

ANNOTATION

to the text of the doctoral dissertation of *Pshenayeva Elmira Bolatkhanovna* on the topic “*Media Transformation of the Kazakhstani Film Industry: Web Series in Sociocultural Regulation*”, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program **8D02184 – Film and TV Directing**

Relevance of the research topic. In the context of historical and cultural representation, web series emerge as an important instrument of media memory, visualizing both collective historical experience and current sociocultural conflicts. The analysis of global streaming platforms demonstrates that web series have become not only a space for innovation but also a mechanism for constructing cultural identity. Understanding this trend makes it possible to assess the potential of Kazakhstani web series in the processes of national representation.

Special attention is deserved by the phenomenon of media-cultural globalization, a vivid example of which is the Korean wave “*Hallyu*.” Korean web series, relying on the cultural brand of the country, simultaneously become a universal media product capable of transmitting national narratives on a global scale. This phenomenon serves as a methodological foundation for analyzing adaptation processes and strategies in the Kazakhstani film industry, as well as illustrating the possibilities of introducing local content into global media markets.

Kazakhstani web series, developing since the early 2020s, demonstrate a transition from marginal internet content to a socially significant artistic form. Today, they reflect the cultural discourse of society: social stratification, urban transformations, issues of identity and value orientations. Web series actively participate in sociocultural regulation, shaping models of behavior, norms, and perceptions of contemporary realities, especially among youth audiences.

An important aspect is the study of social attitudes and development prospects, since web series in Kazakhstan are gradually becoming a platform for media reflection – they are capable of influencing public opinion, stimulating discussions on socially significant topics, and increasing the level of cultural participation of the audience. The development of the creative economy is one of the key directions of modernization of contemporary society. “*It is no coincidence that we speak of the Kazakhstani cultural wave, steadily gaining momentum at the regional and global levels. The enormous creative potential of our nation finds its expression in cinema, music, literature, as well as in entirely new areas of art. I am confident that the creative industry will become one of the most important points of economic progress of the country,*” stated President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the third session of the National Kurultai [1]. According to international studies, industries based on intellectual products, innovations, and cultural production become drivers of economic growth, the creation of new jobs, and the strengthening of national image. Under these conditions, the media industry, and in particular web content, occupy a central place in the economy of cultural production.

The media transformation of the film industry is directly connected with the economic shift from traditional forms of film distribution to digital models of

monetization: subscription services, content platforms, brand integrations, advertising models, and global distribution. Web series act as an innovative media product, creating high added value based on creativity, intellectual property, and cultural codes.

In the context of global practice, web series are turning into an element of national export of creativity. The success of the South Korean phenomenon “*Hallyu*” testifies to the possibility of large-scale dissemination of local content, transforming cultural images into economic capital. This case demonstrates that historical and cultural representation embedded in a media product can enhance the international influence of a state through soft power.

The Kazakhstani segment of the web industry is in a stage of intensive growth, which requires theoretical analysis and institutional support. The emergence of web series produced by independent studios and large media holdings reflects the transition of national film production into the logic of the creative economy.

At the same time, web series perform an important sociocultural function of regulating and reflecting value transformations of society, influencing the formation of cultural identity, which corresponds to the ideas of the creative economy about the role of culture as a resource of national development.

Thus, the relevance of the research is determined by:

- the necessity of scientific comprehension of web series as an independent phenomenon of the modern film industry;
- the transformation of media formats and changes in strategies of national film production under conditions of digitalization;
- the strengthening role of web series in representing Kazakhstani cultural identity;
- the growing social significance of web content as an instrument of value and communicative regulation;
- the need for scientific typologization and analysis of the development of the Kazakhstani segment of web cinematography.

Object of the research: The object of the study is the processes of media transformation in the contemporary film industry, manifested in the development and institutionalization of the web series format as a new component of screen culture.

Subject of the research: The subject of the study is the sociocultural and artistic-communicative mechanisms of representing reality in Kazakhstani web series.

Purpose of the research: The aim of the study is to determine the specific features of the media transformation of the Kazakhstani film industry through the analysis of web series as an instrument of sociocultural regulation, revealing mechanisms of historical and cultural representation, globalization influences, and national adaptation of media practices in the context of the creative industry of contemporary Kazakhstan.

The object, subject, and purpose of the research defined the following tasks:

1. To conduct a theoretical analysis of the concept of the web series as a form of historical and cultural representation in global media practice, identifying the stages of evolution of web series in world audiovisual culture, outlining their

specificity as an independent media format, and actualizing trends of convergence and diversification of media content.

2. To characterize the phenomenon of *Hallyu* as a form of global media-cultural expansion, defining its key elements and methodological foundations of analysis, as instruments of “soft power” and cultural diplomacy in the context of national media policy and processes of strengthening cultural sovereignty.
3. To analyze the sociocultural functions of Kazakhstani web series as mechanisms of social regulation and cultural self-expression, identifying the key value orientations transmitted by Kazakhstani web series, and to determine their role in shaping perceptions of social identity and normative models of behavior.
4. To reveal current trends and prospects for the development of web series in the context of state policy on the development of Kazakhstan’s creative industry, highlighting their strategic significance for the digital modernization of the national film industry.
5. To determine the role of the educational environment of the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov as a platform of institutional support and conditions for the development of web series and the training of competent media specialists.

Scientific novelty of the research:

1. The phenomenon of web series is conceptualized as a specific form of media content performing functions of historical-cultural representation and sociocultural regulation within the transformation of the national film industry, based on global practices.
2. For the first time, dominant models of cultural discourse in Kazakhstani web series have been identified, defining the specificity of representing national identity in the digital media environment (youth issues, urbanization, social conflicts, etc.). In addition, a scientifically grounded typology of value orientations transmitted by Kazakhstani web series has been developed (family-traditional attitudes, modernization discourse, social mobility, cultural pluralism).
3. The stages and mechanisms of adaptation of international media models, including *Hallyu* and Western streaming practices, to the local cultural context of Kazakhstan have been determined. The role of web series as instruments of symbolic construction of social reality, influencing the formation of youth identification strategies and the transformation of cultural norms, has been revealed.
4. For the first time, a prognostic model of the development of Kazakhstani web series production has been proposed, taking into account the cultural demands of society, state strategic priorities, and the dynamics of digital consumption. Furthermore, key factors of industry transformation have been identified: creative economy, streaming monetization, content platformization, and audience trends.
5. The potential of the educational environment of the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov has been considered as an

institutional platform for the formation of new competencies in the field of web production, media management, and digital storytelling.

Methodological foundation of the research: The methodological basis of this study is interdisciplinary in nature and reflects current practices of interaction between media, culture, and society, which determines its significance for film studies, cultural studies, media communications, and social philosophy.

For the analysis of web series, the following set of methods is appropriate:

- **Comparative analysis:** comparison of Kazakhstani web series with foreign ones (e.g., Korean web dramas) in the context of adaptation of genre and aesthetic models (glocalization).
- **Content analysis** of web series (themes, characters, artistic strategies, social problems).
- **Comparative-typological method** (comparison of Kazakhstani and foreign media models, including the phenomenon of *Hallyu*).
- **Sociological methods** (audience surveys, analysis of user behavior on platforms).
- **Case method** (analysis of specific web series as significant industrial examples).
- **Prognostic modeling** (determining prospects for industry development).

Source base of the research: The source base of the study consists of diverse materials reflecting the dynamics of media transformation of the Kazakhstani film industry and the specificity of web series content. Within the dissertation, the following sources are distinguished: Kazakhstani and foreign web series as objects of direct content analysis, normative-legal documents, materials of digital media, streaming platforms and professional resources, sociological and empirical data (Appendix No. 1).

Thus, the source base of the study is interdisciplinary and comprehensive in nature, which testifies to the expanded diversity of sources, allowing for scientific reliability, completeness, and systematicity of research analysis.

Degree of Study of the Research

The study of the phenomenon of web series as a form of post-television content originates in American media theory at the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st century, when the digitalization of media and the development of the internet led to the emergence of new forms of screen storytelling. The key conceptual foundations for analyzing web series were the ideas of the leading media theorist of the 21st century, an expert on mass culture, new technologies, and contemporary phenomena, Henry Jenkins, on *convergence culture* and *transmedia storytelling* (Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 2006). This is the seminal book on cultural phenomena that underpinned modernity: franchises, fan creativity, the power and significance of fan communities, etc. [2], where internet platforms are considered as spaces of audience participation and integration of different media formats.

Professor Amanda Lotz of Queensland University of Technology, a specialist in media economics and media culture, in her work systematized the concept of “internet distribution” as a new phase in the evolution of television, which provided

a methodological basis for understanding web series as a hybrid media product between cinema, television, and interactive content [3].

A significant contribution was also made by John Caldwell, who studied post-television forms of production and the economy of online content [4]. In European methodology, particular importance is attached to the studies of Janet McCabe and Kim Akass, focused on sociocultural strategies of serialization and the phenomenon of *Quality TV* [5], as well as Jean-Pierre Esquenazi and François Jost, who examined French and German web series as a media-cultural space of social representation [6, 7].

Thus, the Western research school laid the theoretical and methodological foundation in which web series are considered as a result of media convergence, creative industrialization, and democratization of audiovisual content production.

In the second decade of the 21st century, the center of theoretical activity in the study of web series shifted to Asia, primarily to South Korea, China, and Japan, where digital media practice is closely linked to the phenomenon of media-cultural globalization and the expansion of the Korean wave (*Hallyu*).

Youna Kim, Doobo Shim, and Dal Yong Jin developed a cultural and communication approach to the analysis of web drama, considering it as a bearer of digital myth, an instrument of cultural diplomacy, and a representation of national identity [8].

Studies by Hyerim Jo, Park Chang Sup [9], and Cho Hae-Joang [10] showed that Korean web series became laboratories for the formation of a new model of transnational narrative, oriented toward international streaming platforms (YouTube, Naver TV, Viki, Netflix).

The Korean phenomenon *Hallyu* and its influence on world culture has been the subject of a vast number of studies. Among them, special attention is given to works devoted to the historical aspects and prerequisites of the formation of *Hallyu* [11, 12]. Many researchers consider the phenomenon of the “Korean Wave” as a policy of *soft power*, used to develop and disseminate the national brand of South Korea [13-15].

The processes of modernization of South Korean society under President Park Chung Hee, which had a decisive impact on the emergence of this cultural phenomenon, are addressed in the work of A.S. Starshinov [16].

In Chinese media art, similar processes are analyzed in the works of Keane M. [17] and Zhang X. [18], where web drama is interpreted as part of the state strategy of cultural promotion and *soft power*.

Thus, Asian researchers proposed an interdisciplinary methodology combining media economics, cultural studies, and political science, allowing web series to be considered as a factor of cultural globalization and national identity [19-21].

In Kazakhstan, the study of web series is at the formative stage and does not yet have such a developed theoretical tradition as Western and Eastern schools. However, in recent years there has been a growing interest in the phenomenon of web content in the context of the development of the creative industry and the digital transformation of cinema [22-24].

The first analytical approaches to the study of digital media and new screen forms appear in the works of Kazakhstani authors, where the processes of digitalization of national culture and the formation of a new media environment are examined [25, 26].

In some works, the term “web series” is defined, factors contributing to the growth of its popularity in the digital environment are identified, and aspects of its influence on mass consciousness and youth cultural practices are considered. Certain authors interpret web series as an element of mass culture, analyzing their cognitive and educational potential, as well as negative effects manifested in the reproduction of stereotypes, normalization of deviant behavior, and promotion of harmful attitudes [27].

Karev I., in his article, also studies the problem of the formation of web series, determining that the format of web series arises as a response to the transformation of media consumption: the growing role of an active digital audience, for whom short viewing intervals (transport, breaks) and the need for fast, easy, and relevant video content are typical. Moreover, according to the author, the web series format is a cultural-media phenomenon that emerged and developed in the digital environment, with its key functions, features, and significance highlighted [28].

The phenomenon of web series as a product of consumption is addressed in the work of Bronson A., *“For the first time in history, streaming services are watched more than cable TV,”*

This idea for the Kazakhstani video market is further developed by A. Yudin, who, based on the study of Kazakhstan’s video streaming market, concluded that the digital transformation of the media sphere is occurring actively and is a significant factor for the study of web series. He shows that web series can occupy a central place in the national film industry if many components are taken into account, such as: digital infrastructure (internet accessibility, mobility), distribution models and commercial opportunities, local cultural features (language, audience, context), etc. In other words, not only the artistic and linguistic characteristics of web series must be considered, but also the market, technological, and institutional environment in which they function [30].

Anara Zhunusova, in her article, announced the launch of the online cinema Unico, which can be interpreted as a signal moment in the evolution of Kazakhstan’s media landscape: it opens the way to the transformation of the film industry through digital platforms with a local orientation, global ambitions, and a new paradigm of content. For the problem under study, this means that web series can be regarded as a key node of media transformation – they not only reflect but also facilitate the change of the rules of the game: formats, languages, audiences, industrial structures, and methods of cultural regulation.

Thus, digital streaming platforms become the infrastructure of media transformation, and their launch represents an opportunity for a national cinema ecosystem leap, which directly correlates with the topic of the research [31].

Galiya Baizhanova, in her article “Three Most Notable Kazakhstani Series on YouTube”, shows that Kazakhstan’s media space increasingly uses YouTube as a serious channel for distributing series, which indicates two key processes: first, the

shift from traditional television to digital formats; second, the strengthening role of youth-oriented and web-oriented content in the national film industry. From a scientific point of view, this confirms that web series in Kazakhstan are becoming an important instrument of sociocultural regulation and media transformation: they not only reflect processes of youth culture, language, values, and media, but also actively participate in their construction.

Moreover, the digital format enhances cross-platform accessibility, expands the geographical reach of the audience, and lowers entry barriers – which in turn creates prerequisites for the formation of a new media culture, where Kazakhstani series can compete not only domestically but also within regional or global internet spaces.

Thus, it can be concluded that the observed trend reflects a turning point in the development of Kazakhstani film and series production – from linear television to flexible, digital, interactive formats, which has significant implications for the dissertation topic on media transformation of the film industry and the role of web series in sociocultural regulation [32].

The author, Galiya Baizhanova, in her subsequent work “How Much Does It Cost to Produce Web Series in Kazakhstan”, showed that the production of web series in Kazakhstan has already acquired concrete economic and industrial frameworks – budgets can vary from micro-budgets to tens of thousands of dollars per season, which allows the format to be considered a serious component of media production. At the same time, the economic model remains unstable, which limits the mass sustainability of the format and affects its potential as an instrument of sociocultural regulation. Consequently, web series in Kazakhstan are at the stage of institutional (and financial) formation, and their study must take into account not only creative and cultural aspects but also budgetary, production, and monetization parameters [33].

D. Kunafin, in his study “How Web Series Can Be Monetized” [34], notes that the web series is not merely an aesthetic or experimental format – it requires economic viability. In Kazakhstan’s media space, where the industry of traditional television and film production faces resource and institutional constraints, understanding monetization models becomes a key component of media transformation. The use of digital channels and web series makes it possible to create new forms of media education, cultural self-reflection, and communication. If a web series reaches its audience through monetization, it becomes part of a sustainable media network rather than an episodic phenomenon. This strengthens its role as an instrument of sociocultural regulation. The author emphasizes that innovative formats and alternative models of distribution/monetization allow for the rethinking of traditional genres and industries. In the Kazakhstani context, this means that web series can serve as a platform where linguistic diversity, multilingual practices, and cultural codes find new expression and monetization. However, despite the availability of digital platforms, monetization through views is limited. This means that in Kazakhstan (and in the post-Soviet space), the task is not simply the creation of content but the building of an ecosystem (rights holders, platforms, advertisers, sponsors). This aligns with the theme of sociocultural regulation: media content must be embedded in the socio-economic and institutional structure.

A number of publications are devoted to analyzing the experience of applying computer and media technologies in independent cinema, including within the framework of “guerrilla cinema.” These works aim to generalize and structure the experience of successful low-budget projects, identifying similarities and differences between domestic and global processes in the field of digital film production [35].

The authors, relying on revisionist and rational methods, assess the degree of accessibility of digital technologies and their role in the implementation of auteur projects, linking theoretical approaches of film art with the practice of contemporary film production.

In the course of the research, the author examined the dissertation of Elena Gennadyevna Shovkovich, “Sociolinguistic Aspects of Multilingual Education in the Post-Soviet Space on the Example of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, which reveals how these aspects are connected with the processes of forming cultural identity, media discourse, and communication strategies in the national media space. Moreover, the dissertation author, using the example of the web series “Syniptas” (Classmate), studies contexts of code-switching and code-mixing, thereby demonstrating that for web series, as a modern media format, multilingualism is an instrument of representing national multiculturalism and an expression of a new cultural identity adapted to global media trends [36].

The article by E. Salnikova, “On the Prehistory of the On-Screen Mise-en-Scène of the Computer”, reveals the structural-semiotic and media-cultural specificity of the web series as a new format of screen art, formed at the intersection of traditional stage arts (theater, variety, stand-up) and digital media. From a scientific point of view, the identified features of web series allow them to be considered as a form of media transformation of screen space, where hybridization of theatrical, cinematographic, and digital-interactive codes occurs. The author further concludes that the web series as a format represents a synthetic media practice, combining theatrical performativity, cinematographic visuality, and digital interactivity. The closed space of the frame, the use of screens as part of the mise-en-scène, and the introduction of transmedia strategies demonstrate the media transformation of screen arts, in which the boundaries between theater, cinema, and internet communication are blurred [37].

At the same time, in domestic science there is still no systematic study of web series as an independent media product functioning at the intersection of art, mass culture, and the creative industry.

Thus, the degree of study of the topic is characterized by the high elaboration of foreign experience and the initial phase of theoretical comprehension of this phenomenon in Kazakhstan, which determines the relevance of a comprehensive analysis of web series as a form of media transformation of the national film industry [35].

In recent years, at the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov, scientific research has been conducted aimed at studying digital trends in contemporary Kazakhstani cinema. These and other studies cover the practice of creating and promoting auteur and student media products, analyze the sociocultural

role of digital content, issues of professional training of personnel, and the interconnection of education and the creative industry [38, 39].

Special attention is paid to the analysis of specific web series created in Kazakhstan, where social problems, youth culture, issues of identity and language are reflected (which are analyzed in detail in Chapter Two) [32, 33].

Contemporary Kazakhstani scientific discourse on web series is developing in conjunction with state policy on the development of the creative industry [40], which gives the research practical significance in the context of cultural modernization and the digital economy.

Thus, the degree of scientific elaboration of the topic of web series is characterized by an asymmetric structure: in Western studies, media-theoretical and economic-industrial analysis predominates; in the Asian (Korean and Chinese) tradition – cultural and transnational approaches; in Kazakhstani science, the initial stage of comprehension of web series as part of the creative industry and digital cultural policy is being formed.

The problem requires further systematic comprehension from the standpoint of national media culture, sociocultural regulation, and educational strategies for training personnel for digital film art, which determines the relevance of the present research.

Provisions Submitted for Defense

Web series represent an innovative form of media representation, ensuring the transmission of historical, cultural, and social meanings in the context of global digitalization of the film industry. Their demand is driven by changes in media consumption models and the expanding influence of streaming platforms as new centers of cultural production. Global practices of historical representation in web series form universal cultural narratives in which the past is reinterpreted.

The phenomenon of Korean media culture (Hallyu) demonstrates a stable global format of the creative economy, based on the export of local identity and emotional content. The success of Korean web dramas substantiates the need for methodological integration of Hallyu models into the development of Kazakhstani media platforms and serial production.

Kazakhstani web series form a new cultural discourse reflecting the current value orientations of society: the demand for social justice, urban transformations, cultural dialogue, and the digital subjectivity of youth. At the same time, local meanings are adapted to global standards of dramaturgy and visual features. The web series becomes an instrument of sociocultural regulation, influencing processes of identity construction, social norms, and behavioral patterns of the audience. Through thematic focuses—criminal plots, social conflicts, youth practices—new models of social interaction are formed.

The development of web series production in Kazakhstan is part of the country's creative economy, contributing to the formation of digital industries, expansion of the media market, professional diversification of film production, and attracting international attention to the national cultural product.

The educational environment of the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov serves as an effective institutional platform for the formation and

development of new professional competencies in the field of web production, media management, and digital storytelling. The integration of practice-oriented disciplines and interdisciplinary media practices ensures the training of specialists capable of creating innovative formats of web content and engaging in productive activity within the digital media environment.

Theoretical Significance of the Research

The study contributes to the development of the theory of screen arts and media cultural studies, clarifying the conceptual and categorical apparatus associated with the terms web series, media transformation, digital film ecosystem, sociocultural regulation. The research establishes methodological foundations for further scientific analysis of digital narrative, web dramaturgy, and the aesthetics of short forms, thereby expanding the theory of contemporary audiovisual art.

Thus, the theoretical significance of the work lies in the development of scientific discourse on the digital transformation of cinema, as well as in substantiating the web series as an independent cultural phenomenon and an instrument of sociocultural regulation.

Practical Significance of the Research

The practical significance of the study is determined by its applied potential in the fields of film production, education, cultural policy, and the creative industry of Kazakhstan. The results of the research can be used in educational programs of the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov, as well as other universities of culture and art, in the development of courses in disciplines such as: “Media Culture and Digital Cinema,” “Web Production,” “Creative Industries and Screen Creativity,” “Media Art and Communication.”

The proposed theoretical conclusions and analytical models can serve as a basis for expert evaluation and state support of web projects implemented within national programs for the development of the creative sector. The study is valuable for filmmakers and media managers, as it reveals effective strategies for adapting content to digital platforms and shapes an understanding of the sociocultural expectations of the audience.

The practical significance is also manifested in the possibility of applying the developed methodological principles in the creation of auteur and educational web series aimed at developing national cultural content and promoting Kazakhstani identity in the global media space. The research materials can be used in the analytical and project activities of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in particular, in the formation of concepts and strategies in the field of the creative industry, digital art, and state cultural communication.

The work contributes to the development of national media theory and screen arts, as well as to the integration of Kazakhstan into the contemporary global media space through the development of its own segment of web content and creative film industry.

Approbation of the Work and Implementation of Results

The main provisions of the doctoral dissertation are reflected in five articles published in journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of

the Republic of Kazakhstan, and two works indexed in the Scopus database (Q1, Q2). The doctoral dissertation was discussed and recommended for defense at the extended meeting of the Department of “Film and TV” of the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov on October 16, 2025.

Certificate of entry into the State Register of Rights to Objects Protected by Copyright No. 57131 dated April 23, 2025: “Sociocultural Perception of Web Series in the Republic of Kazakhstan (on the example of the ‘Korean Wave’): Trends and Prospects” (Appendix No. 2).

Structure of the Dissertation Research consists of the Introduction, two Chapters, the Conclusion, and the List of References. consists of the Introduction, two Chapters, the Conclusion, and the List of References.