role, can influence and give a good example of the development and formation of a sound society in the 21st century according to unchangeable, previously established rules, national traditions and other values. Results of the study can contribute to the development of the methodology for both certain sections of cultural history and the study of socio-cultural significance of Kazakh cinematograph of the 20th century and of the beginning of the 21st century.

KEYWORDS

National traditions, ancient ceremonies, history of culture, ancient cults, modern cinematography.

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Introduction

The contemporary Kazakhstan society is characterized by active search for new and viable paradigm of spiritual development, ethno-cultural and moral self-identification, which, in turn, would provide for the needed level of interethnic concord and unity, and also would be a factor of further growth of the national identity (Aitzhanova, 2014). Against the background of the crisis in moral and cultural values, new symbols and rituals are intensively formed, which are intensively implemented in everyday life of citizens (Bennett, 2013). The culture, in the entirety of its components, herewith acts as a most important factor of sustainable development, and because of that, preservation of cultural codes, traditions and national customs gains topicality. The continuity of generations is provided for, in particular, by restoration and development of national customs and rituals which accumulate centuries-long experience of the nation, and baseline sources of its outlook and spirituality (Wong, 2015).

Cinematograph, as the most up-to-date, mobile and popular kind of arts, reflects processes taking place in the society, and also actively participates in

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the formation and implantation of moral values, behavioral stereotypes, cultural and national self-consciousness of our country's citizens (Celli, 2016). The national identity is expressed not just in historical films, but also in films about present times and the future, because ethno-cultural traditions of the nation are demonstrated in them.

In connection with that, it has to be especially mentioned that in the artistic culture of the past century, cinematograph certainly had a special rank in terms of its status and scope. Motion pictures, similar to folklore, are syncretical by its genre nature. For both folklore and motion pictures, the diversity of methods of creation of natural tempers, of the very image of the nation through a direct comprehension of actual situations of the social life of the country, are inherent. The national nature of the cinematographic art, the internal link thereof with folklore, are demonstrated in the establishment of national cinematographs, in the number of which, undoubtedly, is Kazakh cinematograph (Waller, 2012).

Literature review

The study of the phenomenology of Kazakh cinematograph in the socio-cultural space of Kazakhstan is determined by a number of reasons. It is an indicator of historical, ideological, social and cultural changes of the Soviet and post-Soviet society, which to a wide extent contributed to the solution of existing cultural contradictions (Siranov, 1980). The development of national cinematograph and rooting thereof in the socio-cultural space gained a large scale (Shin, 2015).

Kazakh cinematograph, emerged and existed within the frames of Soviet cinematograph for a long time, absorbed its main features, ideology, and genres which envisaged the deletion of ethnical frames and the propaganda of the Soviet society's values (Nogerbek, 2008). After gaining independence, national cinematograph passed a difficult stage of transformation and deideologization, in the conditions of which cinematographers obtained a unique possibility to realize their ideas and creational appetences without ideological pressure and the necessity of preservation of previous stereotypes. In that period, a large number of full length and short motion films came out, in which unaided eye could see the rudiments of genesis of national cinematograph, first ambitious attempts of getting the international community to know the rich history, unique way of life, age-old traditions and customs of The Kazakh nation (Waller, 2012). In the following years, the pronounced accent to demonstrate the national identity in Kazakh cinematograph not gained only an extensive use, but also gained prevailing status both in motion pictures and documentaries (Rouland, Abikeyeva & Beumers, 2013). Kazakh cinematograph, by way of screen adaptation of Kazakh literature classics' books, epoch-making historical events, biographical genre, was getting wide public to know the centuries-long history, deep-rooted traditions, customs, outlook, and stories of the tragic past. Such cinematographic products found keen response of both domestic and foreign audience (Isaacs, 2016). In consequence of such a trend, in domestic cinematograph of both Soviet period and period of independence, a large formation of stories covering traditional culture, way of life, system of outlook

and beliefs, ceremonies and customs of Kazakh nation was accumulated (Shin, 2015).

Speaking of the topicality of the subject, it has to be mentioned that to a large extent it is determined by the fact that it is understudied in domestic historiography from the point of view of culturological generalizations and concrete conclusions in respect of main aspects of the problem. Above arguments determined the subject matter of the paper: “Traditional Ceremonies and Rituals of Kazakh People as the Reflection of the Spiritual Culture in the Kazakh Cinematograph”, the expedience of development of which is dictated by an aggregate of circumstances of both theoretical and practical-cognitive nature which are also needed for the solution of one of the most complex problems of present-day Kazakhstan, the spiritual and moral resurrection of The Kazakh nation.

The culture of Turkic-speaking nations of the planet is rich and diverse, but in the course of the development of civilization each nation has its own views of life (Yesenova, 2004), own mentality (Akatayev, 1993), own traditions and morale (Tursunov, 2004b), customs, rituals, own language, own written language, etc (Tursunov, 2001; Kenzheakhmetuly, 2002). In this paper, no in-depth analysis of the general history of different nations is presented. In the introduction, the most mysterious and the most interesting cultural sphere: the cinematograph industry is discussed. In European countries, cinematograph began to develop in the late 19th century, and in Asian countries the cinematograph emerged quite later (Nogerbek, 2008). Now, Asian motion pictures are as good as European motion pictures. At many major world film festivals Asian motion pictures are placed high, and sometimes win the Grand-Prix. European motion pictures are made for popular audience, and because of that these are shown not only in their states, but are screened in the entire world and give millions of box office revenues. And as concerned Asian cinematography, it haven't always had such an opportunity because of lack of professionals, because there was no strong school of cinematograph and because of the reason of underdeveloped, weak economy which had no ability to allocate large amounts from the state budget into cinematograph (Siranov, 1980). Only in present times, for years of independence, our government became interested in the development of the cinematograph industry, because, thanks to cinematograph, the nation is educated, developed, the national identity and the national culture wakens up, and the nation unites (Isaacs, 2016).

Aim of the Study

The goal of this study is multifaceted and manifold study of traditional ceremonies and rituals as integral part of the spiritual culture of Kazakh nature which were reflected in national cinematograph.

Research questions

What are the features of Kazakh culture and traditions?

Methods

An important place in the study is held by empirical history of culture: ethnical and confessional breakdown, the evolution of traditional cultural components (folklore, rules and values, rituals, customs, etc.).

When putting down and study of the collected material, the method of scientific description was used. Also, special methods developed in culturological field of study were used: methods of socio-cultural observations and of socio-cultural reflections, as well as the cultural genesis method. Empirical studies were based on the methods of generalization, reconstruction and interpretation of unpublished sources, on the method of secondary analysis of results of studies conducted by other authors and published in the literature.

Data, Analysis, and Results

Nomadism. Nomads achieved extraordinary perfection in everything. The portable dwelling – yourt, means of transportation – horse. The conditions of nomads' living precluded slavery, there were no jails (they are impossible to move them from place to another), and constructing jails at each encampment is absurd. Because they moved in the entirety of a clan or tribe, no one was waited for, and to drop behind a caravan was equal to death. Often, circumstances emerged which required rapid migration: sudden appearance of enemies, sudden diseases, etc. In such circumstances, in order to save their lives, they had to immolate even necessary things. Excessive utensils, even a little trifle, complicated the travel to a new place, and because of that, the nomadic lifestyle precluded stuffocation, hoarding, pursuance of luxury and richness (save for increasing the cattle number). A nomad needed no money: there were no shops, all needed was exchanged for cattle, fur, wool from visiting merchants, especially taking into consideration the fact that many things would not fit in a yourt. No stuffocation led the nomads to wisdom, largesse and hospitality. The inward man was absolutely free from trivial cares, from everything vain and unnecessary, leaving more time for contemplation. The nomadic life and housekeeping, due to their simplicity, required no disingenuity, dexterity, agility and cunning. One could lie only once, and that resulted in unavoidable and cruel punishment. They knew the price of each their action and for each their word. And here lied the roots of their fidelity which was a norm of living, because a deceit was rapidly and easily detected in the conditions of nomadic life. Nomads had cruel punishments: cutting off arms and hands, cutting off ears, nose, material payoff or death sentence. The worse punishment among nomads was the expulsion from a clan or a tribe; the guilty person had to vagabond alone. That meant an awful death.

The story of the motion picture is quite complex and begins with an induction, in which the main role is played by swans which are deemed symbols of love, peace and concord. Brought down, bloodstained swan falls to the ground; the weeping of infant and the sounds of *dobra* can be heard, a song is sung about the dear land. On the ground, there is a broken cradle 'besik', the yourt shanyrak which symbolizes the fall of the fireplace, red sands, *bal-baly*, and then people mourning the fallen people. The entire Kazakh nation is mourning, not

only the 'Shekty' clan. All that is telling of the perennial problem of good and evil, the cry, the grief that swans shouldn't be killed. A famous movie critic K. Siranov, (1980) wrote: "The film *Kyz Zhybek* begins with sudden, harsh comparison of life and death. The editing phrase, the Earth giving life to all living things, and the red blood which besprinkled it, the squawk of frightened swans, the premortal impulsion of a prancer, a widow and an orphan, like black stones stiffed on hill breasts, the flatten out aul, the shanyrak, a symbol of home, life, left in steppe, showed the path of artistic generalizations: on the land which gives life, once again evil happened. This induction is very significant for understanding the general idea of the film. In the artistic study of the eternal problem of good and devil, in general, the philosophical idea of the film is warning people: do not ruin, preserve love."

Cult of Ancestors. In the beginning of the film, there is a little episode: mourning of fallen in the fight with the enemy, where one can see old people, women and children dressed in penitential robes and mourning the fallen, and meanwhile men are on the battlefield.

After that episode, the film very brightly shows how people make oblation to aruahs (the spirits of the deceased), they slaughter a best white horse, because if not the best horse is sacrificed but a jade, the souls of deceased aruahs may be discontented and be angered. Also, in the honor of aruahs (deceased ancestors), a memorial repast – 'as' – is arranged. The memorial food is given on the third, on the seventh, on the fortieth, in some regions on the hundredth day, and great 'as' is given on the death anniversary of the deceased.

During the memorial repast – 'as' – noble and rich relatives arrange grandiose horseraces, strong-arm contests, song contests of poets – 'aytys' and other various games and contests. Famous anthropologist C. Geertz, (1973), in his work titled *the Interpretation of Cultures* educes and deeply analyzes the differences between various functional approaches to anthropology. In one of the chapters of his book titled "The Ritual and Social Changes: The Javanese Example" he writes: "After burying, memorial 'slametans' (repasts) are arranged on the third, the seventh, the fortieth, and on the hundredth day. The body is finally turned into remains and the verge between life and death becomes absolute". It may be seen, there is a similarity between burial rituals of the Kazakhs and the communities living in compons of the Java island. During the marriage, the facts are also associated which are, for example, writes A. Toleubayev, (1991): "The father of the groom, in addition to ransom, also gave to the party of the bride one animal (certainly a male) as a gift (oli – tiri), or otherwise, according to folk belief, the bride would be sickly. This gift was intended for both dead and alive ancestors. When arriving home, this animal was transferred to one of the relatives who slaughtered it in the honor of aruahs and envited aqsaqals (seniors) of the clan. This was made for a kind of propitiation of the spirits of ancestors, received their permission for the marriage".

Symbol of Family. One of the most interesting episodes in the film is when Zhybek, having fired an arrow, chooses a groom and place of the stand of newly wedded couple's yurt. In ancient times, an arrow played an important role in

the Kazakhs' marriage ritual. The bow had to be from the part of the groom or his relatives. It was deemed that an arrow or other cutting and piercing objects played a role of an amulet, that is, protected against evil spirits, evil eye, and witcheries. Moreover, before the Kazakhs, the Mongols, the Kalmyks, the Tatars installed a yurt for the newly wedded couple in the place where the arrow fired by the bride fell. The arrow could have been fired not only by the bride, but also by the groom, and a red stripe was attached to the arrow. A. T. Toleubayev, (1991) wrote: "The ritual of match-making with the use of a fired arrow existed in the societies of Sagayans, the Evenks, the Buriats, where, during the marriage ritual, the bride holds an arrow, and a child is conceived from the arrow. In this case, the author sees the manifestation of the fallistic cult". In that times, these peoples had a belief that if the arrow is stolen and broken, harm may be done to the newly married couple. In *Kyz Zhybek*, the heroine, having chosen an arrow, chose a groom, and later own in the same way she chose the place of stand of her yurt with the chosen one, and at the end of the film, when Tolegen dies and Bekezhan comes with bad news, he, having entered the yurt of newly married couple, broke the arrow chosen by Zhybek, and in such way Bekezhan makes it clear the family hearth was wrecked.

Choice of a Bride. The ritual of match-making and marriage has a special place in the Kazakh society, and because of that, in the film *Kyz Zhybek*, this ritual has a very important place. The most widespread form of marriage was marriage through match-making or bride purchasing for ransom for the bride. Underage persons were matched according to the will of parents or senior relatives. Adults married for love and mutual will, but match-making here was deemed obligatory. At first, the relatives of the groom got to know all the details about the bride's family: from which clan her parents were, their social status, genetic and ancestral roots, where, by whom and with whom the bride was nurtured, etc. After that, parents of the groom sent confidants to the girl's parents in order to agree the size of ransom, marriage expenses, corbeille and the time of wedding itself. The mutual consent was secured by reading the "bata" prayer, and after that the relatives of the groom presented earrings to the girl which meant that she was already matched. That ritual was called 'syrga salu' (tagging). After that they were deemed lawful match-makers and they were presented a special dish (kuyryk-bauyr) from freshly stewed sheep tail fat and liver. Also, the relatives of the groom and the bride gave each other gifts (kyit). Mutual treat and giving gifts symbolized the establishment of kinship relationship for many years. After that, the father of the groom gradually brought inside the agreed ransom, and the parents of the bride brought in the corbeille. And that was the end of the match-making process. Along with the main form of ransom marriage, there was other too. If men from different families were good friends and their wives were pregnant, they gave an oath to become relatives. This is how that ritual was characterized by researcher-ethnographer S. Kaskabasov, (1992): "Kazakh marriage, structurally, can be divided in to three parts: match-making, interim (pre-marriage) period and bridal banquet. Each of the parts has a number of episodes. Match-making includes the arrival of match-makers from the party of the groom to the village

of future bride, the agreement by both parties concerning the time of holding the bridal banquet, the size of ransom, and depart of the match makers. The interim (pre-marriage) period encompasses the time during which the entire ransom (or one third thereof) is paid, and the meeting between the groom and the bride takes place. In this period, frequent meetings between the young couple take place, so called “game of marriage” (kalyndyk oynau). The bridal banquet comprises of two stages: 1) bridal banquet in the village off the bride and a farewell ceremony; 2) arrival of the wedding train to the village of the groom and one more bridal banquet. A very interesting, in terms of spectacularity, is the match-making itself with its etiquette which strictly regulates the behavior and actions of the match-making parties, especially of the visiting party: they have strictly distributed roles and responsibilities of each person”.

The Cult of Fire. An important role, among Turkic peoples, has the ‘cult of fire’. R. N. Bezertinov, (2000) writes: “Fire was deemed a piece of sun (the sky fire) in a yourt. The hearth located in the center of a yourt had round shape (the sun disk). The heat from the sun and fire, their bright glow and colors created certain analogies between them. The sun and fire, their link with the vision of life, with development of descendants were also projected to woman as ancestress and preserver of descendants. Fire-hearth was preserved in every way and was kept clean; the neglect to it could result in its anger and it could “leave” the yourt. Fire was deemed a clan deity, but each family had its own family fire, and mixing it with other family’s fire or borrowing it from neighbors was deemed a sin. It even was prohibited to cook meals in utensils which were previously used with others’ fire”. Maybe because of that, the Kazakhs, when telling blessing to each other, always say: “Shanyragynda otyñ sonbesin, shanyragyn biik bolsyn, keregen ken bolsyn”.

Horses. M. Karatayev (1973): “The role of horses in the life of nomads is well-known. It was means of transportation and source of food (meat, koumiss), means and aim of production, means and subject of labor. Because of that, a nomad could give an overall assessment of horse’s merits. Thus, even a colt before the age of one year has three names: ‘kulun’, ‘zhabagi’, ‘tay’. Among Kazakhs, original vision was developed, which noticed slightest tones in horse paint. In Kazakh language, there are over 500 names for horse paint. Some of them were adopted in the languages of neighbor nations. For example, in Russian: ‘chubaraya’, ‘savrasaya’, ‘kauraya’, and other. Nomad – livestock breeder looked at the world by the eyes created by nomadic labor and social life”.

Zhyrau, Poet-Storyteller. Zhyrau addresses important political and social problems, strives to give explanations to changes taking place in the neighborhood and in the universe. He speaks on the issues of moral, ethics, etc. In the basis of zhyrau’s lyrical stories – tolgau – are feelings, emotions, not only of zhyrau himself, but also of the entire nation. In them, the author shares the insights of his soul with the audience. Also, an important part of zhyrau’s creative work is dedication poetry which is usually addressed to a certain ruler. In them, his actions are lauded or mocked, advices are given, and his position in the society is covered. An interesting opinion in respect of zhyrau was stated by E. D. Tursunov, (2004a): “Zhyrau had the same connections with all clans and

tribes forming the union of tribes (khanate). Zhyrau also were members of the Council of Biys which delivered sermons to khan and to people of the entire khanate, regulating relations between khan and his homagers”. In his next E. D. Tursunov, (2004a) gives the following characteristic: “In such a way, the basis of akyn’s repertoire was made by poetic disputations, improvisations, aytyses and lyric eposes, that of zhyrau was ‘prophetic’ hortative recitatives: ‘tolgau’ and ‘telme’ tirades, as well as heroic eposes; and that of sals and seri was songs of lyric and bohemian content, circus and other entertainment items, etc”. Verbal creative work includes around fifty genres and subgenres. A considerable part of oral and poetic genres and subgenres still exist. The types of bearers of these genres are also diverse. These are clannish poets and song writers – akyns, ‘prophetic’ poets and creators of epic opuses – zhyrau, narrators of everyday life stories, legendries and legends – angimeshes, narrators of adopted opuses – zhyrshy, shamans – baks, poets and entertainers – sal and seri, poets and physiognomist fortune-tellers – synshy, and others. The study of the genetic history of these types of bearers of oral-poetic tradition has to be a necessary step in the approach to the study of the historic poetics of folklore E. D. Tursunov, (2004b). All that is expressed by the film authors through the words of Shege. He is one of the representatives of Zhagabayly clan. The role of Shege in the film is performed by Anuar Moldabekov.

Clan, Genealogic Tree. The Kazakhs are one of the most cultured and developed nations, because only Kazakhs have a genealogic tree: division into tribes and zhuzhs is a kind of the order of the existed social structure. There are three zhuzhs: senior, middle and minor. Each zhuzh included certain clans. Each clan had its own “tamga”, “uran”, “coat of arms”, and even a “flag”. S. Akatayev, (1993) asserts the following: “The discovery by archaeologists of inscriptions in Saki burial mound near Almaty of 5-4 century B.C. dismantles traditional notions that early nomads had no alphabetic writing”. That in a way confirms the assumptions of a number of authors following from actual data that runic writing originated on the basis of tamga symbols typical for local nomadic tribes and represents the actual process of alphabet formation in the best way”.

In the film, two clans are represented: these are Shecty, the clan of Zhybek, headed by her father Sarlybay, and Zhagalbayly, the clan of Tolegen, headed by his father Bazarbay. In the episode when after the death of Tolegen, Bekezhan came with bad news, the representatives of the three zhuzhs sentenced him to the extreme penalty, he was expelled from the clan forever, and women spit in his face. The entire nation defers to the opinion of seniors from the three zhuzhs. The researcher from the University of British Columbia, Yessenova, (2004), wrote the following: “The notion (of single root) determining kindred is a universal and relative category. It can be applied to minimum clannish unit consisting of, probably hundreds of people. It is also used for determination of relations and interests within a clannish unit, and in such case it corresponds to the fundamental structure of Kazakh social organization usually called ‘children of one father’ (bir atanyn balalary). The notion ‘children of one father’ usually stands for a united family, usually consisting of brothers and sisters, their children and parents, of the same clan. Such family had a very high level of

mutual help and solidarity. By the time of the break-up of the Socialist system, the united family consisting of brothers and sisters and their descendants was an important social unit in the Kazakh society – larger than a nuclear family – and based on mutual help and care”. Thus, on the example of *Kyz Zhybek* motion picture, there was a possibility to get to know an entire world of nomads’ culture, their spiritual and moral unity, their customs, rituals and traditions.

The next motion picture chosen by the author for comparison with *Kyz Zhybek* was the film of Yermek Tursunov titled *Kelin*. In these two films, two different time periods are depicted. While *Kyz Zhybek* represents the events of the beginning of the 20th century, *Kelin* tells the story taking place in the 2nd century A.D. The film by Yermek Tursunov *Kelin* is seamlessly integrated to the context of ‘Tengriism’, the ancient Turkic religion of the Kazakhs. Along with Tengriism, the film depicts the cohesive world of Turkic people’s culture which includes different ceremonies and rituals. The film demonstrates the ancient ritual of match-making, ‘amengerst’, ‘alastau’, ‘zherleu’, and the ‘cult of ancestors’. It is important to discover and read about these traditions, and then, through *Kelin* film, the entire cosmos of Tengriism will unfold.

The story of the film is simple and full of desires. The *Keli* film is set in the 2nd century in Altai. The motion picture begins with a trade, when the groom ‘buy’ a bride from her father. The one who offers more is the winner. The girl prefers the lost Hunter, but she is taken by a richer rival who is backed by his Mother-ene and younger brother. However, the struggle for ‘Kelin’ doesn’t end with that. Hunter calls out his rival for a battle, and the battle is won by the Hunter who kills the senior son. Mother-ene marries Kelin and her junior. But Hunter doesn’t settle down and wants to abduct Kelin. And then Mother-ene appeals to the Supreme Being, and, using natural forces, plagues a snow avalanche, and all men die. Mother-ene is ready to kill her daughter-in-law, but at that moment she feels that a new life engendered inside Kelin, and Mother-ene lives the girl alive, and, handing over her clan baculus, leaves to the mountains to die.

Match-Making. The first scene in *Kelin* is realistic and dynamic. A quick trade for Kelin between Hunter and Cattleman ends to the benefit of the latter, but the girl runs after Hunter with her last hope, and he makes a little cut on her hand with a knife and sucks her blood. In such a way, it is shown that he took a part of her spiritual power. In some ethnographic sources it is written that sometimes main match-makers or a groom and a bride made a little cut at the inner part of thumb or wrist and joined the cuts on their hands. This ritual symbolized mixing their bloods, a kind of oath, and if such oath was violated, that was punished. This is what famous Kazakh researcher and ethnographer A. T. Toleubayev, (1991) writes: “There are notices that sometimes main match-makers (usually the parents of the groom and the bride) made a little cut on the inner part of thumb, and joined the cut thumbs. This ritual symbolized, on the one hand, their future mixing of bloods, and on the other hand, punishment in case of violation of ‘ak bata’, the pure oath, and was expressed by the saying “Ak koydyn kany? Ak bata okygany”, that is, “The blood of a white sheep is shed, and ‘white’ (open-hearted) prayer was said”. As there are no words in the film, one

can only suppose that this scene symbolizes their oath of love. It is well known that ransom was paid for a girl, and the girl married the man who gave more. The Kazakhs have a proverb: “Suygen almaydy – bujyrgan alady, mandajyna zhazgany bolady” (Not the one who loves marries, but the one to whom it’s prescribed by God). Herewith, in traditional Kazakh family, the bride is especially esteemed. She is treated with respect. She is reckoned with, because she is not just the one who continues the family life, but also a most important element of inheritance and development of the culture of that family. The girls from troubled families were immediately rejected in most cases, the parents having generational bondage, are unable to give their children a good mental and moral education. In such a way, the selection contributed to physical and moral improvement of the family and of the entire society. A good wife is not only clever, kind, smart, but also can help her husband, if necessary, to put his family right. Here, moral and spiritual support is meant. Because of that, the entire extended family from one or the other side participated in the choice of an eligible marriage partner. Everything which could contribute to or to impede the creation of a close-knit and indissoluble family was taken into consideration; a sound heredity, industry, wealth, moral foundations of the family. Through reliable people (relatives, neighbors, etc.), all merits and draw-backs of families having marriageable girls were found out.

Tengriism. And still, the primary virtue of *Kelin* is the fact that the film director took us back to pre-Islamic period, when the entire Turkic nation worshiped the one deity Tengri. Tengriism had no written form (Kokumbayeva, 2012). Thanks to exactness and clarity of rituals, this religion survived until present times after many millennia. It is mentioned in culturological and ethnographic studies that the distinctive feature of this religion is the fact that people could appeal to the Supreme Being without any intermediaries. Murad Adzhi (2004) emphasizes in his studies: “Every level of skies reflected the dichotomy (i.e. division into two parts): bright and dark, good-minded and demonic. That means that God can be kind and harsh, saving and punishing. He can see everything, and the destiny of a human depends on the human him/herself; the God’s attitude to a human will be according to what are his/her thoughts and deeds. And that is a deep wisdom of Tengriism, which doesn’t humiliate, but ennobles a human, preparing him/her to actions, to a heroic deed. Anyone makes him/her happy or unhappy by his/her own behavior. Our grief and joy originate from ourselves... Because God cannot be deceived. He is the Supreme Judge and gives just desserts to everyone. Nine was deemed the number of Tengri. It contains three times three, and this is the origin of the image of the Holy Trinity, Tripersonal. The Trinity was understood by Turkic people as the space of spirit: God the beholding, the protecting, and the punishing in one person. He is One, but manifests Himself in different ways. People knew: God sees everything, and whether he protected or punished depends on deeds of a human”.

Purification Ritual. Further, the ritual of purification of bride before marriage is discussed. The use of ‘may sham’ fire in this ritual suggests that Turkic peoples who lived in the ancient times knew the ‘cult of fire’. Using fire,

they drove out 'evil spirits', making black spots by fingertips by 'soot' had to protect a girl from evil eye and witcheries, and also was the evidence to the fact that the girl was pure. Smudging also was ritual attribute. This ritual survived from the most ancient times. Smudging was carried out using a branch of juniper or tarragon. It was used for purification of girls before marriage in order to remove everything bad which she possibly had accumulated before marriage, ill persons and dwellings were also smudged, etc. In *Kelin* film, after Mother-ene guessed right about the adultery of her daughter-in-law, she conducted another purification ritual. Various Kazakh superstitions are known, for example, adults say "Eyeldin kyshi shashynda" (Woman's power is in her hair). After the daughter-in-law was deprived of her hair, she became purified as a little child and lost a part her spiritual powers for some time. Mother-ene, having visited the hunter, thrown her daughter-in-law's hair into him and smeared his face with her blood, thus letting him know that she knew everything and that he was supposed not to ever visit them again. And that is one of the key scenes of the film. Not only rituals and customs of the Kazakh nation are present in the film. The texture and the environment created by artistic director A. Rorokin also have a significant importance.

Funeral. Let us discuss the episode of Cattleman's funeral where a wooden circle in the form of the "Sun" can be seen. In author's opinion, it is the symbol of cyclicity of time which consists of cycles – 'mushel', and herewith one mushel is equal to twelve years. 12 is multiplied by 5, and that equals to 60. The age of the younger brother, to whom the wife of the deceased has to belong to, is only one 'mushel', that is approximately 12 or 13 years "On ush zhasta otau iesi" (Mistress of the heart at 13 years old). The boy spent only one life cycle, and that his life had just started, and everything is ahead for him. The bride is 24, the age at which there is no much life experience, she is not able to comprehend everything happening around here. And the mother has the age of five full cycles, 60 years, that is one human lifetime, the age when it is too late to regret about something, everything is left behind; usually, after 60 people try to meet the hoary age and to die decently. In the life of the Kazakhs, each 12th year of life is deemed crisis one (12, 24, 36, etc.). That means, in the transition periods of each 12 years a person has to be careful, to look after oneself against misadventures, illness, etc. Different signs and symbols drawn on the body of deceased person evidence that in those times, people knew the tripartite structure of the world. The spatial model of the world is represented as: afterworld (invisible) and real world, that is, the upper world is the mansion of the supreme, the Heavenly Deity (Kok mengi tenir), as well as of the souls of saint deceased people who earned fame for their good deeds during their lives and go to Heaven and forever live there, in the upper (invisible) world, and the real celestial world is the sky, the stars, the sun, and the moon. Sometimes, Heavenly Deities send to people, as a gratitude for sacrifices or other good deeds, sunny weather, abundant harvest, rain when needed, etc. The upper world of the Tengriist worldview is represented in the film by the funeral ritual, when Mother-ene gives away the body of her son to vultures and entreatingly address them. The representatives of the middle world (real) are we, humans, the nature

surrounding us, wildlife, etc. Many ethnologists, turkologists, folklorogists assert that the invisible middle world is inhabited by masters of rivers, mountains, and also, by invisible spirits. All characters of the film appertain to the middle world, as well as she-wolf, buffalos, and the Hunter's horse. Inhabitants of the middle world live under the sway of passions. And when the story of the film is retold, these are the visible events of the film. The bottom (underground) world is represented by all evil forces; these are djinns, shaitans, albastas, and many other evil spirits headed by the mighty Deity of the underworld, Erlik. Kazakh people have a belief that after a person is buried, forty days have to pass before his/her soul (if he committed many good deeds and benefactions during his life) will go to Heaven to the Heavenly Deity. And if his/her soul is not pure, but sinful, such person will stay as a servant in the underworld. Each morning the sun defeats the darkness, as it was in the first day of creation, and as it happens every day. The time between the light and the darkness is the junction of the beginning and the end which creates the possibility of transition from one to another. Everybody knows that the underworld (the black magic) and everything negative connected with dirty things (illness, witcheries, death) are of black, dark, gloomy colors. On the contrary, everything favorable (health, bright brain, good deeds of people, etc.), pure, bright is viewed in white color, the color of purity and freshness. Turkic peoples and other peoples of Altai imparted the East with positive attributes, because the Sun rises there, and that means that the East is the source of life, the nascence of a new life. On the contrary, the West was deemed to be related to the departure from life, with the land of ancestors. In vertical direction, the South is opposed to the North, the South is to the right, and the North is to the left. In the film, the bottom world is not shown. There is only a cue, when Mother-ene takes Kelin to the cave for conducting the purification process.

According to the customs of that times, after death of husband, the wife of the deceased unplaited her hair and put on the dress which was turned inside out. She had such look for forty days, and when she met unfamiliar people or those whom she hadn't seen from the time of death of her husband, she started crying noisily, which was the evidence of her grief. Until the fortieth day from the death of her husband, she had no right to wear earrings or rings. Such changes confirmed the fidelity of the wife and that in such way the wife is keeping the fidelity to her husband. And if the wife of the deceased received gifts from another man, that was the evidence of the deceased wife's infidelity. It was deemed that even after forty days the soul of the deceased visited his home during up to one year and is a witness to everything happening in his home. If everything was alright, the soul of the deceased peacefully leaves the home, and if something is not right, his soul rushed about and could find a place in the other world. In the film, after the funeral of Cattleman, there are no scenes of Kelin's crying or lamentation, and in the episode where caravan arrived and Mother-ene, bargaining, buys things needed in household, Kelin is happy to receive red bead necklace as gift from Hunter who bought it from a merchant, and a little bird gives a bad sign. After all, Kelin was infidel to his husband from

the very beginning of the film, and because of that, it is possible that the husband's soul wasn't in peace.

Amengerstvo. Along with those customs and rituals, the ancient Kazakh custom (*amengerstvo*) has to be mentioned, which is brightly shown in the episode when after death of her older son, Mother-ene marries Kelin to her younger son. This ancient custom was kept in order to prevent the discontinuation of a clan. Later on, this ancient rule was linked to the purchase of a bride for ransom and with inheritance of the property, i.e. these traditions were closely "intertwined with its entire economic structure". The Kazakhs have an aphorism: "Aga olse zhenge mura, ini olse kelin mura" (If an older brother dies, his wife is inherited by his younger brother, and if younger brother dies, his wife is inherited by the older brother). As the inheritance, not only wife, but also children and movable and immovable property of the deceased were transferred. In respect to the widow, all husband's relatives were deemed 'amengers', that is, heritors of the brother. According to the custom, the right of 'amengerstvo' was applied to all widows. Depending on different circumstances, this right was exercised in different ways, especially if the young widow had no children from the deceased husband, and sometimes she was left alone (if she had adult sons from the deceased husband and was at hoary age). The right of 'amengerstvo' was applied not only to widows, but also to the brides in case of death of the groom. The girl had to marry one of his blood brothers, and if he had no blood brother she became the wife of his cousin, but with the consent of father. And in the film, Kelin runs to the hunter, although the ransom was paid by the other, but, according to the 'amengerstvo' custom, after the death of her husband she belongs to his younger brother.

Shamanism. It should be mentioned that along with the daughter-in-law and the two of her grooms, Mother-ene plays one of key roles, after all, she is the very link between the human world and the other world. In Turkic peoples, shamanism is deep rooted. The fact that shamans had supernatural abilities is well-known. Kams were venerated as people having protection from heavens and spirits. It was deemed that Kams were chosen by spirits and had special gift and magic power which were given to them by the Supreme Being, and because of that people thought that shamans knew everything and were able not only to foresee the future, but also to tell what had happened with their ancestors, and thus that they were able to heal people from various diseases, witcheries and curses. Ordinary Kams played an important role in the life of their compatriots and were held in great respect. Their knowledge of the past and of the future had a special influence, and because of that no one dared to say something bad about them, being afraid of their revenge or curse. Kams participated in settlement of any disputed issues: khan's hunting, battle with an enemy, funeral, match-making, sacrifice, etc. It was deemed that the particulars of communication with supernatural forces and spirits of ancestors are inherited by Kams according to their family lines and have inherited roots. This is what L. Gumilev (2009) wrote in his book: "The existence of shamanism is also asserted by Plano Karpini and Rubruk, but they call shaman kam. This is an Altai-Turkic word, and in Altai, shamanism was highly developed as early as in the

13th century and coexisted with Nestorianism there. As at the end of the motion picture there is an episode of avalanches, when the hunter abducts the bride, and Mother-ene refers to spirits of the nature to help her, which means that people had close contacts with supernatural forces, knew how to call for help from the spirits of the nature. In the film, Mother-ene is a shaman. The she-wolf which occasionally appears in several episodes in parallel with main events, the small episode where Mother-ene, knowing the language of the animal, yawns and calls the she-wolf asking it for help, reminds the audience of the ancient legend of the origination of Turkic peoples which were fed by mother-she-wolf.

In one of the legends about the stem-mother-she-wolf it was told that the 'Ashina' tribe of 'Hunna' clan was attacked by numerous enemies from outside, all the tribe was killed save for a boy who had his arms cut off, he was left in a hog, condemning him to a slow and painful death. There, in the hog, she-wolf found him, and, by licking, healing his injuries and feeding him with her milk, she saved him from a painful death. Got to know about the child being alive, enemies try to find and to kill the boy, but she-wolf runs away together with the boy across the entire steppe to the East and saves the boy for the second time. After that, in a cave, she-wolf gives birth to ten more children. From them, originates and continues its existence the "Ashina" tribe clan. Even at present, in many Kazakh families one can see a wolf's fella hanged on a wall, male teenagers having wolf's tooth or claw as neckwear, which indicate common ancestral and genetic roots. Due to this reason, it is no accident that Mother-ene called she-wolf and gave the child she-wolf's milk. As the author has already mentioned, the main merit of the motion picture is the link between human and nature, and the intermediary between the nature and the Deity is the image of Mother-ene with her supernatural forces. In such a way, in the episode where Mother-ene gets to know that kelin, she has a new life in herself, leaves her baculi and goes to the other world, the film director demonstrated the cyclicity of time and generational change. Here, Mother-ene is on the verge of her life, she is ready to die decently and leave her clan to the future generation: to her daughter-in-law and her grandson.

Discussion and Conclusion

As a result of the comprehensive investigation of the topic of traditional rituals as a reflection of spiritual culture in Kazakh cinema, the following scientific results were attained:

- a description of the concepts "Kazakh cinema of the 20th century" and "Kazakh cinema of the early 21st century" as socio-cultural phenomena was provided;
- Kazakh cinema was examined as a means of human communication with the world of culture and as an element of new life being created;
- the concept of "Kazakh cinema" was substantiated as a special social-cultural space in the context of a comprehensive description of the national cinema as a cultural phenomenon;

– basic methodological foundations were established for researching films as a cultural product which is capable of affecting the formation of the world-outlook, esthetic and other directions of society and personality;

– structural and functional foundations of the nature of film-making were revealed, according to which films provide a tense equilibrium of material and ideal realities of a high level of complexity, in which an evolving system (society and a human being) constantly “takes into consideration” the preemptive character of an unfolding future;

– the specifics of history, modern state and prospects of the national film industry were analyzed. They have transformed into the normative side of culture, in accordance with which the values of the the country’s socio-cultural space are also transformed.

According to Ye. D. Musorin (2014), cinematography as mass art serves as a means of entertainment. However, this study shows that movies also help to spread culture, national traditions and history, which makes cinematography not only a means of entertainment, but also imbues it with an educational function and the ability to convey historical experience and cultural life. During the age of information and globalization, cinematography is becoming an important source of information. The development of national cinematography will facilitate the development of the national culture.

Implications and Recommendations

The emergence of a socio-cultural phenomenon of film as a special intellectual form of audio-visual culture is one of the manifestations of the objective needs, controversies and trends in the social and cultural space. The value orientation of the national cinema of the post-soviet period has changed under the influence of stratification of Kazakhstani society. These changes, however, have provided neither theoretical nor practical grounds for negating the cultural values of the previous period of national filmmaking. Kazakhs of certain age groups consider many ongoing changes unacceptable, whereas others tolerate them, since they are related to the laws of modern society. The realization of the changes in the cultural space of cinema considerably affect the development of society aimed at greater responsibility for moral and spiritual well-being of a person.

The practical significance of the paper is defined by the fact that results of the study can contribute to the development of the methodology for both certain sections of cultural history and the study of socio-cultural significance of Kazakh cinematograph of the 20th century and of the beginning of the 21st century.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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