

EMERGENCE AND REPRESENTATION OF IDENTITY THROUGH CINEMA IN KYRGYZSTAN AFTER COLLAPSE OF SOVIET UNION

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, mass media offers to target audience how to think them with the help of symbols and icons. The meaning given by the cinema and films re-interpreted by consuming individuals. In this article, “Belgisiz Marshrut” film will be analyzed. In this film, it analyzes the lives of passengers in the bus in terms of represented identity. Each individual in the bus represents a certain ideology and identity. “Belgisiz Marshrut” film’s screenplay is written and directed by Temirbek Birnazarov. The film describes post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan period when it enters to a new direction with unknown end after gaining independence. This film is one of the important films which show how the Soviet values and identity converted in to symbols. During study on “Belgisiz Marshrut” film created new identities and have been loaded a new meanings to existing identities in the minds of the people. Semiotic method is used to reveal these meanings.

Keywords: Ideology, Soviet Union, Kyrgyz Cinema, Semiotics

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SOVYET SONRASI KIRGIZISTAN SINEMASINDA KİMLİKLERİN İNŞASI ve TEMSİLİ: BELGİSİZ MARSRUT FİLMİ ÖRNEĞİNDE

ÖZET

21. Yüzyılda kitle iletişim araçları sembol ve imgelerin yardımıyla hedef kitleye neyi nasıl düşünmesi gerektiğini sunmaktadırlar. Sinemada üretilen anlamlar onu tüketen bireylerce yeniden anlamlandırılmaktadır. Bu bağlamda araştırmada otobüs yolculuğuna çıkmış insanların başlarından geçen olayların anlatıldığı Belgisiz Marshrut filmi kişilerin temsil ettiği kimlikler açısından incelenmiştir. Otobüsün içindeki her birey belli bir ideolojiyi ve kimliği temsil etmektedir. Belgisiz Marshrut filmi Temirbek Birnazarov'un yönetmenliğini yaptığı ve yazdığı 2008 yılında sinemalara giren filmidir. Film Sovyet sonrası Kırgızistan'ın bağımsızlığının ardından yeni bir yola girildiğinin ve yolun sonunun bilinmezliğinin anlatıldığı, ve tüm Sovyet değerlerinin ve kimliklerinin simgeselleştiği en önemli filmlerden biridir. Araştırmada Belgisiz Marshrut adlı filmde yeni kimlikler yaratılmış, halkın zihninde var olan kimliklere de yeni anlamlar yüklenmiştir. İşte bu anlamları meydana çıkarmak için göstergebilimsel yöntemlerden faydalanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İdeoloji, Sovyetler Birliği, Kırgız Sinema, Göstergebilim

INTRODUCTION

Cinema entered to every area of our daily live. It sometimes entertains us and also makes us analysis about life. Today cinema became a huge industry. Cinema is used as a tool for propaganda ideology in particular building a national identity.

Cinema although not only tells us the events but also helps us to forget the problems. It bears deep meaning behind scene. Deep meanings can be explained through various kinds of symbols and images. By analyzing them we can understand real meaning that film wants to show us.

Kyrgyz cinema begins to develop during the Soviet period. At first, the aim was to spread the ideology of the Soviet regime which was use defectively. After the collapse of the Soviet Union national identity issue has been raised. National identity is gaining more importance than social and cultural identity after Cold War.

In the sociological sense of identity, is a reflection of a sense of self or self-awareness of an individual. The ID providing quality to the community and person is the structure that determines the character and separates itself from others. Deletion and exclusion of identity in a society ,means abstract of values perceived as a universal presence and what makes human beings human. Emerged in the recent history of mankind Soviet communist system has turned to "anonymity" the individual values and has led to the national identities almost erased. (Yüce 2014)

The goal of this article to examine “Belgisiz Marsrut” film which was taken after independence of Kyrgyzstan by using semioticmethod. It tries to understand the meanings in the film which was placedbehind the images and the symbol. Cinema investigate different identities in terms of the representation of identity. It tries to understandproblem and current issues of the country after independence by the speech and movements of representatives of different identities.

“Belgisiz Marsrut”” film will be discussed in terms of semiotics method. Semioticsmethodwill helpfor the detection of symbols on the representation of identity.

Emergence of Identity in Kyrgyzstan after independence.

Kyrgyzstan gained independence in 1991, adopting the democratic political system and a free market economy.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Central Asian republics, gained independence that has been hailed as a sudden and unexpected developments. Like most Central Asians Kyrgyzstan has welcomed this development with reluctant and hesistantancy. The emergence of national identity based on ethnicity and boundary determination in the context of these identities is a product of the Soviet project in Central Asia (Joldosov, 2013, s.102).

The authoritarian government has been continued in other republics of Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan as an exception had a two revolution in 2005 and 2010 years when ruling government changed each time. On the one hand, it helped to move towards more fair and free democratic election, on the other hand it brought chaos and uncertainty in the short term. Moreover, Kyrgyzstan had experienced two ethnic clashes between 1990-2010 years which focuses more on ethnic identity of the population.

Before the concept of identity was discussing in psychology and social psychology scope then the social and political structures, actors began to be examined in terms. Today, especially immigration, religion, gender, ethnicity and nationalism has taken place in the literature as a concept almost indispensable in such researches (Joldosov, 2013, p.104).

Kyrgyzstan has taken significant steps in national identity in 1980. In this context, Kyrgyz language was declared as the official in 1989. Then after, election of a president in 1990 and declaration of independence in 1991. These steps has followed developments such as the national anthem, national flag and the adoption of the national money. However, these efforts were not continued

Government instead of creating a Kyrgyz national identity was adopted a policy to establish the identity of Kyrgyzstan citizenship in 1993-1994. So that, on a small scale "Soviet National Identity Policy" has tried to be continued in Kyrgyzstan.

Akayev's slogan "Kyrgyzstan is our common home" as a result legitimating his policies and other nations living in Kyrgyzstan has the right participate in government cultural autonomy was granted without precedent in Central Asia.

Akayev: "Our strategy that Kyrgyzstan is our home has been the salient features of democracy and further developed relations with neighbor countries" said in of his speeches. Thus, cultural nationalities of all the peoples living in Kyrgyzstan have been accepted politically, although has attempted to establish an upper identity based on Kyrgyz nationalism (Akayev, 2004:5).

As a result of the second revolution and Osh events the second president Roza Otunbayeva defending the rights of minority ethnic groups living in Kyrgyzstan the ordinance in 2010.

Lack of national policies implementing the spiritual unity of the peoples of Kyrgyzstan opens the way for the promotion of forming negative forms of identity leading youth away from the creative ways.

In general, dealing with issues of identity in Kyrgyzstan, there are tribal identity, region and ethnic identity.

Cinema and Semiotics

Semiotic studies have been accelerated by the 20th century. However, starting with Saussure the first period of semiotic analyzes, natural language we use after becoming the most obvious and regular communication system in the systems of indication becomes a science in the field of semiotics. Semiotics adopts the practice and research methods of structural linguistics but denies the necessity of indicators. However, the semiotics offers self-developed models to other human sciences. Films, dramas, news programs, advertisements and many other areas has helped to open new areas to semiotic analysis (Parsa; Parsa 2004: 89).

Semiotics defined as "signs, indicators of science". Semiotics is basically separated into three categories. a) "descriptive semiotics" made a statement and descriptive analysis on the indicators, b) "heoretical semiotics"

that puts the descriptions and depictions in theoretical framework c)"Applied semiotics"thatattempting theoretical assumptions theoretical assumptions and aims to solve the problems of industrial structure of society (Erdoğan; Alemdar 2010: 314).




Each image carry a meaningby alone but when all the images combined finds new meaning. Film images have such a function and only organized parts come together to create a single whole. Movie scenes, visual and aesthetic values, symbolic meaning and content is a tool to explain the subject of the film (Pelin, 2007: 1).







Communication systems benefit from many indicators in visual communication and language. Mass communication messages can be interpreted differently by the audience. Semiotics want to look holistically to reduce these differences. Semiotics science based on common element sand values. So everyone knows what it means and repeated indicators presented to the audience being taught and increasingly being brought into a common code. Codes are in all areas of life society. Codes, provides the same perception of the message as well by the transmitter and receiver. We are shown by indicators showing a relationship between the first being established, and then merge with each other indicators produces meaning and signification is formed (Pelin, 2007: 4-10).

On the basis of signification are connotations and denotations (detonation). Denotation is the indicator that pointed things, which displays the differences between the cultural association and indicator. Connotations have dimensions as association and myth. Denotation means what it represents and connotations means how represent the indicator (Parsa; Parsa 2004: 95).

The short content of “Belgisiz Marshrut” movie.

Belgisiz Marshrut film’s screenplay is written and directed by Temirbek Bitnazarov. The bus goes to the village named future with 21 passengers in a bad weather conditions. Ordinary trip will turn to a big event full of laugh, tears and fight. Young man named Hope will save their lives when the bus stops at the end of cliff. He will show the road to the driver with torch.

<u>SelectedImages</u> Indicators	Denotation	Connotations
 <p>Bus</p>	<p>Bus Yellow bus stops at misty and cloudy weather.</p>	<p>The road could not be predicted in advance. There is no idea what is known and what kind of surprises are expected on the road. The bus goes to obscurity. Bus symbolizes the Kyrgyzstan.</p>
 <p>Old man 1</p>	<p>Bearded man wears Muslims hat and Muslim dress.</p>	<p>One of the bus passengers is a Muslim. He talks about Islam and speaks of Islamic terms along the way. Islam stands for Islam.</p>
 <p>Young Girl</p>	<p>A lady with red and blue hair, too much makeup, short skirt and constantly chewing gum.</p>	<p>Lady represents prostitutes. Lady suffering from poverty and place to place mentioned about a disease of mother. Transformation of the female body into commodity which symbolizes savage capitalism.</p>
 <p>Young man 1</p>	<p>A young man reading the newspaper and wearing western style hat. At his discourses he constantly refers to Jesus and Bible.</p>	<p>After Kyrgyzstan's independence many youth accepted Christianity. A lot of Christian missionaries came to Kyrgyzstan. Young man represents Christianity.</p>
 <p>Young man 2</p>	<p>Young man with the cap with U.S.A word on it and wears jeans coat.</p>	<p>A young man with clothes that represents United States make a speech refers to democracy. Democracy and democrats are icons.</p>

 <p>Old man 2</p>	<p>Besppectaed old man, dressed in a traditional suit with tethered clock and his hair combed behind.</p>	<p>Clothes and his manner symbolize the Soviet type of people. An old man describing the good side of Soviet times constantly. Represents Soviet Union.</p>
 <p>Young man 3</p>	<p>Young man with dyed hair, dressed in European with comfortable moving.</p>	<p>Represents European youth, youth under the influence of popular culture.</p>
 <p>Driver and a woman</p>	<p>The bus driver lost his way and asks from unknown woman about a village named future.</p>	<p>Bus driver takes directions at misty and foggy air. Woman offers a lot of variants. The bus' route is village named future. Represents the future of Kyrgyzstan.</p>
 <p>Bus driver</p>	<p>Driver is a well-dressed, well-groomed man in middle age.</p>	<p>Bus driver represents of authority and power. In particular, symbolize the Kyrgyz government.</p>
 <p>Passenger</p>	<p>The driver increases ticket price and passengers began to argue and fight with him. In the end, the bus driver is forced to leave the bus. And they began to look for a new driver.</p>	<p>Bus represents Kyrgyzstan and the bus driver represents politicians who ruled the country. The fight and new bus driver symbolize the people's uprising in 2005. As a result of this uprising the President <u>Akaev</u> left the country.</p>
 <p>Voting</p>	<p>Passengers are voting for a new driver.</p>	<p>After the bus driver leave out the bus. There was a voting for a new driver. This event symbolizes the elections of president after ex-president <u>Akaev</u> left the country.</p>





 <p>Passengers</p>	<p>There is no consensus and again people began to argue and fight. The bus was driven to the edge of the cliff.</p>	<p>Discussion began when in the bus political authority was very weak. Symbolizes the unrest within the country.</p>
 <p>Young man 4</p>	<p>A young man named Hope, well dressed, with good intellectual background and vision.</p>	<p>Hope educated in Europe and young man with a vision. He solves the unrest and danger in the bus.</p>
 <p>Old man 2</p>	<p>Old man's death.</p>	<p>The old man lost his live when the bus was approaching to the "Future" village. Assuming that this old man symbolized the collapse of Soviet Union.</p>
 <p>Torch and Kyrgyz flag.</p>	<p>A flag is <u>attached</u> to the bus. A burned torchlights the way.</p>	<p>There is a faith the Kyrgyz young people will help in the road to the future. A young country can look to the future with hope.</p>

Table 1;Semiotic analysis to film scenes of“Belgisiz Marshrut” film

CONCLUSION

In this film, director wanted to give a positive message while the country experienced difficult times starting from collapse of Soviet Union and entering to the capitalist world. In the film, different new identities emerged and they were explained through symbols.

Kyrgyzstan after collapse of Soviet Union has entered to the new, unpredictable and unknown road. This road is a road of independence and future. New regime change is given in detail in this film. The biggest

criticism to the new regime is the fact that of the savage capitalism. There were shown good sides of new regime as a presence and development of trade. Commercial goods were not allowed at Soviet Union.

In the film, the director has symbolized a brief period after the independence of Kyrgyzstan. There were shown 2005 Revolution and as a result president left the country and general elections in this film.

Kyrgyzstan is looking with hope for the future. It may be connected with the people that educated in Europe and Kyrgyzstan chose directions looking for European countries.

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