



BOYS DON'T CRY: THE IMAGE OF CHILDREN LIKE SOCIAL PROBLEM IN HIROKAZU KORE-EDA'S FILMS

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ANDRONIKA MARTONOVA
(Sofia, Bulgaria)

BOYS DON'T CRY: THE IMAGE OF CHILDREN LIKE SOCIAL PROBLEM IN HIROKAZU KORE-EDA'S FILMS (A CASE STUDY ON NOBODY KNOWS /誰も知らない - 2004; I WISH/奇跡 - 2011, LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON /そして父になる -2013)

Abstract

Without doubt Hirokazu Kore-eda (是枝裕和) is one of the finest and most authentic Japanese directors, who follow the thematic and aesthetic tradition of Yasujiro Ozu in contemporary Japanese cinema. Kore-eda always deals with unusual and original stories, as the focus of his attention often fall on various themes of family: mainly the relationships between parents and children. He observes the images of the family in contemporary Japan – his films in this thematic area are often based on real case history, which has shaken Japanese society. Moreover, the director creates the original scripts, distinguished also by a strong plot, linked to portrayal, dissection, analysis and even criticism of Japanese socium of today. The visual style of Kore-eda blends in elegant way the documentary, realistic vision incorporated in the feature film.

The proposed presentation will focus on three of his films that adequately correspond with the context of the International Symposium on Japanese Studies "Contemporary Japan: Problems and Challenges". These are the "Nobody Knows", "I Wish", "Like Father, Like Son".

The three movies form a kind of informal and peculiar trilogy, centered at the image of a child as a serious social problem. The topics and public life's issues are linked to the trauma, the parents' absence, emptiness, loneliness, alienation, responsibility, communication failures within the family. All of them are refracted through the children personality. The social cases, articulated by the cinematic work of Koreeda, are very different, at the same time serious and somewhat strange, on the border of life's absurdity.

What is happening in contemporary Japanese society in the postmodern, globalized era? What challenges and problems the family is facing? Are they solvable and how they can be overcome? Is there a change in traditional family values? On all these issues Hirokazu Kore-eda seeks answers through his films. He makes his movies in an original and talented way, through work in various genre intonations and exploration of deformity vectors between cruelty and hope.

Keywords: Hirokazu Kore-eda's film; relationships between parents and children; Japanese society; social problem; life's absurdity

ЖІГІТТЕР ЖЫЛАМАЙДЫ: ХИРОКАДЗУ КОРЭЭДА ФИЛЬМДЕРІНДЕГІ ӘЛЕУМЕТТІК МӘСЕЛЕ ТАНЫМАЙДЫ / 誰も知らない - 2004; ҒАЖАЙЫП/ МЕН ТІЛЕЙМІН/ 奇跡 - 2011; ӘКЕГЕ ҚАРАП ҰЛ ӨСЕР/ そして父になる -2013 ФИЛЬМДЕРІН ТАҚЫРЫПТЫҚ ЗЕРТТЕУ)

Абстракт

Корээда Хирокадзу (是枝裕和) заманауи жапон кино өнеріндегі Ясудзиро Одзудың тақырыптық және эстетикалық дәстүрін ұстанатын бірден бір ең үздік және ең шынайы режиссер. Корээда туындылары отбасылық әртүрлі тақырыптарға арналған ерекше және шынайы оқиғаларға құрылады: көбіне ата-аналар мен балалар арасындағы қарым-қатынасқа назар аударады. Ол заманауи Жапонияның отбасы образдарын суреттейді, осы тақырыптағы оның фильмдері жапон қоғамын күйзелткен шынайы оқиғаларға негізделген. Сондай-ақ, режиссер, ерекше сюжетімен, бейнелі байланыспен, зерттеумен, сараптаумен және тіпті заманауи жапон қоғамын сынаумен ерекшеленетін шынайы сценарийлерді дүниеге әкеледі. Корээданың визуальді стилі бұл, деректі фильм мен шынайы көріністі көркем фильмге көрнекті біріктіру әдісі.

Ұсынылып отырған жұмыс, «Заманауи Жапония: мәселелер және шақыру» атты Халықаралық симпозиумының контекстінде оның фильмдерінің үшеуін қарастырады. Олар, «Ешкім танымайды», «Ғажайып/Мен тілеймін», «Әкеге қарап ұл өсер» туындылары.

Бұл үш туынды да қатерлі қоғам мәселесі ретінде сәбидің образына құрылған формальді емес және өзіне тән трилогияны қалыптастырады. Қоғам өміріндегі тақырыптар мен мәселелер, ата-ананың болмауы, шарасыздық, жалғыздық, қағажу көру, жауапкершілік, отбасылық қарым-қатынастағы қателіктерден алған жан жарасымен байланысты. Корээданың кинематографиялық жұмыстарындағы әлеуметтік жағдайлар әртүрлі, сонымен қатар, салмақты және мағынасыз өмір жиегіндегідей аздап әдеттен тыс болып келеді.

Жаһанданудың постмодернистік дәуіріндегі заманауи жапон қоғамында не болып жатыр? Отбасы қандай қиындықтармен бетпе бет келуде? Олардың шешімі бар ма, және де қалай еңсеруге болады? Дәстүрлі отбасылық құндылықтарда өзгерістер бар ма? Хирокадзу Корээда өз туындылары арқылы осындай сұрақтарға жауап іздейді. Ол өзінің фильмдерін әртүрлі бағыттағы жанрларда және қайырымсыздық пен үміт арасындағы айырқыты шынайы және талантты түрде суреттейді.

Трек сөздер: Корээда Хирокадзу фильмі; ата-аналар мен балалар қарым-қатынасы; жапон қоғамы; әлеуметтік мәселе; мағынасыз өмір.

ПАРНИ НЕ ПЛАЧУТ: ОБРАЗ ДЕТЕЙ КАК СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ ПРОБЛЕМА В ФИЛЬМАХ ХИРОКАДЗУ КОРЭЭДА (ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ФИЛЬМОВ «НИКТО НЕ УЗНАЕТ» (誰も知らない), 2004, «ЧУДО/Я ЖЕЛАЮ» (奇跡), 2011, «КАКОВ ОТЕЦ, ТАКОВ И СЫН» (そして父になる), 2013)

Абстракт

Без сомнения, Корээда Хирокадзу (是枝裕和) является одним из самых лучших и самых аутентичных японских режиссеров, которые следуют тематической и эстетической традиции Ясудзиро Одзу в современном японском кино. Корээда всегда имеет дело с необычными и оригинальными историями, так как в центре его внимания часто находятся различные темы семьи: в основном отношения между родителями и детьми. Он рассматривает образы семьи современной Японии – его фильмы в этой тематической области часто основаны на реальной истории, которая потрясла японское общество. Кроме того, режиссер создает оригинальные сценарии, отличающиеся также сильным сюжетом, связанным с изображением, раскрытием, анализом и даже критикой современного японского социума. Визуальный стиль Корээда – это способ элегантного включения документального фильма и реалистического видения в художественный фильм.

Предлагаемая презентация будет сосредоточена на трех из его фильмов, которые соотносятся с контекстом Международного симпозиума «Современная Япония: проблемы и вызовы». Это фильмы: «Никто не узнает», «Чудо/Я желаю», «Каков отец, таков и сын».

Эти три фильма образуют своего рода неформальную и своеобразную трилогию, сосредоточенную на образе ребенка в качестве серьезной социальной проблемы. В них раскрываются темы и вопросы общественной жизни, связанные с травмой, отсутствием родителей, пустотой, одиночеством, отчуждением, ответственностью, ошибками взаимосвязей в семье. Все они преломляются через личность детей. Социальные случаи, озвученные кинематографическими работами Корээда, очень

разные, в то же время серьезные и несколько странные, на грани абсурда жизни.

Что происходит в современном японском обществе в постмодернистскую эпоху глобализации? С какими трудностями и проблемами сталкивается семья? Являются ли они разрешимыми, и как их можно преодолеть? Есть ли изменения в традиционных семейных ценностях? На все эти вопросы Хирокадзу Корээда ищет ответы через свои фильмы. Он делает их оригинально и талантливо, в различных жанровых интонациях и в развилке векторов между жестокостью и надеждой.

Ключевые слова: фильм Корээда Хирокадзу, отношения между родителями и детьми, японское общество, социальная проблема, абсурд жизни.

This report focuses on the image of the child, as seen through the prism of particular films from the works of the director Hirokazu Kore-eda. The analysis of his works is linked to the methods of expression in screen language: mainly realism in the style of expression and a documentary, witness observation, devoid of idealistic and melodramatic pathos. *Nobody Knows/I Wish/Like Father, Like Son /そして父になる* are a response to the changing society in modern Japan. The questions that the films ask are: *What is happening in the contemporary Japanese society in the postmodern, globalizing era? What challenges and problems are families facing? Are they solvable and how can they be overcome? Is there a change in traditional family values?*

Is Hirokazu Kore-eda an acutely social author? The answer is both yes and no. That's because the social discourse in his works is not didactic and dominant, but hidden in the deeper layers of his messages – the same place where one can find hidden the discreet warmth of his works. The author's position, reflected in an interview with Mark Schilling, is interesting: *„I don't like films that have a social message, either fictional films or documentaries.- says Kore-eda. It's all right if film reflects something the maker has thought about and agonized about. But a message film doesn't come from that sort of place. The filmmaker thinks he has the answer. But the world doesn't work that way.”*¹

“Nobody Knows”, “I Wish”, “Like Father, Like Son” - these three titles from Hirokazu Kore-eda's filmography have been articulated separately so far in academic film studies, and never in terms of their interconnectivity. Actually, this topic is extremely rich and generous. I will be brief and I will summarize today, without claiming to be exhaustive, but with the desire to sketch with bright touches the volumetric forms of the study.

The three film works have different emotional colors, messages and circles of problems. However, the subtopics of responsibility, socialization, anxiety, loneliness, death, marginalization, alienation, trauma, social exclusion, the absence of a parent, loss, emptiness, and betrayal, are set in the heart of the conflicts. But there are also the hope and the faith in a miracle that something better will happen. The social issues in three films are extremely unusual, serious and somewhat strange. They seem to gravitate around the border of life absurdity. Children themselves, as the objects of the particular research triptych, are in the categorical hypostases of *the Abandoned, the Separated and the Replaced Child*.

All the plots in short:

„Nobody Knows”: The abandoned Akira and his brothers and sisters must survive alone in a tiny apartment in Tokyo. The children all have different fathers and have never been to school. The very existence of three of them has been hidden from the landlord. One day, the mother leaves behind a little money and a note, charging

¹ Schilling, Mark. (2010). Kore-eda Hirokazu: Interview. — *Film Criticism*, Volume 35, Issue 2/3, Winter/Spring, p.11

her oldest boy to look after the others. And so begins the children's odyssey, a journey nobody knows. The the four children do their best to survive in their own little world, devising and following their own set of rules. The film is based on a true story known as the "Affair of the Four Abandoned Children of Nishi-Sugamo", a story that shook and scandalized the Japanese society in the 1980s. In fact, this is the most brutal, dramatic and serious film of the three.

„*I Wish*“: Twelve-year-old Koichi lives with his mother and retired grandparents in Kagoshima. His younger brother Ryunosuke lives with their father in Hakata. The brothers have been separated by their parents' divorce and Koichi's only wish is for his family to be reunited. When he learns that a new bullet train line will soon open, linking the two towns, he starts to believe that a miracle will take place the moment these new trains first pass each other at top speed. With help from the adults around him, Koichi sets out on a journey with a group of friends, each hoping to witness a miracle that will improve their difficult lives. This film, compared to the others, is definitely the most joyous, optimistic and bright one.

„*Like Father, Like Son*“: Ryota is a successful Tokyo architect who works long hours to provide for his wife, Midori and six-year-old son, Keita. But when a blood test reveals Keita and another baby were switched at birth, two very different families are thrown together and forced to make a difficult decision while Ryota confronts his own issues of responsibility and what it means to be a father.

I probably need to emphasize on two things here:

1.) The boys in the three films are between 6 and 12 years old. The only one who is in the process of starting puberty at the end of the film is Akira from „*Nobody*

Knows“. But in any case he's much more a child than a teenager;

2) „*Nobody Knows*“; „*I Wish*“, „*Like Father, Like Son*“ are not classed as children's films, they are not intended for children to watch. They are definitely works for adults and their genre is drama. . Only „*I Wish*“ falls into the category of "family film" appropriate for younger audiences as well. But in all three cinematic works the world of the child is seen, read, and explained perfectly.

Kore-eda proves that it is more difficult to make feature films with the methods of documentaries. And a film for adults with the subject "the world of the child" is even harder to create. But the end result is better and truly genuine. The aim is high and ambitious - catharsis of society. „*I don't know if I like children in general, but I like the kids in the film very much.* - Kore-eda shares -*I chose them for the film and had them adapt to the making of it. I made them step into the very adult world of filmmaking, so I felt a great responsibility toward them, which made me want to show their own personal emotions in the film. I tried my best to get that across.*”²

The conflicts in his films are powerful, yet quiet at the same time. They hurt the existence, being, mind, soul and heart of every kid growing up, regardless of their affiliation (racial, ethnic, national, confessional, gender, etc.). As Linda Ehrlich very accurately points out: „*to listen to childhood is not always to listen for what one expects to hear, or even for what one wants to hear .Kore-eda is rigorous in his willingness to listen to childhood's silence, to the silence that surrounds the flood of words and the flurry of everyday actions.*

² Schilling, Mark. (2010). Kore-eda Hirokazu: Interview. — *Film Criticism*, Volume 35, Issue 2/3, Winter/ Spring, p.11

Listening to childhood includes listening to what remains unsaid"³.

The cinematograph and the image of the child (and childhood respectively), meet in the first reels of the new technical marvel called moving pictures. One of the first 35mm films by the Lumière brothers is an exactly 41 seconds long documentary, called "Feeding the Baby"/*org. Le Repas de Bébé*). Cinema quickly (and appropriately so) becomes fascinated by the world of children, and even begins to experiment with and discover its film language through narratives whose focus is the child. Thus, for example, the Brighton Academy is the first one to play with screen shots in the one-minute feature film "Grandma's Reading Glass" (1900) by George Albert Smith. On the screen we see the little boy Willie, who is playing with a huge magnifying glass and begins to explore the world of objects, of focus, and mostly the world of details. In fact, this is how cinema starts to work with *medium shot* and *point-of-view close-up*. I mentioned this on purpose because in all the years of cinematic evolution to follow, the detail is the thing that will remain the most heavily-loaded semiotic *kinema* in frame; or, to make an analogy with linguistics, it is the inherent morpheme of screen image, according to the theoretical studies of Pier Paolo Pasolini. The closest shot – the detail – is a vital instrument in the hands of directors and cameramen in this very important aspect: it is not only a tool of emphasis, but also an important dramatic element, especially when complicated psychological and emotional states in the characters' minds are depicted. Even more so, when the protagonist in a film is a child, the role of the detail becomes even prominent and significant, especially if it's further loaded and articulates specific,

coded socio-cultural references. In Hirokazu Kore-eda's films the detail also has leading and fundamental role in the construction of complex psychological portraits of children. This is what the Japanese director says: „*That film is nothing but details. That accumulation of small details is life. That's where the drama is--in the small details. When I was constructing each scene, I tried to add details--the pyjamas,, the toothbrushes, the other sort of things you would actually find in a house that would contribute to the feeling [the audience has about the characters].*"⁴

In the context of cinema, the child and childhood could be perceived as inspiring mental constructs, which have varying historical content and parameters, determined by the particular author's style and approach, by the national identity, and of course by the stage of cinematography's development. Film language articulates child issues in a broad array of kinds, types and genres.

Cinema is the strongest visual mass medium through which messages easily access a wide range of audiences. The cinematograph intertwines the two active layers of child subculture in different proportions, depending on the author's vision. One of them is related to what children create themselves i.e. that, which forms their world, mythology, worldviews, games, dialogues, reactions. The other layer is created by the adults. Hirokazu Kore-eda works perfectly with both of them. In many interviews, the director says that the script is enriched on the set by the numerous conversations with the child-actors. He asks them not to act in front of the camera, but rather to be themselves; to respond in a particular scene – situation and dialogue – not like their characters,

3 Ehrlich, Linda C. (2006). Dare mo shiranai (Nobody Knows). — *Film Quarterly*, Volume 59, Number 2, Winter, p.46

4 Schilling, Mark. (2010). Kore-eda Hirokazu: Interview. — *Film Criticism*, Volume 35, Issue 2/3, Winter/ Spring, p.11

but to respond following their own intuition, personality and behavior. Betting on authenticity and documentary approach ultimately maximizes genuine results on the screen. This approach is particularly evident in “*Nobody Knows*” and “*I Wish*”. Furthermore, “*Nobody Knows*” is based on a true story, and in “*I Wish*” the boys playing the screen brothers Koichi and Ryunosuke, are the actual real brothers Maeda.

As Milen Enchev states: “*The world, seen through the eyes of the child’s imaginary “I”, has a hidden meaning, significance and perspective. There is “consistency”, prestige even. Whereas the world seen through the eyes of the adult’s imaginary “I”, is enigmatic and hopeless; meaningless and dramatic; sorrowful and leading back into nothingness.*”⁵In Hirokazu Kore-eda’s films it is as if these two point-of-view approaches also intertwine and merge at times, focusing on the image of the child.

When a child is in the lead role, regardless of what type of film it is, the authors of the cinematographic work impose their current vision of what constitutes the phenomenon of childhood. And this phenomenon is built and upgraded through the dramaturgical and aesthetic principles of the cinematographer. Cinema practically mimics childhood on one hand, and on the other - builds it anew within the frame reality. However, it doesn’t forget that childhood is sovereign, significant and an alternative to the grown-up world of adults. The main planes of discourse, in which the cinema-child is studied through the lens of the camera are:

The child as an object of nurture; the problem of initiation of the child; following

traditional values in the binary opposition “parent-successor”; child’s behavior to a certain set of social roles; the expression of their own children’s identity; child psychology; the problem of violence among children, or the child as an object of violence; children’s collective memory; the mnemonic trauma; memory, forgetfulness and historicity; the child and the challenges of today’s dynamic world; children and ecology; public reaction to a child in need or in a dramatic, even tragic life situation, etc.

These discourses are actively articulated in the contemporary East Asian cinema, to which Japanese cinematography and Kore-eda in particular also belong.

If we look at the history of Japanese cinema, we can clearly see that the image of the child as a social problem is constantly developed by the classic directors Yasujiro Ozu, Heinosuke Gosho, Akira Kurosawa, Mikio Naruse and others. All of them interpret in different ways complex screen and dramatic fates in family context. Perfect parents, dignity, disintegration of the family, illusory image of the father, de-heroization of parental images, conflicts between family and society – all of these have an important role in Japanese cinema, and they follow the current changes in the socio-historical system.

Family is an active and changeable model of the diversity in society. Through their films, Japanese filmmakers offer their views on a key moment for Japan: *children for families, or for the nation?*⁶ Kore-eda’s works are no exception. *The contemporary author is frequently compared to the achievements of Ozu and Naruse. „I’m happy to be compared to people like Ozu and Naruse.” - Kore-eda says, and adds, laughing: „I can’t imitate someone like Naruse, so I don’t consider myself his descendant, but I’ve had another*

5 Enchev, Milen. (2013). The Children of the Republic. Engineering of childhood in Bulgarian poetry for children during the first two decades after World War II. — *LiterNet*. [Online] 2013. Available: <http://liternet.bg/publish3/menchev/decata.htm> [18.02.2015] [Децата на Републиката. Конструиране на детството в българската лирика за деца през първите две десетилетия след Втората световна война. — Original title in Bulgarian]

6 White, Merry Isaacs. (2002). *Perfectly Japanese: Making Families in an Era of Upheaval*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p.108

look at Naruse, as I said. Naruse is closer to my own feelings about people. He had a darker view of humanity. Human beings are no good.”⁷

Kore-eda interprets cases and situations, and shows how limitless extremes are. All sorts of distortions are already happening in the promised land of the stereotypical image of the home, family and parenting. And in fact, they may belong to any socium. But most of all they develop in the Japanese socium. Merry White repeatedly emphasizes the following in the studies: „*Why children are both elemental and problematic in Japan today is a question with tangled roots. It appears paradoxical that bearing and raising children could have both institutional and social approval but not have structural support. This contradiction, unpacked, reveals the gap between ordinary families’ realities and state agenda*”⁸.

A broader and deeper analysis clearly shows that in these three films Kore-eda plays around with a number of concepts related to the perceptions of and debates around Japanese family culture and the Japanese mentality (e.g. concepts of *amae* and dualism *tatema*e and *honne*.). The foundation of parental ideal is the strict father figure (*thunder father*). The social function role of women in the family is linked to *ryosai kenbo* (*good wife - wise mother*) and *bosei hogo* (“*motherhood protection*”). Often, however, in today’s world these ideals undergo a change. Thus the father becomes absent, spends time only on the weekends (as is the case in *Like Father, Like Son*). The mother’s image is implemented as *tenuki okusan* (“*hands-off*” wives), partially depicted in “*I Wish*”.

In “*Like Father, Like Son*” and “*I Wish*”

7 Schilling, Mark. (2010). Kore-eda Hirokazu: Interview. — *Film Criticism*, Volume 35, Issue 2/3, Winter/ Spring, p.11

8 White, Merry Isaacs.(2002). *Perfectly Japanese: Making Families in an Era of Upheaval*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p.100

we can observe some some fading images of *kosodate mama* (a mother who totally devotes herself to rearing her children as her exclusive, singularly important responsibility) and *kyoiku mama* (literally “education mama”).

Realistically, most fierce is the transformation of the mother in “*Nobody Knows*”. The character is even left nameless, named only with the indefinite and even dismissive “You”. The mother here is deliberately and literally typified as *tonde iru onna*: „*A concept borrowed From Erica Jong`’s Fear or Flying, very popular among women in Japan in the 1970s. The phrase came to mean a woman sexually liberated and enjoying multiple relationships with men without responasbility, or, by extension, a woman who makes jer own decisions, through life.*”⁹ Lady “you“ in „*Nobody Knows*” – is exactly like that. Keiko Fukushima performs a wonderful actress incarnation - she is, in the most pejorative sense, a woman-child; she is inherently infantile in every sense of the word, and further loaded with the characteristic irritating children timbre of the voice. In this film by Kore-eda, the image of the father is just... a passerby, a DNA donor, no less irresponsible and impersonal. Oddly, however, Kore-eda does not humiliate or punish parents in any of his films. On screen they even look kind of likeable. But in reality, they are the ones who create the social problem, not their children.

The iconicity of the child in the Japanese family culture is expressed by: *kodakara* (literally, “child treasure”) representing the idea that a child is a gift from heaven, and through the idiom *Kodomotachi no tame ni* - for the sake of the children. But this image also undergoes various interpretations in Kore-eda’s works. Even more interesting is

9 White, Merry Isaacs.(2002). *Perfectly Japanese: Making Families in an Era of Upheaval*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p.141

the fact that the child in his films is faced with taboos - the most vivid of which is that of survival and acceptance of death. The only exception is *"Like Father, Like Son"*, where there is no death.

Kore-eda's boys don't cry physically - there is no place for tears in such a dynamic, lonely, sometimes empty world, in which you suddenly have to grow up, to be stoic, and to persevere. They have to somehow become older, wise, and mature, in the prime of their childhood, long before actually becoming so. Kore-eda's boys cry only very deeply, inside their own "Selves". They hide these invisible tears even from themselves.

Hirokazu Kore-eda elegantly and provocatively criticizes modernity by quietly bringing to the surface inappropriate questions related to the problems of the average, ordinary person, who is part of (or at least claims in their own way to be a part of) the family and society. The object of study is particularly interesting because the three movies form an informal trilogy, and present in different ways the themes of child-adult relationships, child-child relationships, and children-society ones. Hirokazu Kore-eda shatters into little pieces the traditional Japanese family template and the idea of childhood as a space, „*as an ideally safe, innocent, and carefree domain*"¹⁰. The stereotypes are shattered into little pieces so that they can be rearranged into a new puzzle, showing a new snapshot of the situation.

The images of the boys in his three films are created as mirror images. Adults - the active participants in society - see their reflections in these images. Mercilessly. In order to understand who they are, how far

have come and where they are headed. The moral framework surrounding the global, restructured panorama of society is often shocking. Painful. Sobering. Kore-eda's mastery, however, is exactly in the way he is creating this surrounding frame - slowly, piece by piece, building deep emotional tension. At the same time, in his directorial approach, the author never quite finishes and tightens together the pieces of the frame. He leaves free pieces. He leaves room for hope through his open film endings (which are typical of the three works: *"Nobody Knows"*; *"I Wish"*, *"Like Father, Like Son"*). The positive, which will unravel negative seams in the pieces of the frame. This way, thanks to the film message, the viewer is given a chance to rearrange the pieces of broken reality.

Hirokazu Kore-eda - as the author of documentaries and feature films, always deals with unusual stories. His thematic axis is made from the pairs life-death; moment-eternity; memory-present; illusion-reality; what is desired-what is real. Kore-eda is a restless visual archaeologist of memories and deficits. He is inspired by the empty spaces. And the bigger they are, the better. Because it is from them, from the seemingly nothing, that he builds his films brilliantly. In the most laconic way, without unnecessary dramaturgy and without melodrama he manages to convey on the screen the personal story. To finally get to the main culprit of human drama: the theorem of choice. While generally revolving around the same thematic area, all his films are very different, surprising and startling in their own way.

10 Montano, Jose. (2014). Rebellion and Despair. Children and Adolescents in Recent Japanese Films.— In: *MediAsia / FilmAsia 2014*. The Asian Conference on Film and Documentary – Osaka, Japan. Nagoya: The International Academic Forum (IAFOR), p. 58

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Author's data: Andronika Martonova - Assoc. Prof, Bulgraian Academy of Scienses, Institute for Art Studies, Screen Art Department – Sofia, Bulgaria.

e-mail: andronika.martonova@gmail.com

Автор туралы мәлімет: Андроника Мартонова – Болгария ғылым академиясы, Экран өнері департаменті, Өнертану институтының қауымдастырылған профессоры. Болгария, София қ.

e-mail:andronika.martonova@gmail.com

Сведения об авторе: Андроника Мартонова – ассоц. профессор Института искусствознания, Департамента экранного искусства, Болгарской академии наук, Болгария, г. София.

e-mail: andronika.martonova@gmail.com