

## **ANNOTATION**

**to the text of the Ph.D. thesis of Serik Abishev "Independent Film" as an alternative trend in modern Kazakh fiction film (1988-2019)", presented on thesis for a doctor's degree in the specialty 6D040600 – Directing**

### **The relevance of research**

"Independent Film" is a movement that received its name and definition in the cinematography of the United States, gained popularity in other countries and has reinforced the development and formation of original national schools of cinematography (the cinema of Poland, the cinema of Czechoslovakia, the cinema of Hungary, the cinema of Japan, China, etc.). The evolution of independent filmmaking, starting from the birth of the American studio system as a counterbalance to the commercial product, finally became a landmark example of an alternative trend using new media and film language methods.

The specifics character of the development of Kazakh fiction cinematography points to the fact that the process of developing an independent film movement nowadays already has its own history, distinctive features and influences the change in attitude towards film production, film language, and author's ways of displaying reality. Moreover, the independent cinema of Kazakhstan plays the same role as in other countries in the development of the national cinematic style, recognizable into the world cinematography.

The processes in the Kazakh cinema of recent years are film festivals, round tables, forums, film clubs, conferences clearly demonstrate that directors have quick senses necessary to renew both in matters of producing and in the graphic and substantive form of the film.

The significance of this research lies in the fact that within the framework of it, for the first time, a wide-ranging analysis of independent Kazakh cinema is carried out in a research (analysis of trends and films), as well as in a practical way is based on the author's own experience as a producer, director and co-author of the "Partisan Movement » independent filmmakers.

Whence, the relevance of the research lies in the urgent need to study the phenomenon of low-budget independent cinema in Kazakhstan as a phenomenon that has reached serious qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Over the past decades of independence, the film industry of Kazakhstan has managed to form a trend that is viable both in terms of creative search and in terms of autonomous existence in isolation from the dominant film production fairway. The independent cinema of the modern period was formed largely due to the first private (cooperative) studios of the late 1980s and early 1990s, and this relationship is obvious today, but requires more detailed scientific emphasis.

The successes of modern independent cinematography, as well as its problems, originate in the above period, which requires close attention to the cause-and-effect relationship in order to avoid a repetition of the formation of negative trends for the direction.

The independent cinematography of Kazakhstan is developing today in a fairly strong correlation with both the deeply national and the global cultural and cinematic context, which makes it fundamentally important to analyse it from the standpoint of historical and artistic values.

Developing its production and distribution tools, the independent cinema of Kazakhstan today not only coexists, but also periodically enters into collaboration with the structures of official film production, which leads to the emergence of a specific film product that needs careful analysis for artistic value and profitability.

Modern independent cinema in Kazakhstan is successfully developing in three (oftentimes conflicting) directions: mass audience, purely social and authorial, which requires a detailed study of the key characteristics and trends of each of them in order to fully understand the process as a whole.

The independent cinema of Kazakhstan has managed to create the ground for the emergence of a fundamentally new cinematic phenomenon for our country, which has absorbed a colossal amount of production experience and artistic traditions of both domestic and world film schools - "Partisan Cinema", which has not yet received rigorous research analysis and full scholarly understanding.

**Main focus of research** is the independent cinematography of Kazakhstan, its production and artistic forms.

**The research subject** is films made by independent film studios in the period from 1988 to 2019, the art work of independent film directors, facts and phenomena of the modern domestic film process that contribute to or opposing the development of independent cinema in Kazakhstan.

**The research purpose** is to determine the specifics and significance of the independent movement in Kazakh fiction films, to identify alternative trends in Kazakh cinema.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve the following **tasks**:

- To reveal the concept of independent cinematography by way of example of the movement "Independent film" and "Indie-cinema" in American cinema.

- To identify and structure the characteristic features of the national "new waves" in world cinematography, as well as analyse the creation of the author's directorial style as a defining feature of independent cinema.

- To reveal the role of independent studios in the formation of key mechanisms for the functioning of the film industry and explore the features of Kazakhstani film production in the early 90s of the last century, revealing the role of independent studios.

- To use the method of comparative studies to determine the significance of the creativity of the Kazakh new wave in the domestic independent film movement as a phenomenon.

- To analyse and systematize the role of copyright and commercial fiction films in the formation of a new film language and film identity in modern Kazakh cinema.

- To identify and incorporate the main directions and trends of partisan cinema and their influence on the domestic film culture.

**Degree of the research of the theme**



Since its inception, independent cinema has been the object of many-sided study by both film critics and critics, as well as representatives of the film industry. The many-sidedness and unpredictability of independent film developments provides a wide choice of research themes for professionals, and its significant national and country specificity allows us to use a wide range of research methods. The theoretical basis this research paper were the studies of film language theorists, the works in which the following authors conducted research on independent film production in world cinematography: O. Aronson, R. Bart, V. Vinogradov, Zh. Delez, Zh. Derrida, M. Kagan, O. Krivtsun, Zh.-F. Liotar, Y. Lotman, K. Razlogov, M. Fuko, A. Khrenov, V. Shestakov, M. Yampolsky. In domestic film research is based on works on the history of Kazakh cinema by such authors as B.R. Nogerbek, G. Abikeeva, I. Smailov, as well as on the analytical works of film critics O. Boretsky, O. Malysheva, K. Kadyrbaev, G. Baizhanova, D. Mostovoy, A. Porshneva, E. Lumpov and others.

In the dissertations and monographs of B.R. Nogerbek, G. Abikeeva, N. Mukusheva, I. Smailova, M. Ergebekova, G. Kobek, B. B. Nogerbek, A. Aidar, A. Khakimov and others. independence and three key stages that preceded the current stage of development are derived: a new wave, post-waves and generation of independence. The independent cinema of Kazakhstan is also considered by M. Smagulov, A. Levskoy, R. Nugmanov and others.

### **Research methodological framework**

The methodological basis of the research is a systematic approach used in the works of J. Stokes, R. Vitalis, A. Gramscy, G. Rose, B.R. Nogerbek, G. Abikeeva and I. Smailova using the following methods:

- archival analysis, including access to original documents and using them as a basis for research;
- visual methodologies on the use of social media platforms, digital methods and contemporary dissemination, and research image audiences.
- analysis of the development of the production of an independent movement of filmmakers in Kazakh fiction films;
- historical and film studies analysis of the world and Kazakh film process, exploring the main stages of the formation of an independent movement in the world cinematography and in Kazakh cinema;
- the method of comparative studies, which covers the direction of the Kazakh new wave, the author's cinema of the 2000s and the partisan film movement;
- a problematic approach that considers the issue of finding new forms of film production and stimulating low-budget cinema;
- the method of interviewing acting filmmakers to reveal the author's vision of works and identify the features of the subjective perception of the director's style;
- a practical experiment in the field of independent low-budget filmmaking to identify “Partisan Cinema” as an alternative trend.

**Scientific novelty of the research**, considering its relevance, firstly is expressed, in the first comprehensive attempt in the domestic art history science to subject to a comprehensive analysis of trends, phenomena, films, the specifics of artistic creativity, the director's style of the authors of the independent cinema of Kazakhstan. The



scientific novelty of the paper can be disclosed by formulating the following research results:

1) The origins and prerequisites for the emergence of independent cinematography are extensively studied and analysed by way of example of the formation of Indie cinema and the specifics of its formation.

2) The features of the development of film language in the formation of the author's directorial style as a defining feature of independent cinema were identified by the author of the thesis paper, using the example of "new waves" in world cinematography.

3) The multifaceted activities of the first independent film studios in Kazakhstan have been comprehensively analysed, the processes of their production activity and artistic results, as well as positive and negative trends that have formed during the activities of the first independent studios, have been studied.

4) The fact of the correlation between the chronological framework of the existence of the independent cinema of Kazakhstan and its involvement in the world and national artistic context of the development of cinema has been established by way of example of the "Kazakh new wave" as a phenomenon of the independent cinema of Kazakhstan.

5) As a result of the analysis of the modern independent fiction film of Kazakhstan, by way of example of films, the author revealed the generation of a new film language and film identity. Their basic principles, the most successful artistic techniques and key representatives are established.

6) On the basis of the experimental method, for the first time in the history of Russian film studies, the movement of "Partisan Cinema" was studied as a phenomenon and subjected to careful analysis, as an example of the symbiosis of world and domestic film culture, forms of its production and artistic expression.

**The chronological framework of the research paper** covers the period from the birth of independent cinema in the key countries of its formation is from the 60s of the XX century to the present and independent cinema in Kazakhstan in the period from 1988 to 2019.

#### **The main provisions for defence:**

1. The formation of Indie film in American cinema in opposition to the mainstream film production of major studios in the early 60s of the last century gave rise to modern independent cinema in world cinematography, while intellectual, avant-garde, low-budget genre cinema began to develop as an art in search of its own unique film language.

1. The characteristic components of the direction of the French new wave, as well as the originality of the features of the development of other national waves: "wrathful" (Great Britain), new waves of Eastern Europe and Latin America determine the formation of low-budget independent cinema on a global scale. World independent cinema of the 1970s has its own new distinction associated with the development of a social direction. The manifesto of the "Fourth Cinematography" played a big role in this, the essence of which is to bring art closer to the pressing problems of human being.

2. In Kazakh fiction cinematography, the definition of "independent cinema" is directly related to the perestroika period of the late 1980s and the subsequent political

independence of the early 1990s. The specificity of the film industry of this time is associated with the transition of cinema from the public sector to the private sector, producing independent films. The Catharsis film studio played a leading role in the development of the independent film movement.

3. In the history of Kazakh fiction cinematography, the “independent cinema” movement is directly connected with the phenomenon of the “Kazakh new wave”, which, in turn, was represented mainly by films of young directors-graduates of VGIK (Sergey Solovyov’s workshop), films by debutant directors, as well as films middle-generation filmmakers made in private film studios.

4. A new film identity in modern Kazakh fiction films is inherent in commercial and social cinema of independent private film studios, which have formed an alternative landscape of national cinema. The key element of this trend has become topical issues and a clear authorial statement, where the emphasis is on the recognizability of dramatic collisions, the logical, well-thought-out dramatic development of stories and the plausible construction of screen reality without the use of highly artistic techniques or “ornamentalism” of pseudo-author's film.

5. A comprehensive view of the research of the “partisan cinema” movement found that the cause of its emergence was an imbalance between state support for young filmmakers and funding for large custom projects. The theoretical development of the manifesto and the leading role in the activities of “partisan cinema” was played by the film director and screenwriter, the leader of the direction Adil Khan Yerzhanov “Partisan cinema” lasted from 2011 to 2017, in the asset of this movement 8 films that gave impetus to the development of modern independent cinema in Kazakhstan.

#### **Theoretical and practical relevance of the research**

The materials of the thesis paper, scientific conclusions and results can be applied in the development of academic disciplines: “History of Kazakh cinema”, “Modern film process”, “Film production”, etc., as well as the basis for the preparation of a course of lectures, educational and teaching aids on film production of low-budget films, as well as a practical guide for use by domestic filmmakers in filming.

#### **Approbation of the research and implementation of the results**

The main provisions and results of the research paper were presented at international scientific and practical conferences, published in the form of scientific articles in specialized publications, as well as interviews in periodic republican and international publications.

The thesis paper was discussed and recommended for defence at broadened meeting of the department of “Screen Arts Directing” Temirbek Zhurgenov Kazakh National academy of arts (record No. 3/1, October 26, 2022).

**The structure of the research** consists of an introduction, three sections, six subsections, a conclusion, a list of references and an appendix.