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# Promotion of National Traditions by Kazakhstan Mass Media as a Mean of Ideological Influence

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#### **Abstract**

**Objectives:** The research aim is a search for quality characteristics for the broadcasts selected from TV broadcasts of the mentioned time, almost unknown for the viewers from abroad. **Methods/Analysis:** This impact is achieved with modern technologies and has been explored with applied methods of general science like those of observation, description, comparison and qualitative assessment. An evidence base for our research included scientific literature on theory and history of television, as well as the TV content from Kazakhstan dated by the second half of the twentieth century: the broadcasts with national traditions and military history as subjects. **Findings:** According to the survey findings, we have identified specific quality characteristics of the considered broadcasts. The conclusion is that such the best samples of TV arts have themselves become a tradition; they influence the works of both their time and those of the later time. They play an important role in establishing the value system of an individual in his or her learning of history and say of the developed intellectual culture in the society. **Novelty/Improvement:** Research novelty depends on insufficient studies of Kazakhstan mass media production and still unequal participation of Republic in the global information space.

Keywords: Cultural Values, Ideology, Mass Media, National Traditions, TV

#### 1. Introduction

Understanding a role and a meaning of national traditions in history of the humankind as a consolidated society, we should be aware of a value of cultural achievements that belong to each ethnic group, of their research and preservation. We should avoid a danger of mixing them up and a substitution of the values and concepts. This is especially important in terms of globalization, centralization, migration, and formation of larger geopolitical groups. Their consequences are processes of assimilation or dissimilation as well. The higher the urgency and a pressing nature of the chosen issues of national and ideological education and the TV influence in Kazakhstan are, the quicker developing of technologies is in terms of globalization, migration and Europeanization.

This research aims at a search for the specifics of the TV content produced by the Kazakhs. A research object will cover the broadcasts with national traditions and military history as subjects in retrospect, while the research subject will cover the best examples of the TV arts in Kazakhstan from the last two or three decades of the twentieth century. The practical effect of the research depends on insufficient previous studies of the Kazakhstan TV specifics. It is also due to a still unequal participation of Kazakhstan in the global information space, as well as a need based on the best examples in a search for new ways to present the content of national subjects to pick an interest of the audience in intensive competition, on the one hand, and confront economic challenges in making the TV content, on the other hand.

Herewith, it should be mentioned that the TV content with national traditions and military history as subjects is a tool of an ideological influence on a viewer to give him or her necessary doctrines, for instance, which their government needs in order to get a support to a valid policy. This tool also helps to encourage proactive behaviours,

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such as civic behaviour and an election turnout necessary for the advertisers to influence consumer priorities, etc.

A theoretical foundation for the research includes the works on television theory and history<sup>2-6</sup>, relationships between the TV content and information technology7, a role of television in solving social and economic problems in the today's society<sup>8</sup>, in particular the problem of a loss or formation of national identity under an influence of mass media9, promotion and research of the national culture as a tool of upbringing, the ideological influence or manipulation  $^{10-15}$ .

In an analysis of the TV content produced in Kazakhstan in last three decades of the twentieth century, we assumed that in promotion of national traditions it was forbidden to neglect modern technology. That is why research works relate to mass media as a tool to develop the worldview, ideological attitudes, value systems, morality and ethics of a younger generation, as well as political ideas in the society, and even consumers' behaviours among the audience, their preferences<sup>10-12</sup>.

Herewith, it is also important to take into account a rapid development in a variety of formats and devices to produce and watch TV broadcasts, the easy-to-find factor and the re-watching factor, the viewer's satisfaction not only with an aesthetic and an information impact of a broadcast, but also a process of a search for it, its design, its frequency of advertisements, etc. The television has always been closely linked to recent technology; therefore, its success does not only depend on a talent of TV broadcast producers, but also on ways to deliver the content<sup>7</sup>.

Due to demographic, political, geographical and other factors, specifics of the Kazakh television have not been sufficiently covered in literature. Works on this subject are of a fragmentary nature. Limited with the scopes of this paper, let us refer to the paper<sup>16</sup> about the specifics of today's TV broadcasts with literature as a subject. Going from a lot of examples, the author examines an actual condition of the television content, but with a trip into the recent past and in parallel with a development of television of the Soviet Union in general and in the today's television market. He mentioned inter genre syncretism of the considered Kazakh TV broadcasts in line with global trends at a level of a type and variety, a prevailing artistic threshold, well-developed and poorly-developed functions by group of television programs. For instance, he refers to retrospective, propaedeutic, recreational and hedonistic functions. He also points out to a contribution of the considered television broadcasts into the presented

true meaning of the Kazakhs for the world's culture, its rich spiritual and aesthetic heritage.

The author predicts that a development of the Kazakhstan television in general will depend on an economic situation in general and in particular, an evolution of genre diversity and its aesthetic impact will depend on visualization, its accessibility and easiness to be used will depend on development of television and computer technology. He also considers necessary to gather together the data from corpuses of figurative and visual, on the one hand, and verbal and lexical contents, on the other hand, and making feedback systems, when a plot development depends on a viewer's choice. Besides, there is a need in the more perfect in terms of its structure system of TV channels in terms of their semantics and subjects. Finally, the author focuses on dangers from culture and information expansion<sup>16</sup>.

#### **Materials and Methods**

Our academic interpretation of the selected subject was made via the examples of the TV content for the last decades of the 20th century, produced and aired in the Republic of Kazakhstan. We used archives recordings of the broadcasts<sup>17</sup>. A large part in the research says of the specifics of one of the best television projects with the national traditions as a subject in the history of Kazakhstan. We mean the Kokpar show. TV broadcasts are compared with other programs using the comparative method. They are also considered against the background of television practice of the country in general.

In the research, the national traditions were considered in two aspects: The first is that the development of traditions is impossible without a support from the past. The second aspect is somewhat contrary to the first one: it is impossible to live only from traditions in their intact form. They are to be updated according to the requirements of the time, find their new life and sound in new monuments of material and intellectual culture, in particular, in the TV art; we may consider the reviewed TV broadcasts such monuments.

Along with the national theme, we referred to the broadcasts, subjects of which included military history, evidence from the film content on the Great Patriotic War<sup>17</sup>. They present forgotten names of national heroes from the recent past and unknown or poor-known pages of history to the viewer in an artistic or a documentary form.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Having reviewed the television broadcasts with national traditions and military history as their subjects, aired by the Kazakhstan television for the last three decades of the twentieth century, we may conclude that their authors successfully performed the educational and teaching, entertainment and information functions of television. Thus, they have significantly contributed into national unity achievement based on national values.

The broadcasts produced by the Kazakhstan television met pressing challenges of their time, contributed into development of new forms for the future television journalism, presented social and psychological descriptions of the nation, its mentality, supported at the same time with the technology development. Authors of the TV broadcasts with the national traditions as their subject showed their talent in the design aspect and in the aspect of the content. They did not present the national traditions and customs as something frozen, irrelevant, not-in-demand; they breathed the new life into them.

The quality characteristics inherent to the best samples of the television broadcasts, reviewed by us, influence the works of both their and the later time. Thus, they play a significant role in making the history and education system of values for the Kazakhs.

In the years of membership to the multinational union state (the USSR), and later, in the years after the day, on which the country had become independent, the Republic of Kazakhstan was aware of a need to promote the national traditions. Even in a secular country, where there have been more and more manifestations of such processes, as secularisation, migration, urbanization and globalization. This aspect is totally and constantly recognized as one of the elements to create the state ideology based on it to make the national mentality of the Kazakhs.

The public value of national cultures does not require any proof. This is confirmed, for instance, with support to cultures of small peoples provided by both governments and major institutions, which, with grants and other types of support, have preserved remembered cultural customs within the national heritage, standards of behaviour and ways of interpersonal communication. It is also clearly supported by Steinberg, saying that in era of the community-tribal system there were no peoples or tribes that had not had names for things, had not built separate houses, had not had their traditions and customs<sup>18</sup>. Such

cultural differences between ethnic groups have been inherent for the humankind since a birth of the human society. Therefore, they have had their intrinsic value; they are subject to a promotion and development, research and preservation as a guarantee for the future of any country. Without them, the comprehensively developed culture is impossible, they make its potential power, ultimately, the power of the state<sup>19</sup>.

In this regard, we can refer to the works by art historian<sup>20</sup>, who studied ancient traditions, their pedagogical and educational value. According to him, they had contributed into bringing people together within the same area and their survival, helped to fight for resources, formed personal qualities of each individual. Traditional forms of the art evolved from observing the nature, based on everyday experience, had their ritual, symbolic meaning, allowed feeling that an individual was a member of the society, secured against forces of the nature or enemies, they also marked a transition from one age or social group to another.

Undoubtedly, due to their settled way of live, urbanization, changes to the social structure and other reasons, people were at risk to loose national traditions, as some rites of the nomadic peoples or religious holidays had become obsolete. In promotion of national values today, it is essential to avoid arrogance, on the one hand. On the other hand, it is important to protect the national identity, keep it with its proper positioning among other nations, especially in the world of globalization, and a bit earlier - following independence<sup>13,14</sup>, when the country was flooded with tourists, businessmen and investments. As sad as it is understood, as a rule, the guests have had a poor idea of the Kazakhs as a nation, national historical and cultural achievements. In this case, the Kazakhs as such are guilty that in their own state and on their own land, they failed to present at its best the national spirit and set of mind. Nevertheless, in promotion of national traditions in their conjunction with ideology, people have managed to achieve a lot.

Analysing any phenomenon of culture, we should not forget its ideological component, especially when it comes to television that has outlined the framework for this paper, a role and impact of which on people's behaviour and their view of life are great<sup>21</sup>. And the national education has played an important role in the ideological education.

Thus, in 1960-1970-ies, U. Zhanibekov became a sort

of a national ideologue, he encouraged the youth to be interested in literature and the arts. He was a pioneer in a number of projects, which played a significant role in the national history. For example, he restored the Nauryz national holiday, forgotten during sixty years. He also contributed into its transformation into a common folk tradition. Regarding ideology, having explored the causes of problems in a field of bilingualism and dual citizenship, following independence of his republic, Zhanibekov said, "We have not been able to fully implement our economic, industrial, technological, spiritual and ethic potential, as in the tzar's time we depended on the metropolis, while in the Soviet time, we depended on the Centre. We needed a national ideology, which took into account interests of the Kazakhs, which for various reasons had not been able to dominate in the republic for many years"22.

U. Zhanibekov gathered scientific evidence that the Kazakhs had been poorly explored as a nation. Following the findings from a small number of research and analytical projects, which had taken place, there were no appropriate measures taken. People in charge did not create opportunities for further development of the national aspect as such. In this regard, the scientist pointed out to an important role of national programs and strategies of the government. He emphasized that Kazakhstan needed an ideology that was only able and had to be national<sup>22</sup>.

The Kazakhstan TV also made its own contribution: its history has included fifty-four years. Artists have not already recognised a role of television technology in promotion of national values, its respect for the historical past in terms of a movement toward independence only, but also in terms of building new cultural values based on national values. In our case, new values are the values of the TV culture. Thus, they have implemented educational and teaching functions of television, already mentioned above 8, 9. Such TV has contributed a lot into unity of the nation based on national values as well. Broadcasts produced for the Kazakhstan television by K. Igisinov, F. Begembaeva, S. Orazalin and K. Korgan responded to pressing issues of their time, contributed into making new forms of the future TV journalism, presented social and psychological qualities of the society based on achievements of technology development.

Like any other know-how, television has evolved. Over the years, it has been able to enrich an aesthetic aspect of the TV broadcasts. For example, previously prevailing information and educational functions have

been supported with the aesthetic function and the function of entertainment. This is confirmed with a nature of the broadcasts under consideration. Earlier television producers devoted much more time to news delivery, country events, less time and attention they paid to news from the world. There were on air important events of the governmental level, like communist party congresses, etc. Later, an exchange of views became popular in TV broadcasts, as well as direct appeals to the viewers in a form of television projects, combined in cycles or groups. We can add TV magazines and TV almanacs into this line, as well as debates. Among the innovators, who made unique projects, there are S. Ashimbayev, S. Bayhonov, M. Barmankulov, F. Begenbaeva, K. Igisinov, M. Ergaliyev, J. Yermanov, K. Korganov, S. Masgutov, S. Ponomarenko, G. Shalakhmetov, etc. At the same time, the youth wanted changes, looking for their place in the life. It was then that on the central television channel, many youth programs went beyond walls of their studio. There was a need in educational programs and entertainment shows. In this process, new TV show appeared designed to be close by its subject and other characteristics to psychology of the Kazakhs. Moscow TV game show called The 12th Floor was a sample for it. The project was designed as a discussion club and called the Kokpar. It was a result of consolidated efforts made by like-minded persons in the early 1980-ies. There are K. Igisinov, F. Begenbaeva and N. Imangali.

Among the others, it was mentioned<sup>23</sup> that a value of a TV broadcast depends on duration of its "life" on the screen, its author's skills and its director's vision. A success of the Kokpar over time proved that these words were true. The Kokpar was one of those TV programs where a national colour was prevailing. Today, among many other similar programs, we may say that the Kokpar is distinct owing to its originality. Moreover, with years, its value has been keenly perceived. The viewers had not certainly forgotten the Kokpar show<sup>24</sup>. Those competing teams from the early eighties had the most talented students from Almaty colleges.

The close thematic connection of the Kokpar broadcast with various forms of the folk tradition enabled to attract back those viewers, who had forgotten the national values for different reasons. Among the spectators, there were hardly those, who did not take into account or was not interested in the Kokpar in time of its presence on air. This is confirmed with 3,859 letters from the viewers, received at the Kokpar editor's office in 1983-1984. In the studio,

they used to pose questions of literature, culture, science and the arts, encouraging everyone to think and be in a creative search for solutions; the participants showed their literacy and their good sense, that they were broadminded and resourceful.

Famous social activist and writer<sup>25</sup> mentioned that it had not been easy to produce the Kokpar. For instance, its creators were lost when they saw that students had found it difficult to have a correct and quick answer. Later the situation changed. The first phase in history of the broadcast showed that a simplified scenario, a limited horizon presented on air and a base language together with the "stamped" ideas had been shortcomings instead of being participants' mastery and the participants had to overcome them. How did they prepare the broadcast? Its presenter said that a process of preparation had been a deep search and a painful struggle<sup>26</sup>. Everyone knew that a success of the TV show began with an introductory phrase, and depended on effective dialogues. The Kokpar show presents knowledge of the youth and the best features of their nature in actions that they take on the air, and we can learn a lot from those participants. In addition, for a number of the participants, the Kokpar studio became a start in life, not just a discussion area.

A distinctive feature of the Kokpar TV show is its appearance on a national basis in comparison to other projects based on a principle of competition. A success of the Kokpar lies in the fact that its creators managed to inform the current generation about the immortal heritage of our people. They taught the young people to think and forecast, develop skills of logical thinking, their ability to be masters of themselves, be conscious, thoughtful, and show determination and diligence. The mentioned broadcast had another objective, i.e. to develop thinking, a culture of speech, help to get out on the air a message with their thoughts to the audience. In sixty seconds provided for thinking, the broadcast taught how to finish all the opportunities, cope with difficulties, overcome reasonable excitement and take a sudden and the only right decision. In conclusion, I would like to mention that the authors of the Kokpar TV broadcast produced a collective portrait of the nation. Besides, they wanted to update the concept from time to time without losing the approved subjects and content.

Subjects of military history are also important in national and ideological education for the population. The TV art, in this connection, allows even a higher aesthetic impact<sup>5</sup> upon the viewer, than, for example, painting.

The filmmakers headed by D. Vertov, known as a farther of documentaries, spent about three years in Kazakhstan during the Great Patriotic War. In this regard, they produced movies, documentaries and news films. Their contribution is immeasurable into such films, as To You, Battle Front, Together with Dombra Playing, at Foot of the Alatau and a film with forty episodes, based on documentaries. The contribution of workers from the Television and archives of Moscow and Leningrad, Brest and Kharkov, the Baltic Sea region was that they had found the latest data and presented forgotten names and unknown heroic deeds to the people. On the screen, there was a row of heroic deeds made by representatives of our half-a-million nation, their deeds committed during the war in battles of Moscow and Stalingrad. All this they successfully integrated into a plot that the audience will surely keep in mind.

Considering the national TV and film production, we should take into account relationship between the tradition in its wide sense and renewal, development or destruction of these traditions. The principle common for the creators of the TV content in Kazakhstan is a revival or a presentation of typical in the past distinctive properties of our people, both mental, and their way of life, such as rites, their everyday life, that is, their material culture. A search for their connection with today's life, their harmonious adjustment to the requirements and demands of the time. Renowned scientist Bazarbaev confirms our idea in this way, "Tradition and innovations change together with the history. The tradition includes subjects of arts, a familiar motif, participation in the life, the world of images, the ideological direction, prevailing artistic matiere"27.

In this regard, the quality characteristics inherent to the best samples of the television content, influence the works of both their and the later time. Thus, they play an important role in shaping the value system of the viewer to present them the history. Turning creativity into the tradition does not only fame an actor, but also proves, and this is the most importantly, the development spiritual culture of the nation. Only that nation, the creative works of which are intertwined with the lifestyle, turns their spiritual quest into the tradition. Such a tradition usually develops outside political influences and campaigns, in an aspect of true democracy.

There has been a trend in our spiritual and material culture that we consider erroneous. It is a habit and a desire to evaluate our authentic arts like any other in

comparison with achievements of art and culture of other nations. Especially with the European and the USA experiences. If an estimated broadcast fits a taste of the Europeans, it is recognized as a work of art. It is indirectly approved that it meets the so-called classical style.

We believe that this approach is not reasonable. The value and credibility of our traditional national broadcasts cannot be measured with such an indicator as to which extent they are close to the European samples of TV arts. The matter is that each national broadcast has its own specifics, closely associated with the ethnic culture. Any changes to fields of culture and spiritual dimensions may be only developed when they are based upon the previous forms, it is just impossible to make them as borrowed or imitative. The true art cannot exist apart from the people who have made it. In time under consideration, in produced broadcasts, the Kazakhstan TV did not only covered traditions and history of the nation, and a destiny of the country, but also discussed pressing challenged relevant for the society. At the same time, it did not intimidate the viewers and it gave them confidence in the future. TV presenters and invited actors, musicians and experts participated in campaigns, encouraged to make deeds in all spheres of the life, encouraged the youth to show patriotism, established and introduced sources of

On the other hand, some challenges should not remain unmentioned. Kazakhstan has not yet become a true participant in the global information space, according to the experts<sup>16</sup> therefore, producers of the television content should be aware of all the risks that threaten them in time of market economy and globalization, when their country is under high risk of being just a consumer of the exported TV content. In this regard, at the present stage the authors of the TV broadcasts will have to show all their talent and creativity, as well as flexibility and understanding of the situation to preserve and greatly increase the best traditions of the Kazakhstan television.

## 4. Conclusion

In the course of its development for over than fifty-year history, the Kazakhstan TV has developed in a technology aspect. This has expanded the genre system, on the one hand, and presented a movement towards inter genre syncretism, on the other hand, in line with global trends<sup>27</sup>. This has also led to expanded TV functions (for instance,

recreational and hedonistic functions appeared) and aesthetic enrichment of the TV content.

Due to demographic, political, geographical and other factors, the specifics of the Kazakhstan TV have not been sufficiently covered in research papers. In this context, we consider further studies of quality characteristics of television broadcasts very promising with differentiation by the subjects chosen by us. That is, it seems reasonable to study further the television broadcasts with national and military history subjects by groups to identify their classification, genre, artistic and design features summarized per group, as well as difficulties that their creators face in terms of preservation and promotion of national traditions and an impact of television on the viewers<sup>28</sup>.

That is why mass media, academic and public sector pay so much attention to promotion of national traditions as a tool of the ideological influence using new information technologies and other advanced achievements of the evolution.

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