

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE URBAN CINEMA ENVIRONMENT AS A SEARCH FOR IDENTITY

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: The purpose of the present article is to study, generalize and determine the main tendencies in the spatial organization of the urban cinema environment of Kazakhstani cities within post-Soviet cinematographic materials in the context of searching for an identity notion and a general “urban myth” concept.

Methodology: The objects of the study include films of post-restructuring cinema production and the image of a big city depicted in them, different from the stereotype prevailing in Soviet cinema, which was analyzed in the paradigm of creating a cinema environment in Kazakhstani films during the period of independence. For the careful examination of cinematographic artistic means, the study used hermeneutical, functional and comparative methods.

Main findings: The results showed that the article dealt with the environment-forming and image-forming role of cinema in architecture, as well as with the interaction factors of arts in artistic culture and the spatial organization of the urban environment. The development trends of cinema were considered as potential new vectors of the compositional components of the environment.

Applications of this study: The study may be used for presenting a careful review of the current state of the problem of the spatial organization of the urban cinema environment as a search for identity in Kazakhstani post-Soviet cinematography, as well as for further investigations in similar directions. The article might be useful for students of art faculties of colleges and universities, specialists in cinematography and all those interested in the study area.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The study of the urban cinema environment was firstly conducted using the paradigm of the identity search. Multiple methods were used in order to present a deep and thorough analysis of the spatial organization of the city environment in Kazakhstani post-Soviet films. The problem of urban environment creation has been analyzed using the mentioned criteria in synchronic and diachronic dimensions for the first time.

Keywords: *spatial organization, urban environment, cinema environment, national identity, artistic culture, urban myth concept.*

INTRODUCTION

The urban environment of large cities repeatedly reflected in the literature develops into a concept, which is conventionally denoted as an “urban myth”. The urban myth is based on the existing reflections of the urban environment, such as texts, images, and oral communications, in which the city appears as a special kind of artificial landscape, possessing a number of specific and unique characteristics. The phenomenon of the emergence and existence of the “urban myth” is an important component of urban culture. This is a special reflection of the city’s “soul” and verbalization of spatial sensations reflected in the subconscious that are present in its artistic descriptions. The artistic description in this context serves as a tool for verbal modeling of the city’s spatial environment. Dynamic changes in the urban environment are reflected in fiction and cinema in the form of spatial impressions.

In the post-restructuring cinema, the image of a big city, different from the stereotype prevailing in Soviet cinema, was a leading spatial image. Dissatisfaction with the nature of the existing organization of the urban environment led to a change in the view of architecture: in Kazakhstan’s cinema of the late 1980s and early 2000s, an illusion of a different urban texture was created, diverse from the existing one.

All successful approaches to creating the image of Alma-Ata in the cinema of the Soviet period were undertaken by the Kazakhstani cinema in such films as “Our Dear Doctor” (1954) and “Angel in a Skullcap” (1968), shot by Shaken Aimanov during the so-called Thaw period.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The spatial organization of Kazakhstan’s urban environment was considered in the works of A. Sabitov (2007). However, the author took a generalized point of view, and in spite of giving a thorough idea about the concept and the meaning of spatial organization in cities, he paid little attention to the identity notion and overlooked the peculiarities of reflection of spatial urban organization in cinematography. M. Bonnes et al. (1990) also examined the city as a multi-place system. M. Bennett and D. Teague (1999) focused on the nature of cities, especially the idea of ecocriticism and the urban environment. According to them, cities are often thought to be separate from nature, but recent trends in ecocriticism

demand that we consider them as part of the total environment. They sharpen the focus on the nature of cities by exploring the facets of urban ecocriticism, by reminding city dwellers of their place in ecosystems, and by emphasizing the importance of this connection in understanding urban life and culture. Their essays seek to reconceive nature and its cultural representations in ways that contribute to understanding the contemporary cityscape, explore the theoretical issues that arise when one attempts to adopt and adapt an environmental perspective for analyzing urban life (Bennett & Teague, 1999). In G. Abikeeva's (2015) work, three modern trends in the Kazakhstani cinema were explored. D. Clarke states that Cinematic City offers an innovative and thought-provoking insight into cityscape and screenscape and their inter-connection. Illustrated throughout with movie stills, a diverse selection of films (from 'Bladerunner' to 'Little Caesar'), genres, cities and historical periods are examined by leading names in the field. The key dimensions of film and urban theory are introduced before a detailed analysis of the various cinematic forms which relate most significantly to the city (Clarke, 2005). M. Shiel and T. Fitzmaurice bring together the literature of urban sociology and film studies to explore new analytical and theoretical approaches to the relationship between cinema and the city and to show how these affect the realities of life in urban societies (Shiel, 2008; Shiel & Fitzmaurice, 2011). S. Dickey proposes the study about the Indian cinema and states that it is concerned particularly with cinema-goers in Madurai, a city in Tamil Nadu, South India. The author reviews the history of Tamil film, explains the structure of the industry, and presents the perspective of the filmmakers. The rich ethnography of his study is related to the notion of national identity, and the investigation makes an original contribution to the study of film and the understanding of the city image (Dickey, 1993).

Ju. Pallasmaa focuses on cinematic architecture, the architecture of imagery expressed in films. In the author's point of view, the mental task of buildings and cities is to structure our being-in-the-world and to articulate the surface between the experiencing self and the world; while cinematic architecture focuses the ways cinema constructs spaces in the mind, creates mind-spaces, reflecting thus the inherent ephemeral architecture of human mind, thought and emotion (Pallasmaa, 2008).

K. Chu discusses the social, philosophical and aesthetic significance of modern ruins. The researcher conceptualizes ruin aesthetics with examples taken from a selection of contemporary Chinese photographic artworks and films, focuses on examining changing aesthetics in modern Chinese art and cinema and suggests a shift in the way Chinese people perceive the world and the relationship between human beings and the environment (Chu, 2012).

The current article deals with the environment-forming and image-forming role of cinema in architecture and states that cinema trends are potential new vectors of the compositional components of the urban environment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To prepare the study and analyze the obtained results, the following methods were used:

- Historical-genetic (the study of the artistic genesis of the Kazakhstani urban image), hermeneutic (study of the semantic models of the urban environment);
- Structural-functional (analysis of the relationship and interdependence of the structural elements of the urban image composition);
- Comparative-historical (the study of the interaction of the Soviet and post-Soviet cinematographic works in the context of the spatial urban organization);
- Mythological (analysis of archetypal images and situations in the "urban myth");
- Psychological (the study of the features of the films' composition concerning the urban image, which are programmed to the appropriate psychological reaction of the viewer and have a distinct influence);
- Functionally aesthetic (understanding the nature and functions of art means in the spatial urban organization);
- Historical and functional (revealing the place and role of films of the post-Soviet period in Kazakhstan's cinematography stressing the accents of urban environment creation).

RESULTS

In the film "The Needle", directed by Rashid Nugmanov, a number of objects whose environment symbolically reflects the situation before the collapse of the USSR are shown. For the director, the nature of the environment in which a number of key episodes took place was extremely important. So far, a good example is a large episode in an abandoned part of the Alma-Ata Zoo, in which the characters are set in old, closed, but unlocked cages. This is a metaphor for the need to open up new internal reserves of freedom in oneself and in society.

An important scene takes place in the character's apartment. It shows the panorama of a closed room, isolated from the outer world, interpreted as a metaphor of the "intellectual space" of a Soviet person with a set of sign things and objects present therein: screens, shaded lamps, sculptures and sculptural fragments on the floor as fragments of aged rumors, superstitions, opinions and "immutable" truths that fueled the inner world of a Soviet person in the street.

The third significant episode takes place on the bank of the dried Aral Sea and is a grandiose metaphor of the dying social order.

It is clear that without having the most objective criteria, the cinema of Kazakhstan, like any art, is difficult to prepare from the point of evolutionary periods, but some systematic and consistent development is still visible. The work of the “Kazakh new wave”, with all the experiments of such directors as Rashid Nugmanov, Darezhan Omirbaev, Serik Aprimov, Ardak Amirkulov, and others, consciously or unconsciously (which in this case does not matter) has focused on cinema as a matter.

The next decade with a new generation of directors (Akan Sataev, Yerlan Nurmukhambetov, Anuar Raybaev, Rustem Abdrashov and others) with the persistence of teenage solipsism successfully rejected the old forms and erected the understanding of not only the cinema language, but also the film production process in general, which could not help but become a “double-edged sword”. On the one hand, the technical elements of production came to a higher level; on the other hand, the issue of financing became the cornerstone and, consequently, profitability, which inevitably led to the essentially scholastic process of commercializing national cinema as art. It was believed that quantity would grow into quality.

The prevailing vicious circle in the conditions of the weak development of the industry led to the segregation of cinematographers into groups of access to production resources. Such collapses are typical and similar in their evolutionary sequence of causal relationships with many cinematographs of the world. In that way, in the 1950s, the “Les Misérables” movement was born in Britain. In 1948 the French director Alexander Astruc released a program article “The Birth of the New Avant-garde: Camera-Pen” (Sabitov, 2007).

It is quite logical that the director Adilkhan Yerzhanov, the main ideologist of the “partisan” cinema movement, chose this form of protest. The official appeal of the “partisans” to the people took place in 2014 on the portal “Esquire Kazakhstan” (the material is now removed) and was a full-fledged manifesto signed by young cinematographers, namely Askar Uzabaev, Arslan Akubaev, Zhasulan Poshanov, Alexander Sukharev, Murat Makhan, Talgat Bektursynov and Denis Borisov (Kozbagarova et al., 2018). “How did the “angry young men” appear? – was asked at the very beginning of the manifesto. – In the 1950s, British cinema was in crisis – Hollywood crushed, its own cinema died in the artificial pathos of the historical genre; the directors were shooting about anything but the real life.” The situation was paradoxically reminiscent of Kazakhstan’s “zero years” film process. Large budgets and large profits were placed at the forefront, for which the form was flattened and the content of the paintings was simplified to the limit. In contrast, the “partisan cinema” proclaimed the following main principles: low cost, the need to make films without a weight financing; socialist realism, plots of pictures should only be about the present, only realistic and only social; the new form, implying the rejection of the standard forms of cinema, as a bourgeois manifestation. Only the protest form was accepted, only the riot was in the form and only the new one was possible (Kozbagarova et al., 2018).

It is clear that each principle is designed to actively contrast with the reality that has developed in Kazakhstan’s cinema, but one of the key features of its gradation by the “partisans” is still being adopted. The film critic Gulnara Abikeeva concludes whilst analyzing the trends prevailing in the Kazakhstani cinema: “Our national cinema is divided into three sectors: state, commercial and private. The state mainly fulfills orders for historical films, the commercial sector earns money (these are regional films and private studios that distribute films) and the so-called third sector, which makes movies for film festivals.” (The partisan cinema. Manifesto, 2014)

Many critics rank Yerzhanov’s full-length debut “The Realtor”, which can only be considered partly as a real one, only because the picture was officially filmed at the Kazakh film Studio. However, the meager budget for a similar project of 150 thousand dollars, new techniques in the image and the subsequent attention of the festivals to the picture makes it possible to see it as the forerunner of full-fledged “partisan” films (Abikeeva, 2015).

The picture of a disaster-realtor, who, by chance, falls into the medieval steppe, is working with a fairly standard plot, but with an emphasis on searches in the field of film language. In the film “Bakhytzhama” (2007) the very “protest” concerns the image of the film as a whole: an unfocused picture, subjective shooting from the hand, camera movement, dividing into short scenes, a quick change of mood, an unstable rhythm – speeding up then stretching in rapid, and in the end sinking in the pause (Yerzhanov, 2014).

The same solutions are also found in “The Realtor”: the originality of presentation in this film still supported by technical means, such as montage, camera operation, and sound. These variations are organically developed in the following “pre-manifest” picture of “The Constructors”: shot and produced for an insignificant budget of 10 thousand dollars allocated by the Soros-Kazakhstan Foundation for the production of social short films. The director and producer (author of these lines) found the budget enough to make the full-length work, significantly different in its artistic realization from “The Realtor”. Acute social emphasis along with the original artistic solution allowed Yerzhanov to lay the foundations of the artistic principles that can be seen in the works of the “partisans” today.

Let us analyze them in detail. First, a completely simple plot, refined from unnecessary peripeteia and characters, was put at the forefront. The ancient category of “doom” was outlined, which will inevitably lead the characters and the plot to the

intended finale. Secondly, the form became even more protests. This was expressed in bringing the acting to the level of elementary functionality. The style of the acting became anti-speculative, which allows the viewer to conceptualize what is happening. It was a kind of a nod to the Kazakh “new wave” and its autistic characters. Thirdly, “The Constructors” gave rise to the absurd as the category of movement most palpable in the films. The fight against the inevitable, windmills and Don Quixote, – all these hyperlinks perfectly emphasized the social tone that was given by the film – nothing will change in this society.

However, the public resonance and bright polarization of the audience to supporters and opponents did not make the partisans the “angry young men” to the full extent. In addition, the point here is not so much in the difference of approaches, but in the difference of sociocultural contexts. No matter how strongly the British cinematographers of the 50s cultivate the author; in Kazakhstan’s “tenth” it is difficult to imagine the main character without the classic Sancho Panza, which quite organically layered on “Eastern collectivism”, as opposed to “European individualism”. The author as a figure in the “partisan cinema” was certainly present in the most vivid manifestations; however, the “mighty crowd” was nevertheless necessary for the realization of everything that had been conceived.

At the same time, unlike their masterminds, the “partisans” still do not strive for permanent noise around them and periodically go underground, like during shooting periods, which fully corresponds to the name of the movement as such. Shocking the public, as suggested by the participants of the movement, is only reasonable by the specific results of the work.

That is why the festival resonance of “The Constructors” (the Go East International Film Festival in Wiesbaden, Edinburgh International Film Festival, and Philippines International Film Festival) became an excellent platform for performing with a manifesto. “I perceive only one way of PR – the festival,” says Adilkhan Yerzhanov, thereby determining the future path of the movement (Smailova, 2013).

Thus, at the very moment when the Kazakhstani cinema finally signed up for its mercantile spirit and defined for itself mass distribution as a fundamental goal, an alternative view of the situation and alternative methods of production and promotion emerged.

“We have no cinema outside subsidies,” Adilkhan Yerzhanov said in an interview with “Session” magazine after the participation of the new film “The Owners” in the International Film Festival “Edge of the World”. “There’s enough money here, but the state order imposes a certain imprint on the entire domestic industry. The cinema glorifies traditional values, afraid to express an opinion, runs into the past, so as not to be convicted of sedition, and avoids any contemporary topic. The cinema has become frankly useless: the viewer does not particularly like it, and there is no sense in culture from such a movie” (Amandykova et al., 2018).

The film “The Owners” became the most complete answer of the “partisan cinema” to its bourgeois cinema-countryman. To the already existing three postulates, he added quite meaningful symbolism and proclaimed the primacy of the author’s core philosophy over the whole plan. This was the philosophy of the absurd, which was supplemented by a humanistic gesture of empathy of the author to all his characters, which quite adequately combined with the traditional Kazakhstani hospitality even towards the enemy.

The film had a tremendous resonance, thanks to its successful festival fate. The famous American film critic Jonathan Rosenbaum even noted it among the best films of 2014 (Amandykova et al., 2018, Shilderkhanov et al., 2018). Moreover, the film was included in the list of the hundred best Asian films, according to a panel of critics selected by the Busan Film Festival. “Three city siblings arrive in the county to claim the ramshackle hut they’ve inherited from their deceased mother and the tragicomic misadventures and forms of corruption that they encounter oscillate between grim realism, absurdist genre parody, and dream-like surrealism, culminating in a doom-ridden yet festive dance in which both victims and victimizers participate,” Rosenbaum states in the article. “Yerzhanov’s use of genre staples actually expands his expressive and emotional palette without foreshortening our sense of the people involved” (Kabylov et al., 2017).

At the same time, at homeland, the work caused an ambiguous reaction and once again split the public opinion into two diametrically opposite sides: those who understand and accept and those who do not understand and reject. The wide discussion that unfolded in the media and the Internet did not affect the plans of the “partisan movement”, but attracted attention to it. At some point, the movement even turns into a trend, which in no way facilitates the fulfillment of the tasks assigned to it, but creates a resonance for the formation of wider audience interest.

However, cinematographers also show their interest in the movement. In 2015, the director Zhasulan Poshanov shot a film by Yerzhanov’s script – “The Barrier”. The picture is recognized as a “sign” for the Kazakhstani cinema. “First of all,” the critic Karim Kadyrbaev states, “this is a sample of high-quality cinema at a minimal cost. Secondly, it is the emergence of the social cinema genre beyond the limits of deliberate posterity and moralism. And thirdly, this is an example of a new Kazakh drama without a touch of serial melodrama”.

Reasonable doubts in these conclusions are caused by the epithet “high-quality,” because the train of the experiment stretches throughout the film, which is cut tight, but with stitches out. Known for his light works like “The Windy Girl,” Poshanov clearly set foot on the uncharted territory, and this path simply could not be perfect. The director sought to create

a compromise between the “partisan” and spectator films, and for the first there is an acute social story about inequality, and for the second – a very intelligible, almost “chewed” presentation with quite familiar images, camera work, and acting, for which the picture was even awarded the prize at the MIFF. As the critic Smailov rightly notes, “...the film fractionizes into two parts, and unlike drama, they do not connect but are rather perceived at the level of a clear separation like “good and bad”, with varying success – something is done well, something is done bad....”

In terms of flirting with the viewer, Poshanov also resorts to optional additions to the main plot and leads the lines of the two antipodes strictly parallel to the very end, apparently fearing that the viewer will simply not understand a little more ornate design. Absolutely mainstream participants joined the shooting of the picture and the movement at this stage: operator Azamat Dulatov (“Kelinka Sabina”, “Ghost Hunt”, “Adel”), actor Yerkebulan Dayyrov (“Tagdyr”, “Bauyrzhan Momyshuly”), successful director and producer Askar Uzabaev (“Cocktail for the Star”, “Glamor for the Fools”, “The Way of the Boxer”). This (opposed to some extent to the idea of the “partisans”) provided the film with limited distribution and demonstrated the investment and reputational attractiveness of projects of this kind of collaborations. This simply did not affect the increase in the credibility of the creativity of the participants in the movement on the part of the audience and potential partners. New films of the “partisans” come out one by one. In 2016, the pictures of “The Bailiff” by Murat Makhani and “The Witness of Case No. 6”, shot by the author of these lines, came out.

“The Witness of Case No. 6” was conceived as an adept of the literature absurd. It was important not to make significant overtures to the viewer, but at the same time not to imitate Yerzhanov, saturating the work with hyperlinks, allegories and shifting the emphasis on the figurative series. Stylistically, the case of “The Constructors” or “The Plague in Karatas” which was already completed at that time, continued only in work with light and shade.

Almost all of the film’s action takes place at night, hinting at the hopelessness of the situations described. In the story, a young man who literally works for his uncle for food becomes a witness to a fatal accident and, despite all the requests of a relative, goes to the police to testify.

This moment becomes the key to the process of bastardization of what is happening. It was important to preserve the recognition of these almost stereotypical situations as much as possible, to give the viewer the opportunity to learn their absolute majority and thereby make him feel the movie. In the tradition of Lewis Carroll, the main character is the guest of the rabbit hole. He is a normal person, with principles and a clear understanding of “what is good and what is bad”. This makes him abnormal in the eyes of others, who, unlike him, are well aware of how to falsify testimony, negotiate and “kickback”. According to the plan, each character surrounding him, starting from his uncle to the investigator, assures him that this is completely normal, familiar, and, most importantly, devoid of negative consequences. Moreover, while an honest person interprets what is happening around, other participants are actively trading? The fact that in the course of the movie a positive character more and more fades into the background should have caused the feeling of complete fictitiousness and the illusory nature of justice, of which he initially thought.

In order to avoid any evaluative judgments, we refer to the article “Films from the Underground” by the director and film critic Yevgeny Lumpov.

The author points out that “the search for justice, in general, is usual for the “partisans”. In the films of Adilkhan Yerzhanov, the truth flashed in the form of that hackneyed truth like in “everyone has his own truth”. In “The Barrier,” Poshanov openly died in the grip of social inequality, while Abishev rightly holds what the majority suits. This is the world order in “The Witness of Case No. 6” and this effect is enhanced by a familiar to the pain of what is happening with subtle irony, which favorably emphasizes individual features and textures of the absurd.

However, humor is generated in the film by the obviousness and predictability of illegality, a kind of passive audience approval for what is about to happen. This is the subtlety of directing and the depth of the script: you know that the police officer will take a bribe offered by the criminal's lawyer, but you are impressed with how this happens. And it happens every day, routinely, sleepily, as if all the characters are naughty children, and the director is an educator who can only shrug his hands and ironically say: “Well, there you go”.

The irony of the attitude to what was happening here was a significant element of the narration that was previously alien to the “partisans”. It is designed, on the one hand, to bring the viewer closer to the picture, so that he can comprehend what he has seen, and on the other hand, turn him away from the unpleasant truth that is being shown on the screen. It was important not to fall into hyperrealism, but to give realism exactly the way everyone observes it.

However, criticism is seen as the other side of the coin. “Having saturated the narrative with unobtrusive deep thinking, the director, in many respects remaining true to his previous works, made it possible for the film to approach the viewer at the level of elementary perception. Hence, the ease of narration and the scene after the credits are the recognizable types. They are familiar, but at the same time, they are not devoid of the color of their native latitudes and, remarkably, they were acted without any conventionality: harmoniously and precisely. The only thing for which it would be possible to chide the creators is the lack of clear motivation for some characters. Perhaps this is part of the convention, which, despite all the specifics, is present in the film”.

From this point of view, “The Witness of Case No. 6” looks like a completely logical successor of the “partisan” traditions laid down by Yerzhanov and transformed by Poshanov in “The Barrier”. Murat Makhan set himself similar goals in “The Bailiff”, which was also shot according to the script of Adil Khan Yerzhanov. However, in this film there are still more errors in the directional aspect: the performance completely loses its brightness on the scale of a feature film. The story of a bailiff who evicts a girl having the “most ancient profession” with a teenage daughter from home would have obviously looked stronger if it had been half-shorter. Protracted and at some point unintelligent episodes do not introduce innovation and protest into the form, but only exaggerate the significance of those moments on which the director stressed. Most likely, there was an attempt to encourage the viewer to dialogue and give the opportunity to think about what is happening, but in reality, it looks like an attempt to camouflage the plot weakened by its full length.

Analysis

Analyzing this film, Ye. Lumpov concludes: “Trying to mix the familiar with the unusual and the understandable with the incomprehensible sometimes looks too pretentious, and if in Abishev’s film every thought was a link in the chain of reasoning, then Makhan’s thought is something like the fragments of Lego: you can connect them, but you cannot understand. Of course, there are working approaches (for example, the eternal desire of the main character to put on his slippers firmly), but there are very few of them and that is why they look helpless. We understand that there is a character and that somewhere in the depths of the untold his past exists, with all the ensuing consequences, but we do not understand the character. He seemed to have migrated here from the 90s, from the films of Omirbaev, trying to immerse us in that timelessness and purposelessness. Some episodes seem to be trying to reveal him as a person, but they either cannot cope with that or the character is too faded as a person, so that he doesn’t attract interest. There is no life and no struggle in him. Another thing is a single-mother with the “most ancient profession”. She partly makes the film dynamic, but her efforts are leveled somehow by themselves. The eternal struggle for housing in the film is so weak and faceless. The character is connected with the second director’s mistake: a narrative one. Everything that could be shown is told. It is not expressive at all”.

Probably the cause of the director’s blunders, in this case, is the imitation, which is classical for any beginning. Makhan diligently copies many elements, wishing to create a new one, but at the same time forgets about the necessary individuality. However, even with these miscalculations, the picture fits into the framework of the “partisan” cinema: it raises pressing questions and tries to push the viewer to search for answers. In addition, each new shoot for members of the movement is a field for experiments, which do not have a negative effect.

In films like “The Witness of Case No. 6” and “The Bailiff”, the team of the movement continued to work on the techniques and methods of producing and organizing the shooting process; new expressive means were sought to minimize production costs; audiences and festival markets were tested, which are of fundamental importance for subsequent distribution. Even the main ideologue of the movement keeps up. With funds allocated by the Soros-Kazakhstan Foundation (\$6,000), Adil Khan Yerzhanov made a film “The Plague in Karatas”. Stylistically, it continues the search of the author that began in the “The Owners”, however, in an effort to develop and expand the lexicon of the film language, Yerzhanov naturally integrates new elements into the film that have never been used. Thus, one can find references to Dante in “The Plague in Karatas”, quite pertinent musical accompaniments, scrupulous work on the construction of set-ups, intertemporal context and even violence that has never been supported by the director.

The story of a young akim, sent to the village, soaked through with the plague of destructive bone traditions, is told at the turn of two planes: an absolutely familiar reality and some fabulous metaphysically. In favor of the first one, we have patterned situations, familiar to everyone and quite specific attributes of our era, like the “exhibition center”. The second plane is represented by an amazing but quite tangible from the current standpoint combination of epochs and formations: feudalism, capitalism, and socialism coexist harmoniously here as in the attributes of life, and in the worldview of the inhabitants of the village. “Perhaps there is nothing bad in the traditions themselves until they cease to be safe for society,” the director said in an interview. “The paradox is that, to our horror, our society is probably based on the thing destroying the other society. For example, there are some species that survive only at the expense of parasites, and their existence is limited to theirs. The homeostasis of our society is so tied to corruption and cronyism that without them we will have a different culture – which one is unknown, but it’s absolutely certain that the old one will no longer exist.”

Such a grotesque form makes it possible to describe the film as a detailed caricature, in which the reality does not veil, but, on the contrary, in every possible way protrudes from each of its attractive and repulsive sides.

The film provoked many hotbeds of controversy, sometimes far from the cinema itself, but this is precisely the main merit of the “partisan cinema”. Appearing as a manifesto, signed by a handful of people, the movement has managed to loudly declare itself in the country and abroad within a few years, and to attract many representatives of quite a traditional fairway into its ranks. Today, many directors, critics, professional and non-professional actors are actively involved in creating films of the “partisans”. The constant festival successes of the “partisans” and the system of low-budget and even budgetless production that they are improving are beginning to attract both cinematographers of the past waves and filmmakers of today. Therefore, the director Darezhan Omirbaev is actively supporting the movement today, and last year Nariman Turebaev officially shot the film “Dirt of the Big City” as part of the movement. The film of Adil Khan Yerzhanov “The

Sunrise” was supported by the film studio “Kazakh film”, and the film “Shooting in the 11th Neighborhood” was produced by Akan Sataev’s Foundation “Astana Film Fund”.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, the “partisan cinema” movement is still extremely dependent on the figure of its flagship in the face of Adilkhan Yerzhanov. However, the more balanced the process of producing and distributing paintings will become (based on minimal funding, the creators' enthusiasm and good work in promoting paintings to festivals), the more active the participants will involve more and more new staff that can bring hitherto untested elements to the cinema.

Nevertheless, the comparatively small number and the low productivity of the movement do not yet allow speaking of it as an established alternative system for the functioning of national cinematography. Not only the efforts of the “partisans” are necessary, but also fundamental changes in the existing capitalized form of the national cinema, ready to give the viewer at the mercy of Hollywood its own mass product, sometimes of dubious quality.

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