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SOVIET MASCULINITY CRITICS IN FIŠKIN'S CHARACTER IN МОЙ ПАПА БАРЫШНИКОВ (MOJ PAPA BARYŠNIKOV) MOVIE

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Abstract
This research discusses critiques of Soviet masculinity through the character of Fiškin in the film *Moj Papa Baryšnikov*, directed by Dmitrij Povolockij. It aims to examine how Fiškin embodies a critique of traditional Soviet masculinity. The author uses Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation and Krippendorff's (2019) content analysis method. The analysis presents dialogues and film screenshots alongside Chafetz's (1978) concept of masculinity, contextualized within the framework of Soviet social realities. This research reveals that Fiškin's character does not represent the seven key characteristics of masculinity, including physical appearance, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and personal. As a result, he serves as the antithesis of the ideal Soviet man.

Keywords: critics, film, masculinity, representation, Soviet

Introduction

As defined by Connell (2005), masculinity refers to the social ideas and expectations about how men should behave. In the Soviet Union, this concept became embedded in the ideological construction of the "New Soviet Man," a loyal, disciplined, and self-sacrificing citizen devoted to the collective good and communist ideals (Gasviani, 2023; McCallum, 2018). He was envisioned as a political thinker, a strong breadwinner, and a moral role model whose identity served the needs of the state.

To shape this ideal, the Soviet state enforced political socialization *(vospitanie)* from childhood through a wide network of schools, extracurricular programs, and youth organizations under the control of the Communist Party (MacIntyre, 1993). Boys were trained in patriotism and heroism, with an average of 140 hours of basic military training, while girls were expected to embody obedience and moral purity. Role models were drawn from historical, political, and cultural figures, shaping how young Soviets understood and performed their gender roles (Attwood, 1990).

In this context, film emerges as a powerful medium for both reinforcing and challenging ideological norms. As a form of visual literature, film conveys character development and thematic messages through moving images and narrative action (Ramrao, 2016). In the post-Soviet era, youth-oriented films gained prominence as tools to promote Russian values and social ideals, reflecting a

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cultural revival after the Soviet collapse (Todd, 2023). By 2011, children's and youth films had become a priority in Russian cinema, aligning with state interests in shaping national identity among the younger generation.

Moj Papa Baryšnikov stands out as a film that centers on a teenage protagonist and provides a critical perspective on Soviet ideals. The narrative challenges the concept of the ideal Soviet youth by depicting a boy who deviates from state-prescribed expectations. Instead of presenting a model citizen, the film explores the emotional struggles, personal aspirations, and identity crises of a young boy coming of age during the perestroika era, a period marked by political and social transformation. Through this portrayal, the film offers a nuanced and humanized representation of masculinity in transition.

Released in 2011 by the production company Новые Люди (Novye Ljudi), Moj Papa Baryšnikov is a comedy drama directed by Dmitrij Povolockij and starring Dmitrij Vyskubenko, Anna Mixalkova, Vladimir Kapustin, and Marina Policejmako. The film premiered on 9 June 2011 at the 22nd Russian Film Festival "Kinotavr" and was later screened at the Moscow Film Festival. It received the "Best Film Music" award for Mikael Tariverdiev and was also nominated for the "Grand Prix" at Kinotavr.

Set in 1986 at the Bolshoi Ballet Academy during the perestroika era, Moj Papa Baryšnikov follows Fiškin, a teenage ballet student who struggles to meet both the physical and ideological expectations imposed on him. His short, thin frame makes him a target of bullying, while the absence of a father figure leaves him emotionally adrift. Convinced that the famous ballet dancer Mikhail Baryšnikov is his father, Fiškin becomes determined to succeed in ballet and perform at the Bolshoi Theatre. However, his involvement in black market dealings with a friend selling cigarettes and clothes for profit ultimately leads to his expulsion from school.

Toward the end of the film, Fiškin learns that his biological father is actually a man named Sonni. He refuses to accept this truth and continues to believe in his imagined connection to Baryšnikov, a refusal that reveals his emotional need for a heroic paternal figure and underscores his resistance to Soviet norms. Through Fiškin's personal journey, the film critiques Soviet masculinity and portrays youth shaped by uncertainty, defiance, and emotional complexity.

Based on this introduction, the main problem addressed in this research is the critical representation of Soviet masculinity as reflected in the character of Fiškin in *Moj Papa Baryšnikov*. This study aims to examine how masculinity is constructed, challenged, and depicted through Fiškin's lived experiences in the film. Through this analysis, the author explores how the film critiques the dominant ideals of masculinity within the Soviet cultural context.

Method

This study employed the content analysis method from Klaus Krippendorff in his book entitled "Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology" (2019). Content analysis is a method used to analyze social phenomena by considering data as a communication tool. This communication tool then functions to be seen, read, interpreted, done, and reflected according to meaning. This method requires a systematic reading process of text, images, and symbolic material so that things that are not needed from the perspective of the author and user can be identified.

Krippendorff outlined six stages of content analysis, all of which were applied in this study. First, unitizing was carried out by integrating data through the grouping of scenes and dialogues involving the character Fiškin. Second, sampling which conducted by selecting specific scenes and dialogues that best represented critiques of Soviet masculinity. Third, recording, which involved the application of Stuart Hall's representation theory to interpret the meanings conveyed in the selected data. Fourth, the reduction was done by narrowing the material to seven key scenes considered sufficient to represent the film's critique of Soviet masculinity. Fifth, inferring consisted of concluding the scenes and dialogues, preparing them for further analysis. Last, narrating involved explaining how the critique of Soviet masculinity was reflected through the character of Fiškin as a portrayal of a non-ideal Soviet man.

This research employed Stuart Hall's theory of representation as the primary analytical framework. The theory was applied to examine how meanings related to masculinity are constructed and conveyed through the film's scenes and dialogues. In this context, representation refers to a system for producing meaning through language (Hall, 1997), in which specific images, actions, and narratives are used to shape the viewer's understanding of the critique of Soviet masculinity.

Findings and Discussion

Masculinity concept

Masculinity is a gender practice that is the opposite of femininity because it is related to the male body and behavior (Connell, 2005). It also refers to the idea and expectation felt by someone about how men should behave (Connell, 2005). The concept of masculinity is based on different social and cultural backgrounds. Relating it to the Soviet Union, a masculine man was someone who served the country (Radina & Nikitina, 2011). The concept of masculinity and the ideal Soviet man then became closely related to the depiction of the new Soviet man. It is followed by the creation of a new Soviet man who aimed to create a man as a breadwinner, an independent political thinker under state control, and a fighter by the Soviet leaders (Gasviani, 2023).

Through the lens of the historical aspect, from 1917 to 1940, the Soviet Union urged its people to prioritize public duties, such as the defense system. It is especially in the 1930s, when there was a world war and political repression, that men were required to become soldiers and were involved in the war. As a result, they were separated from their private sphere, which included the role of father, family, and responsibilities in the household (Igaeva & Šmeleva, 2021). The idea of a culture of masculinity consisting of the glorification of frontline soldiers took root from the post-war period to the first decade of the 21st century. Therefore, the main element in the identity of masculinity is men who play the role of soldiers (McCallum, 2018). This is also supported by Igaeva and Šmeleva (2021) that someone who receives the status of a soldier is a hero who also acquires a masculine identity.

In the Khrushchev era, the Soviet perception of masculinity was still an obligation and cultural prerogative for every man. However, in the 1980s, Soviet masculinity was diagnosed as experiencing a crisis due to the disintegration of the previously mighty state (Gasviani, 2023). Dumančić (2021) continued that a demographer Boris Urlanis coined the term "Protect the Men!" through his article

and the term continued in the 1970s to 1980s as a warning of the crisis of masculinity in the Soviet Union. Urlanis stated that the average lifespan of men was ten years lower than that of women. This was due to the low life expectancy of Soviet men since they were involved in war and political oppression.

The author is interested in analyzing Soviet masculinity through the character of Fiškin in the film *Moj Papa Baryšnikov,* based on seven characteristics of masculinity according to Chafetz (1978), which include physical, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and personal.

Representation of physical characteristics



Figure 1. Fiškin doesn't have the physical strength to lift his ballet partner.

In Figure 1, Fiškin and his classmates are practicing ballet, performing a movement that involves lifting their female partners onto their shoulders. Fiškin, however, can only lift his partner to chest level, which makes her feel uncomfortable, unlike his other classmates, who complete the movement successfully. Noticing Fiškin's mistake, Igor punishes him by ordering him to stop dancing and do push-ups. Fiškin follows his teacher's command, but is then mocked by his classmates.

This scene represents Fiškin's weakness in ballet dancing compared to the strength of his male friend, Lexa. This is because Fiškin has a thin and short body. Fiškin's identity in this scene is constructed as a non-masculine boy based on the characteristics of masculinity according to Chafetz (1978). Chafetz defines masculinity with a physical character that is manly, strong, athletic, brave, and not worried about signs of aging on his body. Fiškin's identity in this scene is constructed by his failure to meet the standards of masculinity of physical character. This failure affects how Fiškin is treated by others, as he is punished by his teacher and laughed at by his classmates.

In this scene, regulation is represented in the standards applied by Fiškin's teacher to the physical performance of his students. The punishment of push-ups also shows the existence of strict discipline and high expectations of physical strength in ballet training. This also represents the reality of physical culture in the Soviet Union. The Soviet government, involving the Ministry of Education, the Committee for Physical Culture and Sports, the Central Committee of the Komsomol, and the Ministry of Health, planned and implemented physical education programs (Zilberman, 1982). The program was implemented in public, secondary, and higher schools, and all aspects of life.

The Soviet government believed that schools in the Soviet Union played an important role in developing a young generation with a communist mentality, thereby creating the ideal "new Soviet man." In line with this goal, the government sought to cultivate loyalty to the state and the party, as well as to promote discipline and collectivism among Soviet students. Leonid Brezhnev, in his speech at the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Komsomol youth organization, also stated that Soviet leaders wanted to see a healthy and physically strong young generation (Zilberman, 1982). Ideas related to the male body were also reflected in art and literature.

Stalin-era novels depict muscular Soviet male bodies with scars. They have physical disabilities such as blindness, paralysis, a limp, one-legged, and have scars on several parts of their bodies. These body characteristics represent the struggle of Soviet men to defend their homeland; thus, they deserve to be given the status of heroes for the country (Kaganovsky, 2008). In addition, Soviet government posters also display images of proportional, strong, and muscular bodies (Bonnell, 1997. Stalinist monumental art is also displayed with the new Soviet human body that is large and made of iron and steel.

This scene was produced as a counter to the concept of masculine men based on Chafetz's concept of masculinity and the reality of men in the Soviet Union. This scene was also produced to depict the conditions of the ballet class by highlighting the physical challenges faced by male dancers. Moreover, the punishment and ridicule from Fiškin's friends also represent how the standards of masculinity and physical strength are reinforced in ballet dancing. This is supported by Pickard's opinion (2012) that the male ballet dancer's body is strong, slender, and muscular, while the female body is petite and elegant.

Pickard (2012), in his research, also found that a teenage ballet dancer would not declare their identity as a ballet dancer if they did not have a body with the appropriate shape and size. Therefore, ballet dancers realize that physical strength is an important element to compete for success. The audience can also consume the meaning in this scene as a critique of masculinity through the character of Fiškin, who does not have physical strength. The punishment experienced by Fiskin can be seen as a form of pressure for him because he is not an ideal male figure. Thus, Soviet masculine identity is related to a person's ability to have strong and muscular physical strength. The film offers a subversive portrayal of masculinity that contrasts with Soviet expectations.

Representation of functional characteristics



Figure 2. Saša gives the money they earn from the black market to Fiškin

In Figure 2, Fiškin questions Saša about the small amount of profit he receives. The profit originates from black market transactions conducted by both characters on the streets of Moscow. The distribution of these profits is managed by Saša. This is further illustrated in another scene where Fiškin hands over the proceeds of their illicit dealings to Saša, indicating that Fiškin entrusts him with financial management. However, Saša appropriates a larger share of the profit for himself, suggesting an imbalance in their partnership and a degree of exploitation.

This scene portrays Fiškin as a Soviet male who is exploited by Saša due to his gentle and submissive nature. He lacks the courage to confront Saša and continues to engage in black market activities not out of necessity, but for enjoyment and excitement. Although he actually needs money, his actions reveal a lack of practical responsibility and economic purpose. This suggests that Fiškin's participation in the black market serves more as a form of escapism than a means of livelihood. Thus, this scene constructs Fiškin's identity as a non-masculine figure, reflecting Chafetz's (1978) functional aspect of masculinity, which associates manhood with the role of a breadwinner or provider.

Fiškin's character displays a character who does not act as a breadwinner because he only focuses on happiness, not on getting money. In this scene, regulation is seen in how persistent the character Katja is in getting greater profits in black market transactions. In contrast to the character Fiškin, who only aims for personal pleasure. This is related to the reality in the Soviet Union regarding the role of men as breadwinners. The Soviet government in the 1936 constitution, article 35, stated that men and women have equal rights in the Soviet Union. The same rights apply in education, work, wages, social activities, politics, culture, and so on.

It is, however, the idea of men as breadwinners that has been formed and maintained in the context of Soviet culture. Eremeeva and Natalia (2021) also state that although the Soviet constitution guaranteed equal opportunities for men and women. In reality, Soviet men were more involved in industry, management, and science, and women were involved in the household. The concept of the ideal man as a breadwinner is a cultural residue from the pre-revolutionary period. This is reflected in pre-revolutionary peasant culture, where a man is considered a provider for the future of the family (Kiblitskaya, 2000).

Soviet men have been taught since childhood that a real man is a man who is able to earn money, leading to the consideration that men are the breadwinners (Kiblitskaya, 2000). The concept of Soviet men as breadwinners is also seen in the Stakhanovite mass movement. Stakhanovite is the name of a cultural movement for a worker who is highly respected in Soviet society. Although the Soviet government prioritized equality, men still dominated and worked hard in the mass workers' movement in the Soviet Union (Reid, 2010). Therefore, it can also be said that Soviet men were encouraged to have a passion for earning a living, although it was not directly conveyed through the Soviet constitution.

Zdravomyslova and Temkina (2003) in their survey of Soviet families in Moscow also revealed that the majority of women agreed with the statement that the husband acts as the breadwinner while the wife takes care of the children and the house. Therefore, the filmmakers show freedom in producing the character of Fiškin as a non-masculine Soviet man. This is because the film was released in the

post-Soviet era, so that regulations related to censorship and government control of literary works were no longer in effect. Therefore, this scene was produced as a contradiction to the concept of masculine men based on Chafetz's concept of masculinity and the reality of men in the Soviet Union.

The audience may interpret this scene as a critique of masculinity, represented through the character of Fiškin, who is unable to earn money yet engages in illegal activities for personal gratification. Moreover, Fiškin's exploitation by Katja in this scene can be understood as a consequence of his gentle and passive nature. Thus, Soviet masculine identity is depicted as being closely tied to a man's capacity to provide financially. Fiškin's passivity, therefore, challenges the notion that a man's worth is determined by his economic productivity.

Representation of sexual characteristics



Figure 3. Katja leans on Fiškin's shoulder while on the bus

In Figure 3, Fiškin is going home with his girlfriend, Katja, because their apartment is in the same building. Katja shows her interest in Fiškin through her gestures. Katja leans back by putting her head on Fiškin's shoulder while closing her eyes. However, Fiškin feels uncomfortable. He tries to keep Katja from leaning on him by looking at a picture card of a sexy woman. He does this so that Katja feels jealous. Katja then realizes and immediately moves away from Fiškin.

This scene portrays Fiškin as a man who shows no interest in women and politely rejects Katja's advances. When he presents a card depicting a sexually attractive woman, it does not signify desire but rather serves as a deliberate attempt to discourage Katja and prompt her to leave. This depiction challenges Soviet gender norms by presenting an alternative, non-aggressive form of male sexuality that diverges from the conventional ideals of masculinity conceptualized by Chafetz.

Chafetz defines masculinity in terms of sexual characteristics, describing a man as aggressive and sexually experienced. This idea also relates to the social reality of the Soviet Union. According to Gagnon and Simon (as cited in Garcia, 1982), sexual character refers to how men express their masculinity through sexual behavior or gestures. In contrast, Fiškin's character is portrayed as sexually passive rather than aggressive. Moreover, the Soviet government encouraged its citizens to marry, as reflected in the 1944 Soviet Family Law introduced under Stalin's administration to increase the national birth rate.

This family law promotes family stability by complicating the divorce process so that it can encourage greater procreation (Randall, 2019). Although in the end Soviet men were not required to be directly involved in childcare and housework.

Randall also added that mixed marriages with different genders were one positive way to unite people from various groups in the Soviet Union. Mixed marriages also supported the success of communism as a manifestation of the Soviet commitment to friendship between different peoples and racial equality.

Propaganda and visual culture during the Stalinist era, during the war, and post-war also emphasized the role of Soviet men as father figures and protectors of the family. This is realized in the role of Stalin, who is considered a leader and a substitute father figure for the Soviet family (Randall, 2019). Thus, the filmmakers show freedom in producing the character of Fiškin as a Soviet man who is not masculine. This is because this film was released in the post-Soviet era, so that regulations related to censorship and government control of literary works were no longer in effect.

Therefore, this scene serves as a contradiction to Chafetz's concept of masculinity and to the prevailing ideals of Soviet men. It also illustrates an uncommon male response to sexual attraction. The audience can interpret this scene as a critique of masculinity through Fiškin's portrayal as a Soviet man who lacks sexual aggressiveness. Fiškin's avoidance of Katja can further be understood as a sign of weakness in relation to traditional masculine ideals. Thus, masculine identity is associated with the ability to display sexual dominance, while Fiškin's non-aggressive behavior challenges this expectation. Through this depiction, the film expands the understanding of how masculinity can be experienced and represented.

Representation of emotional characteristics



Figure 4. Fiškin wants to hit his younger friends.

In this scene, Fiškin is seen leaving the classroom after being punished by his teacher for failing to perform a ballet movement correctly. As he walks through the school hallway, he continues to practice ballet. In front of him, two younger and smaller male students watch and stare at him dancing. Feeling uncomfortable under their gaze, Fiškin clenches his fists as if to strike them, causing the boys to become frightened and run away.

This scene portrays Fiškin as a young man who struggles to control his emotions, expressing anxiety and frustration after being punished by his teacher for failing to perform a ballet movement correctly. His behavior constructs him as a non-masculine figure, deviating from Chafetz's (1978) depiction of masculine men as unemotional, stoic, and non-crying characters**.** Fiškin's attempt to assert

dominance over his younger friends reveals a sense of inferiority. According to Adler (1997), such behavior reflects an inferiority complex, in which individuals project strength to mask feelings of inadequacy.

Inferiority is a character that is not suitable for the Soviet people because Soviet regulations encourage its people to become heroes for their country. The Soviet government adopted the formation of the highest order, namely the hero of the Soviet Union, in a decree of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union in April 1934. The decree stated that Soviet heroes occupy the highest place given by the government. The title was given on the basis of personal and collective services rendered to the state and society. The achievement was considered a heroic act and thus received special attention from the state. Therefore, a superior character was needed in the Soviet people to become a superior people and achieve the title of hero.

Kukhterin (2000) also stated that a Soviet man had to maintain the idea of his superiority in society, so that the idea of male superiority was maintained in the Soviet Union. Therefore, the filmmaker, through this scene, shows the freedom in producing the character of Fiškin as a Soviet man who is inferior and not superior. This is because this film was released in the post-Soviet era, so that regulations related to censorship and government control of literary works were no longer in effect.

This scene represents a critique of Soviet masculinity as defined by Chafetz and reflected in the reality of Soviet men. Fiškin's emotional and inferior behavior contrasts with the ideal of the rational, dominant Soviet man, revealing an alternative representation of male identity. Through this portrayal, the film challenges the notion that masculinity is tied to emotional restraint and social achievement.

Representation of intellectual characteristics



Figure 5. Fiškin and Saša get goods from soldiers at the military base

In Figure 5, Fiškin engages in activities prohibited by the state, black market trading, together with his friend, Saša. Saša hands over money to Andrej, Fiškin's neighbor and a former soldier who lost his leg while serving in Afghanistan. Andrej assists Fiškin and Saša by making deals with soldiers he knows to supply goods for the black market. These goods include ribbon knots, belts, and badges, which Fiškin and Saša then resell. The profits they earn from these transactions come in the form of money, cigarettes, and jeans.

This scene reflects Fiškin's disobedience and lack of loyalty to the state. He prioritizes his own happiness without considering the consequences of his actions. To him, the black market is an exciting and enjoyable activity. Fiškin's identity in this scene is not constructed as masculine according to Chafetz's (1978) characteristics of masculinity. Chafetz defines masculinity in terms of intellectual traits, describing men as logical, rational, practical, socially aware, active, contributing to society, and dogmatic. Fiškin's behavior does not demonstrate logical or rational thinking, as he repeatedly engages in illegal activities until he is expelled from school.

This is also related to the reality in the Soviet Union. Soviet people are encouraged to be loyal and obedient to the government. The Soviet government issued a constitution in 1977, in Article 59 that Soviet citizens are required to comply with socialist standards of behavior, uphold the dignity and honor of citizenship, and obey the laws and constitution of the Soviet Union. Article 62 also continues that every citizen is required to protect the interests of the state and increase the power of the state. Therefore, the most important task for every Soviet citizen was the defense of the socialist homeland. If the people betrayed their homeland, then this act was the most serious crime.

Igaeva and Šmeleva (2021) define the image of Soviet masculinity in the 20th century as loyalty to the government. A true socialist man is described as a person of good character who is loyal to Soviet ideology, works hard, and shows determination. This idea is supported by Radina and Nikitina (2011), who argue that loyalty to the government must be instilled in Soviet men as a form of devotion to the country, since they are under the supervision of government institutions. Essentially, men occupy the most influential social position.

Therefore, the filmmakers show the freedom to produce the character of Fiškin as a Soviet man who is not masculine. This is because this film was released in the post-Soviet era, so that regulations related to censorship and government control of literary works were no longer in effect. Therefore, this scene was produced as a contradiction to the concept of masculine men based on Chafetz's concept of masculinity and the reality of men in the Soviet Union. This scene was also produced to raise the issue of black-market transactions that were rampant in the Soviet Union. In connection with this, the scene also brings attention to the issue of black market transactions that were rampant in the Soviet Union. The black market is an economic activity whose buying and selling is prohibited by law (Kenton, 2025).

In the Soviet Union, the black market was known by the slang *фарцовка (farcovka)*. *Farcovka* became a lifestyle for Soviet youth to make money with big profits (Shevchenko, 2022). In this scene, the filmmakers also produced Fiškin's clothing fashion with jeans. Jeans were a coveted item in the Soviet Union (Shevchenko, 2022) as well as a Western youth fashion that was widespread among Soviet youth (Miano, 2022). Therefore, Fiškin took advantage of his black-market transactions to be able to keep up with Western clothing fashion. This is supported by Boilard's opinion (1998) that Soviet youth wanted the freedom to own Western goods, which was achieved through black market transactions.

The audience consumes the meaning of this scene as a critique of masculinity through Fiškin's character as a Soviet man committing an illegal act. Based on Chafetz's concept of masculinity and the realities of the Soviet Union, masculine

identity is related to one's ability to be loyal and obedient to the state. By rejecting rational obedience to authority, Fiškin challenges the ideological foundations of the Soviet masculine ideal.

Representation of interpersonal characteristics



Figure 6. Katja gives her school bag to Fiškin

In Figure 6, Fiškin and Katja are standing face to face in front of the school. Katja is the only friend who cares about Fiškin. They are always paired in ballet class because they are the same height. Katja then gives her school bag to Fiškin and asks him to carry it. Although it is burdensome for Fiškin, he still accepts Katja's bag and carries it. For Fiškin, carrying the bag is a form of punishment because he is not interested in Katja. This scene represents Fiškin's character, showing that he does not have the courage to refuse Katja's orders.

Fiškin's character as a gentle teenage boy is used by Katja to obey her wishes. Katja's action of giving the bag to Fiškin represents gender dominance. Meanwhile, Fiškin's action of accepting Katja's bag represents Fiškin's obedience to his female friend. Fiškin's identity in this scene is constructed as a teenage boy who is not masculine based on Chafetz's masculinity characteristics (1978). Chafetz defines masculinity based on interpersonal characteristics, namely a man who leads, dominates, is disciplined, independent, free, and individualistic.

Basically, Soviet men are encouraged to have courage and dominate in society. The Soviet government gave the title of hero to people who have served the country and society both individually and collectively. The action was considered heroic, so it received the highest place in society. The title was adopted by the Soviet government in a decree of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union on April 16, 1934. The Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union, on April 20, 1934, then awarded the title of hero to seven male pilots who had shown courage in saving the crew of a ship in the Arctic Ocean.

Soviet men also dominate in the public space. This is represented in the popular culture of Soviet society. Men play the role of builders of communism and defenders of the homeland, while women play the role of workers who are still emphasized in their maternal roles. Therefore, women do not have the same power as men (Mikhantyeva, 2022). Stakhanovite, a workers' movement that was highly respected in Soviet society, was also dominated by men, even though the Soviet government promoted equality (Reid, 2010). In addition, men also dominated political bodies in the Soviet Union. Women represented only 20.9% of the communist party in 1967 (Mespoulet, 2006).

The dominant character that every Soviet man should have is different from Fiškin because he lacks courage, so he is easily dominated by his female friends. Radina & Nikitina (2011) also argue that the need to dominate in all areas of power in Soviet society is a main characteristic of male identity. In addition, Kukhterin (2000) stated that the state offered opportunities for Soviet men to contribute to the public sphere so that they could have power and dominate. It can be stated that the filmmakers had the freedom to produce the character of Fiškin as a non-masculine Soviet man. This is because the film was released in the post-Soviet era, so regulations related to censorship and government control of literary works were no longer in effect.

This scene was produced as a contradiction to the concept of masculine men based on Chafetz's concept of masculinity and the reality of men in the Soviet Union. This scene was also produced to illustrate that men who are not dominant and do not have courage can weaken their identity as masculine men. The audience can also understand this scene as a critique of masculinity, as Fiškin's character does not reflect the ideal Soviet man. Fiškin's lack of dominance can also be understood as a consequence of his gentle nature, which is exploited by his female friends.

Representation of personal characteristics



Figure 7. Fiškin standing on stage and looking down

In Figure 7, Fiškin stands on stage facing the teacher, the school director, and his friends, who are sitting in the front seats of the stage. The teacher and the school director announced that he was expelled from school because he had committed a black market for the second time. This scene occurs after Fiškin was caught by the police while conducting black market transactions. The police then returned Fiškin to the school. This affects Fiškin's future because he cannot achieve his dream of becoming a professional ballet dancer performing at the Bolshoi Theatre. Fiškin does not defend himself and ends the conversation by saying "Thank you and goodbye".

This scene represents Fiškin's character as a man who surrenders and is unable to defend himself, even though he has been given the opportunity to speak. Fiškin should have been ambitious to stay in school in order to achieve his dream of becoming a professional ballet dancer. His soft character is seen in how Fiškin deals with problems. Fiškin's character in this scene is not constructed as masculine according to Chafetz's (1978) characteristics of masculinity. Chafetz defines masculinity based on personal character, namely a man who is aggressive, success-

oriented, ambitious, proud, trustworthy, assertive, competitive, uninhibited, and adventurous.

Soviet men were encouraged to be future-oriented according to the expectations of Soviet leaders. Khrushchev, during his leadership, promised a strong recovery and encouraged society to aspire to a prosperous future for themselves and their descendants (Goldman in Dumančić, 2021). In the late 1930s, father figures were required to be active and participate in the lives of their children so that they spent their time at home. Therefore, father figures were encouraged to provide socialization to children to ensure a safe Soviet future (McCallum, 2018).

Kaganovsky (2008) also defines masculinity and the new Soviet man through literary works in the early period of socialist realism. Through his research, Soviet men were encouraged to never be satisfied in order to continue moving forward towards a bright future, thus losing their bodily mobility. Therefore, this scene was produced as a contradiction to the concept of masculine men based on the reality of men in the Soviet Union.

This scene was also produced to raise the issue of students being expelled from school. The issue of being expelled from school is an issue that often occurs among Soviet teenagers. Between January and August 1990, Leningrad Sociologists surveyed 1,100 dropouts in the cities of Moscow, Leningrad, Sochi, Kostanay, Tiumen, Rostov, and Nizhny Tagil (Ilynsky, 1992). As a result, 70% of teenagers experience loneliness, more than 50% have considered suicide, and about 33% of them think it is better to die than to live.

The audience can also consume this scene as a critique of masculinity because Fiškin's character does not represent the ideal Soviet man figure. Having been expelled from school, he also represents a significant personal risk since he committed an act prohibited by the state. This suggests that being success-oriented was an important element for Soviet men aspiring to a prosperous future. In this context, masculine identity is directly related to a person's ability to be ambitious and success-oriented.

Conclusion

The Soviet government encouraged its people to become an ideal Soviet man who put loyalty and sacrifice for the country in order to encourage communism. This is also shown in other Soviet literature. However, it is different from the film *Moj Papa Baryšnikov*. The filmmakers show freedom in producing Fiškin's character, who is contrary to the concept of Soviet masculine men, because the film was released in the post-Soviet era. Therefore, government control over literary works is no longer valid.

This film opposes the concept of an ideal man according to Chafetz and the reality in the Soviet Union. Fiškin's character is constructed as a non-masculine man based on Chafetz's concept of masculinity (1978), which includes physical, functional, sexual, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal, and personal characteristics. Through the seven scenes that have been analyzed, Fiškin's character is a young Soviet man who is physically weak, unable to make money, not sexually aggressive, unable to control emotions towards younger people as a form of his inferiority, not rational and logical, not dominant, and not success-oriented. Fiškin's character is produced as a contradiction to the concept of an ideal

Soviet man. *Moj Papa Baryšnikov* can be consumed as a critique of Soviet masculinity because the character of Fiškin is the antithesis of the ideal Soviet man.

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