



# INSTITUTIONAL ART CRITICISM IN 20th- AND 21st-CENTURY IN KAZAKHSTAN

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**Abstract.** The independence of Kazakhstan and its state sovereignty became important reforming factors in the new social fabric and worldview of the nation, its culture and art, the main component of which is the replacement of former political ideals and the mythologization of its own past. In Kazakhstan, official and unofficial art lives side by side and is displayed in various exhibition venues, which avoids a mindset of opposition and allows for art historians and curators to create divisions by preference.

In Kazakhstan, there is a long-overdue need for serious comprehension of, and fixation on, artistic initiatives. Here, we are not regarding 'fixation' as the photography and videography of events; we need something different – analysis of the work of individual researchers, painting a picture of the direction of research and the development of the creative side of art criticism institutions in Kazakhstan.

This article is an attempt to understand the realities of 21st-century Kazakhstani fine art. It is important to determine the most important institutions and bring the achievements of art criticism in Kazakhstan to the global community, based on the work of individual researchers. Aiming to grasp and examine the main directions and goals of contemporary art critics, we have discovered the individual directions and themes of leading researchers, which serves as a basis for the revealing the characteristic traits of art criticism in Kazakhstan through the prism of individual knowledge and passions.

**Key words:** art criticism, art, contemporary art, problems of art history, Contemporary aesthetics, visual culture.

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## Introduction

The study of Kazakh fine art has accumulated a substantial body of research and interpretation. There is an urgent need to examine the evolution of national art studies from the inception of critical thought to the present day. This evolution has been shaped by socio-historical conditions and the interplay between the art sphere and political life.

Previous research has focused on various aspects of Kazakh art criticism. Notable works include: L. Gardin's *Literatura i iskusstvo Kazakhstana* ('The Literature and Art of Kazakhstan'), V. Kantor's *Put' k zrelosti* ('The Path to Maturity') (18), Sabyr Mambeev's *Khudozhniki Kazakhstana* ('The Artists of Kazakhstan') (16), Amir Kanapin and Lev Varshavsky's *Iskusstvo Kazakhstana* ('The Art of Kazakhstan') (45). These works have contributed to a foundational understanding of contemporary Kazakh art, addressing aesthetic and social issues and proposing new theoretical perspectives. However, critical thought in Kazakhstan has long been underdeveloped, often limited to reviews of exhibitions and artists, with a focus on positive achievements aligned with socialist themes.

This study aims to fill gaps in the existing research by analyzing the dynamics of art criticism in Kazakhstan, exploring its historical development, and identifying emerging trends. The objectives include examining how socio-political changes

have influenced art criticism and assessing the current state of critical discourse. This research will provide insights into the interplay between national and universal values in Kazakh art and offer a perspective on the future of art criticism in the region.

## Methods

**Historical Context and Biographical Details:** The research method involves citing names and biographical details of artists and listing official organizers of exhibitions. This method helps establish the historical context and relevance of each artist's work, illustrating how art served as a reflection of its time. By analyzing biographical and institutional information, we can assess how these factors influenced the opportunities for independent creativity and the formation of art criticism.

**Thematic Analysis:** The analysis focuses on the thesis that art, as a reflection of its era, had limited scope for independent creativity. By evaluating the thematic content of artworks and their critical reception, this method examines how art movements and critical approaches evolved in response to socio-political changes. Recognized classics are discussed through their biographical details and their impact, highlighting the need for dedicated monographs that underscore their significance.

**Evaluation of New Trends and Artistic Language:** As new trends and evolving plastic languages emerged, this method

involves analyzing critical discussions and the responses to these developments. The research explores how critics addressed contemporary issues and the evolving artistic language. This approach helps understand how the search for innovation influenced art criticism and the broader art scene.

**Market Relations and Artistic Success:** In the 1990s, the blurring of criteria and market-driven approaches were examined. This method evaluates how artistic success was affected by market forces rather than genuine professionalism. By analyzing how critics and the public perceived artistic experiments and commercial success, this method sheds light on the shifting dynamics of art valuation.

**Comparative Analysis of Art Historiography:** The research draws on art history articles by prominent critics such as R. Ergalieva, (27) R. Kopbosinova, (20) K. Li, (6) and I. Yuferova. (100) This method involves comparing their interpretations and analyses in the collection "*Aktual'no ob aktual'nom*" *aktual'nom*' (*Presently about the present*) to understand how contemporary art was perceived and contextualized. (Ergalieva et al, 27) The focus is on how these critics used their knowledge of past art to meaningfully address contemporary artistic experiments.

By applying these methods, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of art criticism's evolution, the impact of socio-political changes, and the role of market relations in shaping artistic success.

## Discussion

Since the arrival of researchers educated in Moscow and Leningrad in 1953, creative and critical thinking in Kazakhstan has consistently advanced, even within ideological constraints. Changes in criticism reflect Kazakhstan's political and cultural shifts, from early Soviet rule and Socialist Realism to the war years,

Khrushchev's thaw, perestroika, and independence, all impacting artists and art criticism. In 1932, the decree 'On the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic Organizations' was issued, leading to the creation of the Organizing Committee of the Artists' Union of the USSR. The Organizing Committee of the Artists' Union of Kazakhstan was established in 1933. The Union's first meeting in 1940 marked its official creation. The initial exhibition, 'Artists of Kazakhstan Fighting for the Socialist System' (Zhurgenov, 97), showcased the Republic's creative strengths. However, press coverage often only mentioned the exhibition's name and location, lacking analysis of the artistic situation and the names of participating artists.

In the 1940s, art submissions detailed town, venue, participants, and works. The 1950s saw a revival of criticism and art studies, influenced by a belief in communism. The press rarely assessed artistic life but recognized works linked to civic duties. For instance, a 1951 article criticized A. Cherkassky's *Blue Spring* for chaotic brushstrokes, while L. Leont'ev's *Night Threshing* was not harshly critiqued despite its distortion of Soviet reality. V. Frolova's *Harvesting the Sugar-Beet* faced criticism for technical flaws. Art critics struggled under ideological pressures. In 1953, The Institute of Language and Literature established an Art Studies department with specialists like E. Vandrovskaya, M. Gabitova, E. Mikul'skaya, and I. Rybakova, who faced constraints from fears of being accused of Western admiration or modernist tendencies.

From 1954 onwards, all exhibitions were planned, as spontaneity was not typical of socialist society. Each exhibition's closing involved discussions evaluating the artists' chosen paths. An archival document, 'Discussion of the Exhibition of Kazakh Artists, 18 February 1959' (Leningrad), highlights the first presentation of works

by K. Shayakhmetov, M. Kenbaev, K. Tel'zhanov, A. Galimbaeva, N. Khludov, Sakhi Romanov, and others. Critics noted the impressive progress of Kazakhstan's fine art in a short time.

In a short period, Kazakhstani fine art has evolved from amateur to professional status, gaining international recognition. Since the mid-1950s, art historians have published numerous albums, articles, and catalog essays. Collections like *The Fine Art of Kazakhstan* by M. Gabitova and others marked the beginning of in-depth art historical studies. These works blend biographical details with art analysis, providing comprehensive insights into the art scene of the time. The introductory article in *Essays on the History of the Fine Art of Kazakhstan* highlights the progress in art studies and emphasizes clarity and conciseness.

By the end of the 1960s, Kazakhstan had established a professional national art school. Key works from this period include I. Rybakova's *Kazakhstan's Fine Art in the Years of Soviet Power* (1962), L. Plakhotnaya and I. Kuchis' *The T. Shevchenko Kazakh State Art Gallery* (1966), and N. Nurmukhammedov's *The Artists of Kazakhstan* (1962). Also notable are I. Rybakova's *A. M. Cherkassky* (1966), M. Mikhel'son's *Five Artists of Kazakhstan* (1966), and M. Gabitova's catalogue *A. Kastejev* (1968). These works provide rich insights into the art scene of the time and highlight the need for a defined period to assess each artist's role in art.

During the late 1970s and into the 1990s, works at the intersection of ideological commitment and traditionalism became central. The journal *Art (Iskusstvo)*, no. 9, 1990, marked a shift with its focus on Kazakhstani art and the spirit of perestroika. The editorial team emphasized that 'Art must exist outside of politics; it has always, in all situations, served, and always will serve, as the most important link between the people and the

country.' In the 1980s, the aim to move away from stereotypes in the study of fine art continued, and more attention was given to associative thinking, ritualization and mythologization in artists' works. (Ergalieva, 56)

The issues raised in the articles "*The Art of Kazakhstan of the 1980s*" by R. Kopbosinova, "*Pushing the Boundaries of the Habitual*" by N. Polonskaya, "*Studies in Informal Tones*" by I. Yuferova, and "*Ecstasy and Meditation in Kazakh Sculpture*" by R. Ergalieva remain relevant today. The artists discussed have become classics of Kazakhstan's fine art. Current critiques continue to explore criteria for creativity, the concept of a 'national school,' and philosophical perceptions, reflecting ongoing relevance. Monographic material is evolving, with recent articles focusing on artists' worldviews and their experimental approaches to reality.

During this period, critical thought about art was concentrated in institutions such as the Abylkhan Kastejev State Museum of Arts, the M. Auezov Institute of Literature and Art, the Artists' Union, the T. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy of Arts, the Board of Directors of Art Exhibitions and Auctions, and the Soros Center of Modern Art. Exhibitions were predominantly thematic, showcasing a variety of styles and trends. Staff at these organizations actively engaged in commenting on contemporary art, reflecting the growing national self-awareness and discussions on reviving ancient Kazakh applied art traditions. Additionally, cultural experts began contributing to art criticism from an aesthetic perspective.

The 1990s marked a period of highly specialized themes in decorative-applied art. Sh. Tokhtabaeva analyzed the work of goldsmiths in 'The Symbolic Orientations of Kazakhs in Relation to Jewelry and Ironwork' ('Simvolicheskie orientatsii kazakhov, svyazannye s yuvelirnym i kuznechnym delom'), among others.

In 1994, complex research on ornament, which covered the entire scope of the issue, of the history of its study, and of theoretical questions and practices, came to light in K. Ibraeva's 'Kazakh Ornament' (Ibraeva, 34). By analyzing the origin, development and formation of ornamental systems, the author delves deep into the semantics of ornament. In their research, art critics aim to unify national memory, the search for vivid and visual structure, the newest trends in 20th-century art, and a genetic understanding of color, ornament, and form in the country's modern art.

The end of the 1990s was a time of determined focus on cosmogonic and religious presentations of nomads. The need arose to define the conceptual and semantic side of the national style.

A fundamental work which establishes the close link between past and present is 'Ethnocultural Traditions in the Contemporary Art of Kazakhstan' ('Etnokul'turnye traditsii v sovremennom iskusstve Kazakhstana') (Ergalieva, 22). Wide-ranging, systematic research on the issue depicts the development of fine art in Kazakhstan at all stages of its existence.

In the new century, contemporary art in Kazakhstan reflects both traditional nomadic themes and modern influences. Artists utilize provocation, irony, and new forms like performance art and installations. The dynamic between artists and curators influences contemporary art, with critics either supporting or opposing new visions. Recent publications from the Soros Center of Modern Art, such as *Art-discourse – 97*, address contemporary themes and technical issues, while monographic catalogues remain significant for their content richness.

Researchers' treatment of the history of art criticism in Kazakhstan is becoming particularly important. In this aspect, it is necessary to turn towards the works of foreign art critics. Svetlana Gracheva is a respected Russian art critic and teacher who researches 20th-century art criticism.

In her article 'National Art Criticism of the 20th Century: Questions of Theory, History and Education' ('Otechestvennaya khudozhestvennaya kritika XX veka: voprosy teorii, istorii, obrazovaniya'), Gracheva examines the key aspects of the development of art criticism in Russia, underlining its significance for society and art.

In her research, she notes that 20th-century artworks rarely existed without textual accompaniment—manifestos, programs, or other texts—making the critic's role increasingly significant. She cites V. Turchin, who argues that texts surrounding artworks could themselves constitute a history of art. During this period, artists began writing books, articles, diaries, and letters, integrating textual elements as a vital part of contemporary art.

S. Gracheva highlights the influence of Russian art criticism from the literary works of V. Belinsky and N. Chernyshevsky, emphasizing the connection between aesthetic criteria and ethical values. Chernyshevsky saw criticism not only as a judgment on art, literature, or science but also as a judgment on life based on the concepts and emotions these phenomena evoke. This democratic and socially active role of criticism remained crucial in Russian art throughout the 20th century.

The art critic pays special attention to the development of criticism at the start of the 20th century, analyzing the works of A. N. Benois, M. A. Voloshin, S. Glagol, I. E. Grabar and others, noticing their essayistic approach.

In recent decades, St Petersburg has witnessed a significant development in its creative industries, and the emergence of new art-spaces, which is in keeping with the situation in Kazakhstan. These spaces serve as platforms for the interaction between various artistic institutions and representations of modern art. The accent on the role of professional academic art in this process, and its interconnection with modern creative industries, in the works of

S. V. Gracheva is especially important to understanding the situation in Kazakhstan. (1297)

The creative industries in St. Petersburg are characterized by the synergy of creation and enterprise, which facilitates the creation of innovative products and services. They integrate art with economics, influencing the town's development and activity. However, it is worth mentioning that the creative industries are not only limited to performing the function of entertainment; they have a much wider cultural significance, including educational and instructional aspects.

In Russia, modern creative clusters often engage with academic art, but in Kazakhstan, academic artists are generally excluded from creative events and exhibitions. The Abylkhan Kasteyev State Museum of Arts is a notable exception, incorporating contemporary art into its classical exhibitions.

The collapse of the Soviet system dismantled the structure that once ensured artists' livelihoods, leaving them unprepared to navigate the market. As M. Shemyakin notes, "To truly understand contemporary art requires intellect and knowledge. Those who are helpless and lack discernment, hoping to break into high society, are easily exploited by astute figures like Gagosian and Saatchi" (Shemyakin).

In relation to this, it is appropriate to quote C. Saatchi himself, from 6th December 2012. 'Even a show-off like me finds this new, super-rich art-buying crowd vulgar and depressingly shallow. Being an art buyer, these days is comprehensively and indisputably vulgar. It is the sport of the Eurotrashy, Hedge-fundy, Hamptonites; of trendy oligarchs and oiligarchs; and of art dealers with masturbatory levels of self-regard. They were found nestling together in their super yachts in Venice for this year's spectacular art biennale. Venice is now firmly on the calendar of this new art world, alongside St Barts at Christmas and

St Tropez in August, in a giddy round of glamour-filled socialising, from one swanky party to another'. (Collector Charles Saatchi Comments)

Global trends are demonstrated by modern art fairs and exhibitions which, as a rule, take place without regional professionals, and also lack special publications for art critics' remarks. This issue also impacts Kazakh artists whose works are quickly adopted by the West, often resulting in a fleeting effect. Currently, young artists frequently collaborate with specific modern art galleries and curators who believe they are fostering art. This leads to a situation where "there are already curators, there isn't any art yet," as rapid progress exposes art to the public prematurely, without the establishment of a well-defined individual artistic method.

Saatchi argues that "for professional curators, selecting specific paintings for an exhibition is a daunting prospect, far too revealing a demonstration of their lack of what we in the trade call 'an eye'. They prefer to exhibit videos, and those incomprehensible post-conceptual installations and photo-text panels, for the approval of their equally insecure and myopic peers. This 'conceptualised' work has been regurgitated remorselessly since the 1960s, over and over and over again" ("The Hideousness of the Art World").

## Results

Examining regional cultural processes from a contemporary, global perspective is crucial. In this study, we focus on K. Khalykhov's work, which underscores the significance of philosophical, critical, and anthropological approaches in defining 21st-century trends in Kazakhstan. Khalykhov's monograph, *Image of Human Being in Contemporary Art*, published in Kazakh, is a key contribution to Kazakhstani art studies and criticism. It explores the human figure in art from

logical-methodological, philosophical, and cultural perspectives, addressing concepts like “spirituality” and “culture” (38). This work is notable in a field where most scholarship is in Russian.

The monograph also highlights the high aims of art as a means of enhancing both the individual and the world, investigating the spiritual essence and significance of artistic works, the interaction between the creator and the audience, and the transformation of human existence in the context of globalization and postmodernism. Special attention is given to Kazakh art, its distinctiveness, and the impact of cultural modernization processes.

In his work, K. Khalykhov does not limit himself to analyzing R. Eldridge’s *“Introduction to the Philosophy of Art,”* but also incorporates research on cultural anthropology and cultural identity, based on international collaborations and interdisciplinary approaches. By examining Eldridge’s work, Khalykhov underscores the importance of philosophical reflection on art, highlighting contemporary trends and the necessity of critical thinking. His study discusses the ideas of Kant and Hegel, their influence on modern philosophy of art, as well as Eldridge’s theories of visualization (12).

In K. Khalykhov’s research on the cooperation between Kazakhstani and Hungarian academics, the main emphasis is placed on the study of *cultural identity in the conditions of globalization*. Particularly significant is the author’s focus on the anthropology of art, including the biological changes associated with the development of creative abilities, the universality of art as a cultural phenomenon, and Alfred Gell’s ideas on intentionality in art: “...a new definition of ‘art’ as a complex system of intentionality, in which artists create art objects to effect changes in the world, including unlimited changes in the aesthetic perception of the art audience” (161).

In his work, he analyzes the impact of global cultural processes on the state of contemporary mass culture in Kazakhstan, which is reflected in their research and creative projects. As Khalykhov notes, metamodernism is characterized not only by the search for new artistic expression but also by a philosophical approach to the concept of justice, which is viewed as a key virtue of social institutions. This is evident in works dedicated to the analysis of historical data and socio-cultural changes, as well as in productions that explore images of conflict and their resolution (60). The author’s research serves as an important source of information and a starting point for further studies in the field of Kazakhstani art, contributing to a deeper understanding of its evolution and impact on cultural identity.

The research by Yespenova A. and Ydyrys Z. focuses on the exploration of art in the meta-space (Musabekova and Yespenova, 163) and key figures in the Kazakhstani art community in the context of global artistic trends (269).

The works of K. Khalykhov and the activities of the T. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy of the Arts facilitate not only academic and cultural exchange, but also the development of art in Kazakhstan, highlighting the necessity of critical thought, cultural dialogue and an interdisciplinary approach to the study of artistic practices.

A significant role in the study of visual art in the era of independence is played by the M.O. Auezov Institute of Literature and Art. For instance, the publication *“The Synthesis of Arts in the Artistic Culture of Kazakhstan in the 20th-21st Centuries”* explores the phenomenon of interaction among the plastic arts. Architecture, monumental works, decorative-applied and book art, as well as the activities of theater and cinema artists, are presented by a team of authors united in their effort to study and analyze the diverse and underexplored areas of Kazakhstani art.

In the course of our research, it has been important to refer to the works of colleagues at this institute.

D. Sharipova is known for her research on the works of individual painters from Kazakhstan, as well as the period of formation and subsequent development of visual art in Kazakhstan (233). D. Sharipova's research also encompasses graphic works and monumental sculpture dedicated to the tragic events of the early 1930s famine, revealing the socio-cultural functions of the Monument of Sorrow, which plays a crucial role in the formation of national identity. The concepts of "memory," "tradition," "forgetting," "sites of memory," and "cultural trauma" are examined in the context of artworks, providing a deeper understanding of their significance for Kazakhstan's culture (Sharipova et al., 3).

In the 21st century, art critics examine how contemporary Kazakhstani artists incorporate text elements to forge new artistic expressions while maintaining cultural codes and traditions. Intertextuality is viewed as a dialogue with both global and national cultures, facilitating new forms of expression through borrowing and memory.

The study of intertextuality in Kazakhstani art, especially regarding cultural memory, focuses on how artists use historical and cultural references to create new meanings and contexts. This process reflects and reinterprets collective memories and identity amidst global and local changes.

Attention is given to how artists preserve cultural values through various materials and techniques, which are seen as rituals and artistic acts. The impact of globalization on modern art and the risk of losing national identity are also discussed, with artists' interest in mythmaking viewed as an effort to revive national spiritual foundations. Examples include Syrlybek Bekbotaev and Daniyar Sarbasov, who reassess traditions and create new contexts for classical works, blending historical

memory with contemporary perception (Sharipova et al., 180).

D. Sharipova's research underscores the significance of the dialogue between past and present, illustrating how intertextual elements help preserve and renew cultural values. Halima Truspekova, a researcher at the M. Auezov Institute of Literature and Art, has made significant contributions to the study of Kazakhstani art through her articles and monograph. In her works, she analyzes the influence of historical, social and cultural changes on the development of architecture and fine art in Kazakhstan. Truspekova emphasizes on the fact that the appeal of this form of observation to Kazakhstani artists is explained by the specific cultural and historical context of Kazakhstan. An innovative approach to the study of performance, the influence of historical events, analysis of the work of both groups and individual artists, such as R. Khal'fin's 'Kokserrek', 'Kyzyl tractor' ('Kyzyl traktor'), and 'Green Triangle' ('Zelenyi treugol'nik'), and consideration of the social context, all make this article deep and detailed. Problems with the perception of performance by the general public are also mentioned, which underlines the significance of this artistic trend in post-Soviet society. (264)

The historical and cultural context, the freedom of artistic self-expression, the appearance of new forms of art, such as performance and installation, symbolism and metaphors, the influence of modernism, and interactions with international society, are all described. (202)

Truspekova's monograph, 'Avant-Garde Ideas of the 20th Century in the Painting and Current Art of Kazakhstan' ('Avangardnye idei XX veka v zhivopisi i aktual'nom iskusstve Kazakhstana') provides a significant contribution to the study of Kazakhstan's art.

The academic work of the Abylkhon Kasteyev State Museum of Arts of the Republic of Kazakhstan has its own



particularities. An important component is work on the study of exhibits and on catalogues of the collections. Currently, the following have been published on fine art and decorative-applied art:

‘The Catalogue of Jewelry, Kazakh National Decorative Art’ (‘Katalog yuvelirnykh ukrashenii, Kazakhskoe narodnoe prikladnoe iskusstvo’), Almaty, 2010; ‘The Jewelry of 19th-20th-Century Kazakhstan’ (‘Yuvelirnoe iskusstvo Kazakhstana XIX-XX vv.’), Almaty, 2008; the catalogue ‘S. Kalmykov’; and ‘The Painting of Kazakhstan’ (‘Zhivopis’ Kazakhstana’) in three volumes. The additional attribution of works, clarification of information about their receipt, etc., is important in these publications. The work of research staff is not limited to the format of the applied character of publications. On the whole, the museum’s specialists are occupied by fundamental and applied research linked to the history and development of Kazakh fine art from the 19th to the 21st century.

The research of Ekaterina Reznikova is dedicated to the study of the interaction of the contemporary art of Kazakhstan with classical legacies. She analyses how contemporary Kazakhstani artists integrate elements of the past in their works, creating a new cultural dialogue.

Reznikova examines the historical context of the opposition of classical and experimental art, from the impressionists to the avant-gardists of the early 20th century. She highlights the aim of Kazakhstani artists to unite traditions and innovations, creating synthetic works that include various media and cultural elements. (74)

E. Reznikova analyzes the works of Said Atabekov, Erbosyn Mel’dibekov, Elena and Viktor Vorob’ev, Aleksandr Ugai and others, and reveals that the contemporary art of Kazakhstan actively interacts with classical heritage. The artists use traditional forms and techniques, adapting them to a modern context.

Svetlana Kobzhanova continues the theme of the influence of global artistic traditions on the art of Kazakhstan, and studies the works of individual artists of different schools. (24). Examining the innovative content of modern art, determining the boundaries of patriotism in artists’ works, studying the influence of folk art and photography, etc., she aims to move away from visual generalizations to a factually precise and objective analysis of the works of individual artists. (22)

In summary, we can state that only on Kazakhstani material, and within the region, is it permissible to discuss the saturation of works with one content or another without taking into account the market value and position of the artist in sales ratings.

The turbulent process of the growth of national self-awareness aroused interest in the nation’s own history and the poetics of its traditional culture, in its layers of epic mythology, folklore and sacral religion. The freedom of artistic self-expression and the rejection of dictates of state censorship in art have been proclaimed. The philosophy of national art has transformed before our very eyes.

The integration of national and universal values has become a key driver of originality in Kazakhstan’s modern aesthetics. Independence allowed artists to engage directly with global avant-garde art, strengthening modernist tendencies and the search for new plastic forms and metaphorical language within a national context.

These artistic transformations have altered the relationship between society and art, influencing its role and perception in the new ethnocultural sphere. However, the rapid pace of artistic developments has outstripped the ability to fully comprehend and evaluate them, leading to a critical sector that is largely informative rather than analytical. Art criticism now often lacks depth, focusing more on promoting works than on providing substantive analysis.

The role of the art critic today involves:

1. Personal passions.
2. Enhancing an artist's reputation.
3. Evaluating the sale value of works.
4. The devaluation of printed editions and professional networks.
5. Adherence to a defined structure.
6. Acting as an authoritative expert.
7. Lack of responsibility for the art market.

Art researchers have transitioned from historians to critics and, in some cases, art dealers. There is now a strong demand for in-depth analysis of cultural events. Modern art's diversity in style and techniques prompts a need for clear evaluation criteria, including artistic value, context relevance, novelty, originality, and political relevance.

Critics must adapt to new methods of analysis as art increasingly incorporates political, social, and spiritual elements. In Kazakhstan, art is characterized by:

1. Historical cultural elements mixed with modernity.
2. Use of forms without artistic pretension.
3. Art as a puzzle rather than a reality model.
4. Emphasis on context over physical materials.
5. Reflection of newspaper chronicles.
6. Art as both political dissent and state conceptualism, where aesthetics are often replaced by expression.

### Basic provisions

This study highlights the evolution and challenges of art criticism in Kazakhstan, focusing on the dynamics between national art and socio-historical influences. Art criticism in Kazakhstan has been shaped by both the development of art itself and the political climate of the country. Early criticism was predominantly limited to exhibition reviews and positive reflections on the achievements of socialist society, with little analytical depth.

The purpose of this research is to trace the development of Kazakh art criticism, its key trends, and how it has evolved in response to social and political changes. Unlike previous studies, which often focused on historical overviews, this work emphasizes the need for critical analysis of contemporary art practices and the role of criticism in shaping the artistic discourse in Kazakhstan.

Key issues identified in the study include the underdeveloped nature of critical thought in the region, the lack of comprehensive reviews in early art criticism, and the gradual shift towards more analytical and theoretical approaches in recent years. This study underscores the need for more in-depth exploration of the relationship between art and its socio-political context in Kazakhstan, offering insights into the future direction of art criticism in the region.

The research contributes to a deeper understanding of how art criticism has reflected and shaped the broader cultural landscape, encouraging a more nuanced approach to analyzing both historical and contemporary art in Kazakhstan.

### Conclusion

Based on the situation of Kazakhstan's contemporary art – games in a narrow sphere, with meanings flipped without pretense – art critics are left, without showing off too much previous constructive research, to engage in the 'game'.

The language of contemporary art is becoming very complicated, expressive, and saturated with emotions and hidden meanings, requiring the intuition of art critics in their roles as historians, theorists and prophets, and it can define the artistic significance of works and the potential of an artist. The functions of the study of art in contemporary criticism are broadening and require many qualities. It is becoming evident that to research contemporary art, a universal systematic

and structural methodology is much more fruitful, incorporating new understandings – communication, information, objects, structure, and others. The expansion of the toolkit is absolutely necessary due to the changes in the concept of the art object itself, and changes in its forms and the aspects of its impact. The use of various methods includes the introduction of the experience of other sciences – sociological, informational, psychological, and medical aspects, etc. - which significantly expand the researcher's toolkit. The creative comprehension of works, where boundaries of both type and genre are blurred, is only possible with the involvement of various sciences and precise knowledge. The majority of contemporary artists see their task as materializing the clash of different cultures, political educations, historical foundations, and traditions, through the prism of art. It is crucial to recognize that today, the methodology of art criticism is changing on two theoretical levels: the general aesthetic level, and the level of the study of art. New, non-traditional types of art and artistic expression, such as cinema, television, mass spectacles, design, etc., are fundamentally changing the situation of artistic life and the functioning of art in culture. A sociological approach to art with the use of psychology in the analysis of works provides important meaning.

Modernity offers us its own realities. On the one hand, the imitation of the presence of the creative process in art demands the same in the development of critical thought. On the other hand, Kazakhstan has a rich potential of faithful art researchers, endowed with professional intuition and prepared to indicate their

positions at different levels. At the same time, it is worth noting that, in this age of blurred criteria for modern art, if we cannot change the situation, then we need to keep an eye on it, and the fixation of the art event in professionals' individual studies becomes an important component of critical thought.

Researchers of modernity study artistic processes from a multidisciplinary, comprehensive position. As we can see, the prerequisites for various phenomena in artists' work are studied, from traditional values to the consideration of the influence of urbanism and architecture on the artist's consciousness.

The activity of contemporary researchers of art underlines the significance of the study of all aspects of artists' creativity in order to have a deep understanding of the integration of regional art in the global context, and the importance of cultural exchange for the development of Kazakhstan's contemporary art. Based on the theme and subject of works, art critics aim to define the influence of the environment, visual stimuli, and elements of emotional impact, and a significant role is given to social and cultural aspects, and in the context of contemporary conceptual works, special significance is given to innovations and technology which simultaneously define the identity of an artist and the embodiment of their thoughts in the context of the 21st century. In the works of contemporary art critics, an abundance of facts, a comprehensive analysis of the cultural product, and valuable insights into the process of the formation and development of the modern art of Kazakhstan, serve as important sources of information for further study.

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**XX-XXI ҒАСЫРЛАРДАҒЫ ҚАЗАҚСТАННЫҢ ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛДЫҚ КӨРКЕМДІК СЫНЫ**

**Аңдатпа.** Қазақстанның тәуелсіздігі мен мемлекеттік егемендігі жаңа қоғамдық құрылыстың, ұлттың дүниетанымының, оның мәдениеті мен өнерінің маңызды реформаторлық факторларына айналды, оның негізгі құрамдас бөлігі бұрынғы саяси мұраттарды алмастыру және өзінің өткенін мифологизациялау болып табылады. Қазақстанда ресми және бейресми өнер бір-біріне параллель өмір сүреді және әртүрлі көрме алаңдарында қойылады, бұл оппозициялық көңіл-күйді жоққа шығарады, бірақ өнер тарихшылары мен кураторларын қалауы бойынша бөлуді көздейді.

Қазақстанда шығармашылық бастамаларды байыпты ұғыну және бекіту қажеттілігі бұрыннан бар. Бұл жерде біз «тіркеуді» оқиғалардың фото және бейнематериалы ретінде қарастырмаймыз, бізге басқа маңызды нәрсе – жекелеген зерттеушілердің шығармашылығын талдау, ол Қазақстанның көркемдік сыны институттарының ғылыми бағыты мен шығармашылық құрамдас бөлігінің дамуын көрсетеді.

Бұл мақала XXI ғасырдағы бейнелеу өнерінің қазақстандық болмысын түсінуге талпыныс болып табылады. Жекелеген зерттеушілердің еңбектеріне сүйене отырып, неғұрлым маңызды институттарды айқындау және Қазақстанның көркемдік сынының жетістіктерін әлемдік қоғамдастыққа жеткізу маңызды болып табылады. Қазіргі заманғы өнертанушылардың негізгі бағыттары мен ұмтылыстарын ұғынуға және қарауға ұмтылыста біз жетекші зерттеушілердің жекелеген бағыттары мен тақырыптарын анықтадық, бұл жеке білім мен құштарлық призмасы арқылы Қазақстанның көркемдік сынына тән сипаттарды анықтау үшін негізі болып табылады.

**Түйін сөздер:** көркемдік сын, өнер, контемпорари өнері, өнертану мәселелері, көрнекі мәдениет, заманауи эстетика.

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**ИНСТИТУЦИОННАЯ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННАЯ КРИТИКА КАЗАХСТАНА XX-XXI ВВ.**

**Аннотация.** Независимость Казахстана и государственный суверенитет стали важными реформирующими факторами нового общественного устройства, мировоззрения нации, ее культуры и искусства, главной составляющей которых становится замена прежних политических идеалов и мифологизация собственного прошлого. В Казахстане официальное и неофициальное искусство живет параллельно друг другу и выставляется на разных выставочных площадках, что исключает оппозиционные настроения, но предполагает разделение в сфере историков искусства, кураторов по предпочтениям.

В Казахстане давно назрела необходимость серьезного осмысления и фиксации творческих инициатив. Здесь мы не рассматриваем «фиксацию» как фото и видеоматериал событий, нам важно другое - анализ творчества отдельных исследователей, дающий картину научной направленности и развития творческой составляющей институций художественной критики Казахстана.

Данная статья является попыткой осознания казахстанских реалий изобразительного искусства XXI века. Важным становится определить наиболее значимые институции и донести до мирового сообщества достижения художественной критики Казахстана, опираясь на труды отдельных исследователей. В стремлении постичь и рассмотреть основные направления и устремления искусствоведов современности, мы выявили отдельно взятые направления и тематику ведущих исследователей, что послужит основой для выявления характерных черт художественной критики Казахстана сквозь призму индивидуальных знаний и пристрастий.

**Ключевые слова:** художественная критика, искусство, контемпорари арт, проблемы искусствоведения, визуальная культура, современная эстетика.

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