



The Functions of the Cinema in the Process of the Individual's Becoming Socialized

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ABSTRACT

Mankind learns to meet his basic needs with his experiences derived from the time he was born, which can be defined to speak, to communicate, interacting with his neighbourhood and behaving according to the cultural and sociological structure of the society he lives in. Cinema is one of the means of socialization for mankind in the process of becoming a socialized being. The individuals create themselves a social area and formed group values via the films they have seen either on television or at the cinema saloons.

The individual is greatly influenced by mass media and especially by the films he watched within the first (family) and second groups (his fellows, schoolmates...) starting from his childhood. This influence can happen in two ways. The first is the child decides on the films with his friends and family. In this way, he creates a social area for himself. The second is, he builds group values during the sharing process of the notion, knowledge and senses he had from the films he watched.

The language of cinema includes the construction of the items in a certain unity and the recreation of the image, so called reality, which is wanted to be created through the subconscious of the audiences. The recreation of the reality by the individuals is reshaped according to the social relations and interaction process of the audiences at that point.

Keywords: cinema, socialization, individual, childhood



I. INTRODUCTION

Beginning from the childhood period, means of mass media communication holds place as means of influence in all stages of human life. The individual is subject to this influence from very early ages to the end of his/her life. During childhood, children have no option to take. For that reason, the effects of means of mass media on the socialization begins at very early ages of childhood and makes up an important part of human life. Since the child isn't able to open the environment, the only connection tool opening to the outer world is means of mass media communication. The status of the individual after the periods of childhood and adolescence are named with the terms "youth", "adulthood" or "maturity". It is impossible to say that an individual that gets out of childhood cannot be said to have taken over all responsibilities and fulfilled all the expectations. Some hypothesis related to the personality development claim that socialization is-just as in biological development- completed at certain ages, especially during the last stage of the adulthood; the values and beliefs of the society are completely internalized during definite age periods and the individual can live up to roles in the society. However, it is known that this isn't true; when biological development of individual stops, social development doesn't stop parallel to this and it is reproduced in some cases (Aziz, 1982:6). This point takes us to the pattern of adult socialization. For that reason, our main point is adults. Therefore, we will emphasize the socialization of adults not the socialization of children.

Nowadays, means of mass media play important roles for the meeting of artistic outputs that are produced in the cultural industry with society. As a mass media communication tool and art, the cinema has various effects during the socialization process of individual with its social, political, financial and ideological dimensions besides its aesthetical dimension.

Since the products of cinema that are produced within a definite social structure have ability and authority to reach to millions of crowd, its socio-cultural functions are the qualifications that should be examined and researched. For that reason, "the functions of cinema during the development process of individuals" that we find worth researching and necessary for the main topic of our study.

II. INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIALIZATION

First of all, the pattern of socialization occurs in a society. The individuals take their roles as members of that society; they accept and approve the norms dominating the society.



However, it is true that this process is realized through factors such as family, school, managerial units, associations, peer friends and neighbour groups that form the society, not in the society that is understood to be an abstract pattern at first look (Aziz, 1982:16). The society has a structure that includes all of these factors.

Social scientists classify the factors that provide the socialization of the individual as primary, secondary groups or as individual units as family, school, friends, peer groups, environment and mass media tools. We will examine the factors such as family, school etc. that affect the socialization of an adult in the group of primary-secondary group that we accept as a basis.

II.I. The Factors of Socialization

The primary (family) and secondary (peers, school) groups that the individual interacts at the point of socialization during childhood period are considered as socialization factors.

II.I.I. Primary Groups

One of the widest and basic distinctions is the distinction of "primary" and "secondary" groups. The first group is occurring by the groups such as family, close relatives, friends, which the individual has face to face and direct interactions, which develops relatively strong, sincere and prolonged relations in solving the problems, in mutual aids and in protecting each other.

The first group includes the environments such as family, peers, friends and playgroups that keep the individual as an organ of the group within the cognition of "us" (Demir and Acar, 1982:59). As it can be inference from the definitions, face-to-face relations in the structure of such groups and the length of duration make the effects of these groups in a society primary (Aziz, 1982: 17).

The period when the massive effect of primary groups on the socialization process is seen is the periods of childhood and early youth. During this period, the individual shapes his social qualification and aims through primary groups. Naming these groups as primary groups is based on the features listed above. They are the groups in which sincere relations are developed, where the individual feel himself as part of a common whole, and the individual feel himself within the common life and goals of the group at least in terms of a few aims. Because, the importance and effects of primary groups relatively decrease and leave their places to secondary one as they approach to adolescence (Lundberg et al., 1970:75).



II.I.II. Secondary Groups

As human beings separate from sincere, warm relations of primary groups, he/she gets closer to the secondary groups where the relations are less emotional. Secondary group is a social one to which the individual is connected with shorter, more formal, weaker and mostly through artificial relations compared to primary group. Distant relatives, occasionally have seen people, acquaintances, crowds, the city where he/lives, nation, political party, factory and similar groups can be given as examples (Demir and Acar, 1982:184). Since the mass media communication tools don't interfere the personal interaction directly (Elkin, 1995:28), they are classified in the secondary groups.

While the effecting rates of mass media communication tools increase in proportion to the place where the individual puts the messages of mass media communication tools in his life, the level of the effect can change according to the qualification of primary and secondary groups with individual since mass media communication tools are massively faced (Elkin, 1995:28).

II.II. Means of Mass Media, the Cinema and Socialization

Means of mass media get at human beings -who are one of the elements forming social structure- regardless of their being child or adult. For that reason, the process of being affected from mass media communication tools as human beings and the interaction process occur at every stage of human life. Means of mass media undertake the tasks of "a cultural ambassador" between the cultures. They have an important role both in transferring the lifestyles that come from past to present in the same society and in the interaction of different cultures. Mass media communication tools take their place in the change and development processes of the society (Akay, 2006:1). Therefore, the role of mass media communication tools during the socialization process is undeniable.

The cinema has a different place from the others as it appeals to big crowds due to both its being a mass communication tool and to its position among the visual arts. Because sculptures and pictures tell about a single memory or a situation. Of course, every piece of art has a story to tell but the most important of it is what we attribute the piece of art as a phenomenon. This is a valid reason for us to discriminate cinema from the other forms of visual arts. The cinema doesn't try to tell a lot in a single frame, it can spread the story to a period of time though limited it may be. Thus, we can learn the source of the story, its causes, the process of occurrence and the historical truths lying under it. In one respect, the forms of visual arts except cinema picture the present moment even if they are generally fed from history and social realities. However, the cinema has a greater opportunity to draw on the findings of various by benefiting from history and



social realities in a wider area. The most important thing is that cinema can perform social construction of reality.

When universal aesthetic values are considered, there are three aspects that a piece of art should have: functioning (role), proportion (rate, aesthetics) and construction. In this context, cinema, as a form of art that deals with social problems and patterns and open them to debate, bears the aspect of functioning. Carrying thousands of frames, facial expressions, states of human beings and relations to aesthetical dimension and picturing them are indicators showing that proportion is also considered. Strong fiction and plot is the proof of strong construction.

III. THE FUNCTIONS OF CINEMA IN THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS OF INDIVIDUAL

It is necessary to comprehend cinema, which is one of the most important mass media communications tool of our age, and determine its qualifications on various levels as it has the largest viewer amounts among visual arts.

As cinema with the large of crowds it reaches, edits and visualizes the reality with some definite purposes, it has various effects on the comprehension of individual. Because, the cinema is both a source of entertainment and an industry, and technological device; it is both a culture and a production, besides it is a political and social instrument which has propaganda structure. In this context, we will try to explain the functions of it during the process of socialization of individual.

III.I. Common Values and Forming a Social Zone

Beginning from his childhood, besides primary (family) and secondary (peers, school...) groups that he interacted during the process of socialization, the individual is intensively affected from mass media communication tools and especially from the cinema works he has seen.

This influence occurs in two ways. First of all, the choice of film is determined with close environment and friend. In this way, he forms a social zone. Second, he constructs his group values during the process of sharing the opinion, information and feeling that he acquired while watching the film.



Table 1. The places movies are watched (**Aytas, 2007**).

			The Place Horror Film is watched					Total	
			No answer	Home alone	Home with friends	Alone in the Cinema	At Cinema With friends		Other
G E N D E R	M	Count	2	39	74	10	69	4	198
		%within Gender	1,0%	19,7%	37,4%	5,1%	34,8%	2,0%	100,0 %
D E R	F	Count	3	18	85	7	88	1	202
		%within Gender	1,5%	8,9%	42,1%	3,5%	43,6%	,5%	100,0 %
Total		Count	5	57	159	17	157	5	400
		%within Gender	1,3%	14,3%	39,8%	4,3%	39,3%	1,3%	100,0 %

When looked at the choices on where to watch the horror films (Table 1), we have taken the answers of "in the cinema with friends" or "at home with friends". These answers show, at the same time, that secure atmospheres are preferred while watching horror films. Boys' rate on this point is 72.2% and girls' is 85.7%. So, we can say that girls need secure atmospheres more than boys do. At this point, we can claim that cinema has obvious effects on the socialization process of individual. Especially, young people determine what to see in the cinema or at home with close social environments and friends, not on their own.

III.II. Forming a Communicative Pattern

The government directs the behaviours of the individual that forms the society and possible results of these behaviours. For that reason, Foucault describes the government as the way through which the behaviours of individuals or groups are directed, in other words as a management problem (Foucault, 2000). The government mentioned here is not a single institution; person, class or group but autonomous structures and forms that are sectional which are related to each other but can establish its platform in the system. For example, the government here is composed of produces powers, political institutions, ideology, international commerce, religion, traditional patriarchal power, determined social sexualities, culture and communication styles and the media which presents and represents them. Especially, the cinema as a visual communication media produces definite communication patterns, definite bodies, definite gestures, definite utterances, definite desires and definite images through contents which it provides



mentioned dynamics. This plot is presented to individuals as models and thus individuals that are convenient to the patterns are produced.

According to C. Wright Mills, mass media communication tools not only play a role of vehicle and filter in comprehending outer world but also can reflect and make even the individual himself adopt a personality, as they desire. Mass media communication tools that can make individuals accept what he is, what he should be and how he should seem to outer world, can also be effective by making individuals acquire new behaviour patterns and changing the individual to a desired type (Mills, 1974:440).

In the modern industrial society, most of the tasks that various religious activities fulfilled in the past are now taken over by mass media communication tools. With its high visuality, and stories it assembles and edits, its characters, atmosphere; cinema presents communicative patterns to individuals and provides behaviour patterns.

III.III. Identification and Purification (Catharsis)

Although the viewer is aware of the reality illusion that he is in while he's watching a film, one reason why he is in a mood that accepts the position of being exhibitionist in front of these semi-real images that flow on the filmstrip, can be explained with identification.

According to Monaco (2003:387), the presentation of the reality on the screen has various effects on the individual's daily life. Individual becomes one with the characters in such films as horror films, he puts the violence activities into virtual targets instead of real targets and he decreases the density of possible aggression incentives that can lead to violence behaviours. According to Tarkovsky (1992:43), the viewer becomes one with the character on the screen when the screen functions as a mirror. On the basis of becoming one, it is important to concretize the symbols lying under the subconscious of the viewer in the abstract environment through a film. For that reason, the narcissist and masochist side of human beings force him to have dreams through becoming one in a cinema hall.

In the Hitchcock films where the figure of a man who has been accused for a crime he didn't perform, the viewers become one with the hero (Wollen, 2004: 273). If we consider the film *Psycho* (1998), we become one with the character of *Marion* in the bath in front of the camera that shows us the murder in the film from the points of murderer and victim. When the only "survivor or living thing" is the camera, our cooperation in the crime becomes more clear (Gabbard, 2001:311).



According to the theory of Catharsis presented by Aristoteles, the audience who watches the murders, crimes and events in the tragedies, theatre plays or during the film give up taking up that "bad" feelings and starting such activities. He has to give up, because he has seen the result of these activities on the screen or at the stage, he has taken his lesson and was purified. In other words, the narration of terror purifies, calms down the writer, reader or viewer and prevents them from doing harm (Akt. Scognamillo, 1996:11-12).

The contemporary human being determine the horror as a pattern which is lived and bought and satisfies his narcissist and masochist sides through having dreams in a half-awaken manner in a dark hall and providing becoming one with the character for while. Freud (1998:45) assumes that "*Having a dream reveals the desire to execute the forbidden behaviours on definite people*". The reality that Freud assumed, the hypothesis claiming that we try to perform the activities we can do in our real lives through our dreams, can be accepted as the desire to unload the memory of contemporary human beings that has been wrapped up by consumption culture.

III.IV. The Construction of Identity and "the Other"

According to Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells (2006), search for a collective or personal, attributed or constructed identity in a world with global wealth, power and symbol running has become main source of social meaning. However, the "identity" with the effect of media and mass communication tools has become main or sometimes basic source of meaning with the resolution of organizations, loss of validity for institutions, fading away of cultural movements, temporariness of cultural expressions.

The concept of identity has gained its real importance in the twentieth century. "The identity" as a concept is within the field of psycho-dynamic and sociological theories and the opinion of both approaches describes the identity as a process which was created and fiction process. The descriptions developed by various disciplines establish the sources of identity to various bases (Elmacı, 2006:30).

Psycho-historian Erik Erickson explains the identity as the core process inside an individual in a society and he correlates between society and identity. Erickson is the person who has suggested the term of identical crisis that is a popular concept of present and has gained popularity especially among young people after World War II. According to the theory of pragmatic conceit, identity is a process that reduces itself to socially edit categorizes -language, communication -. Later on, Erving Goffman and Peter Berger explained identity as a process which was socially transformed. The



structuralist and post-structuralist theories manifest the language as the factor that shapes the identity. The person who has put a base to these theories is famous Swiss structuralist Ferdinand de Saussure. The whole social structure is a system producing meanings like the language. He claims that all sociological and cultural meanings could be produced within a language thus the identity could be produced within a language too. French intellectual Michael Foucault expresses that pronunciations formed the identity through ideas and these pronunciations were internalized and the identities were shaped with this process. Thus, he advocates that we build telescopic and multi-stored identities. According to another opinion that claims the identities became telescopic and defends cultural crossbreeding, racial and ethnical identities are not pure, other races also mixed. Any of the mixed cultures were dominant; conversely a new identity has appeared (Marshall, 1999:685). When the historical perspective is examined, it is clearly seen that sociality is the major determiner of identity.

As a problem, the identity appeared after the appearance of life styles of modern societies. Stable identity in the traditional society has transformed to an active and changing structure with the complex structure of modern societies. In modern societies, the values related to social solidarity and collectivity were replaced with more individualist processes and the identity were shaped with much more complex factors. As we can see, modernity has brought dissolution of social solidarity and the group dependent to traditional values has started the search for a collective identity. Various theorists expected the search for collective identity to bring various expectations such as security, power and status. Especially, problematic and rapid urbanization causes failure of individual in internalizing the values related to the core of the city. The individual separating from traditional environment conflicts with the values of new place with more limited individual interactions and he seeks for a more collective identity rather than individual identity. Particularly, the individuals tend to act in groups as a reflex to protect themselves in the groups where ethnical factors are dominant when they encounter the cases of externalizing or when other groups externalize them. Cyclically, it was seen that collective identity feeling or nationalism got stronger when any threatening by other powers was felt in the social environment when we examine the political tendencies of the society. Time by time, local governments turned this situation to a material of domestic politics. In a group where everybody is "the other" for each other and "the other" was externalized with various definitions, there is no way of existence for an individual who hides behind the security wall that feeling of belonging to a group or forming a group created (Elmacı, 2006:33-34). Surely, the thing that reveals his existence is the feeling of being "the other".



In his book named "Full Screen", Baudrillard discusses that we entered to the age of creating Other with modernity. He claims that the most important of matter of our age is the ability of the other to produce not killing, demolish, pervert, resist, compete, love or hate it. Creating "the Other" is invented in order to escape from the world, the body and the sex as a destiny. At this point, various mass communication tools which have important effects on the society and individual intervene. The television which visuality occurs at highest levels and especially the cinema which addresses an individual living in an edited world perform the construction of "the Other" as an obligatory for the construction of identity.

III.V. Making the Consumption Forms Embraced

Giant industries that create popular thoughts, hopes, desperations and expectations, keeps, continue and change them when necessary arise with the effort of production in organized structures. These industries perform the consciousness management for both themselves and capitalist market. Major industries are television, cinema, press, media, advertisement, public relations and education.

These industries make both their own productions and the products of other industries popular. Thus, popularity of productions of industries such as clothes, food, drinks and entertainment are produced dynamics popularities. In the popularization of the products of these industries, communication and entertainment media determines the dominant agenda. In the end, not only these products gain popularity but also provide popularity to other products (Erdoğan and Alemdar, 2005:79). Being compared to a film hero provides value to individual. Wear clothes similar to the characters of popular films of the period, eat pizza, catch up fashion can be a practice and makes the practice "popular" (timesaver, advanced and contemporary).

Mass communication tools provide the society connection between the country and the outer world through giving information about the places that it hasn't been and the topics it hasn't known, they enable people who live in small groups to pass to "greater societies" and the society to transform to "modernizing society" from "the traditional one".

In this context, the cinema that functions as both an art and a mass communication tool, shows the audiences the places where they have never seen, and takes them to the places they have never been and make them listen to the things they have never heard. Moreover, it provides new behaviours to individual, it leads desires for new ideas, new goods, a new life style and it provides new consumption forms (Oskay, 1978: 69).



III.VI. Maintaining the Dominant Ideology and Propaganda

Marx and Engels, discusses that the reflections of dominant class were dominant reflections in German ideology and the class with physical power in a society has "intellectual" power too. In other words, the class possessing the materialistic production tools also owns mental production tools. They are so within the other that the opinions of the individuals who aren't given mental production tools depend on this dominant class (2004:75).

We can say that cinema is one of the mental production and ideological propaganda tool when the financing the products that are created during the historical development process depends on capital, its use and comprehension.

In the studies performed until the end of 1930's cinema was supported by official propagandists, newspaper owners and particularly advertisers during the World War I and was described as an important power that can effectively direct behaviours, shape opinions and beliefs, change the life styles and even determine the political systems. This belief on public opinion could be shaped as desired had been influenced by a book with the name of Public Opinion by Lippmann published in 1922. In his book, Lippmann examined the relations between the world out of us and the visualities in our mind (Akay, 2006:21). Later on, in 1933, Private Payne Foundation appropriated funds for "Motion Picture Research Center" in order to enable 16 sociologist and psychologist perform a chain of studies and some studies to determine the way in which children and youth are affected from the cinema were executed. These studies revealed a frowning and a functional result (Türkoğlu, 1988:8 quoted by Akay, 2006):

1. Movies include a covered philosophy of life,
2. Cinema can be highly benefited from in the education of children in their adolescence ages.

Indeed, such researches give the inventory of some kind of opinions. According to the government, masses are "groups that require training". The media in the power of the government is "tool of training groups" according to the presidencies of government. The information in the quantity the government desire is delivered to the groups after being "disinfected".

In this context, Walter Lippmann is the first one to search the relationships between the contents of modern mass communication tools and real world systematically. Lippmann determines that mass communication tools reflected real world after distorting it; this



distorted reflection creates “the images in their mind”. There is no equality between the world people animate in their mind and the real world and the people who shape the real world perceive the truth distortedly, thus it prevents their interference to the real life ideally (Mutlu, 1991:78).

According to Daniel Boorstin, the content of mass communication tools not only consists of chosen appearance of real world but also produced artificial cases are presented as real appearances of the real world (Mutlu, 1991:79). Although the cinema, which is one of the main mass communication tools, takes its material from the outer world, it draws a specific world for itself via this material. People watch a cine-visual world established with factors from real world and the representations of these factors not real world, and they experience this world. Here, the reality has been replaced with a fictional reality (Mutlu, 2005:411).

The images and stories given in the cinema productions create new mythologies in sorting out the daily problems. They are the stories which explain, teach and justify the practices with a simple meaning.

Douglas Kellner tries to prove that ideological messages which justify and strengthen the established regime in most popular cultural texts such as cinema and television texts, advertisements and serials using various examples. According to this point of view, there is no significant difference between popular culture and crowd culture. Both of them are the names which were given to completely same cultural pattern and they can replace each other without hesitation. Thus, either it is called as popular culture or massive culture, the same pattern is an important tool that dominant powers used to strengthen and maintain their dominance on the dependent group (Güngör, 1999:12-13).

IV. CONCLUSION

The development of mass communication tools in the twentieth century, organization and functioning of these tools, have become more effective on the production and consumption styles of crowds namely the financial and ideological structures of societies. Current cultural industry plays important roles on the socialization process of the individual through the produced works.

The cinema that is one of the most important socialization tools during the human beings’ process to become a social existence or socialization process, has various social,



political, financial and ideological functions besides its aesthetical dimension as a tool of mass communication and art that reaches millions of people.

The language of the cinema includes the editing of the factors in a unity and the creation of pattern that is wanted to be shown through the help of viewers' consciousness by viewers. Recreation of reality by the viewers is shaped according to the social relations and interaction process where the viewers are located. The individual who determines his preference for films with his close environment and friends creates a social zone for themselves through films both on television and in the cinema halls and he constructs group values during the process of sharing opinions, information and feelings he observed from the films. Besides, viewers' accepting the mood of seeming an exhibitionist in front of these flowing semi-real images although he is aware that he is in a reality illusion while watching the film is explained as becoming one.

The cinema serves to the establishment of fictitious relations (ideologies) in a definite form and social manner through the messages it includes. Cinema isn't the only institution that produces ideology in the modern society. However, it has great importance among the other mass communicative tools when the number of human beings it reaches is considered.

Moreover, cinema is the most appropriate myth production tool of present day although cinema cooperates with the other parts of media. While developing its myths, the cinema forms rituals of primitive societies and uses the methods where fairy tale rituals and dances. Myths deal with important problems in human life; it enables human beings to make a deal with death, violence, love, sex, work and social conflicts in attractive frames. Heroes such as Superman, super cop, super Spiderman, hero cowboy, Batman, man of 6 million dollars, Flash protect the society that is weak against Gangsters, Indians, wars, revolutionists, terrorists, bandits and aliens. The use the methods that mostly bad people prefer by mythological powers to solve the problems is dominant in most of popular products. All of them carry the ideology and obeying the sociological authority. These myths make the dominant institutions and life styles natural; they find solution to adopt the individuals to the society (Erdoğan and Alemdar, 2005:55). Heroes in the cinema films always protect the properties; they mend the structure of property relations that were ruined and violated.

According to Postman (1994:100), cinema produces or builds any part of reality rather than representing it. Reality doesn't exist in the objectivity of empiricism; it is a production of pronunciation. Thus, the re-presented thing is ideology not reality and



effectiveness of this ideology is provided through the visuality of cinema. In this way, it tries to locate the claim of accuracy into the objectivity of reality and thus it hides the truth that every "accurate" that it produced was ideology not reality. Industrial system doesn't only perform production and re-production of items, the thing it re-produces at the final stage and inevitably is the capitalism itself. Of course, this is an ideological re-production not materialistic one.

The cinema is a source of entertainment and industry, it is both a culture and a production at the same time, besides it is a political and social instrument with its appropriate structure for propaganda.

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