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# The city as an artistic vision in the paintings of Kazakhstan: The period from Soviet realism to contemporary art

La ciudad como una visión artística en la pintura de Kazajstán: El período desde el realismo soviético hasta el arte contemporáneo

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The article is devoted to study the problem of the artistic icon in the painting of Kazakhstan in the 20th and 21st centuries. **Materials and Methods:** The vision of the city became one of the most popular, important and noticeable even at the stage of formation of the Kazakh painting school in the thirties of the twentieth century. Then the ideas of progress were concentrated and visually manifested in it. **Results and Discussion:** Optimism and faith for the future were visualized in numerous storylines of industrial landscape, as a new genre of Soviet art that arose within the framework of Soviet realism. Along with the changes taking place in the history of the country, the picturesque image of the city in the works of Kazakh masters developed and was filled with new meanings. From the naive idealization of the urban landscape in the images of A. Kasteev, to the emotional impressions of the urban seasons in the works of A. Cherkasskiy; from the symbolic-conditional dreamy-romantic image of the city in the art of the "thaw" by S. Mambeev, A. Dzhusupov, K. Mamakov to the abstraction and iconic sketchiness of M. Bekeev, G. Madanov and others. **Conclusions:** The image of the city as a semantic and philosophical category in the painting of Kazakhstan turned out to be a vivid indicator of the social, cultural and artistic evolution of our history. The picture of the world, the rhythm and pace of different periods of time are clearly revealed in the urban landscape genre, as many conceptual, cultural, aesthetic and even moral imperatives are intertwined here.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of the artistic vision in modern art history remains relevant. This is due to the variability of the concept of "artistic image" in the art of the twenty-first century, a new understanding of its meaning. Non-verbalized ideas and thoughts appeared in art as images that accurately and deeply reflect the time, era, rhythm, philosophy and picture of the world. The genesis and evolution of the painting school of Kazakhstan is immanently connected with all historical processes and events of the 20th century <sup>(1)</sup>.

Today, Kazakh painting has developed as a unique phenomenon, with its own characteristics, principles, methods and ideals. And most importantly, in the course of its development, an expressive language of images, symbols, signs has developed, closely related, on the one hand, to the archetypes of national consciousness, and, on the other hand, to the concept of "time" not in an ontological sense, but as an idea of scientific and technological progress. Time and space in pictorial expression is one of the most interesting, complex and rationally unresolved problems. To understand it, something more is always required than just an external description, an aesthetic assessment, or a formal-stylistic approach. The image of the city as an artistic image of Kazakh painting can become the key to understanding the transformation of the entire cultural context, as well as become an indicator of changes in the painting school of Kazakhstan, the emergence of new trends, new visual techniques, a new reading of plots, their symbolic transformation <sup>(2)</sup>.

The relevance of the study is associated primarily with the insufficient degree of study of the topic in domestic art history. And secondly, with the importance and significance of its disclosure for understanding the deeper socio-cultural and mental processes taking place in the space of contemporary art in Kazakhstan.

The principle of analytical systematization in the presented scientific report is based on the chronology and typology of the development of the painting school of Kazakhstan. For completeness of the study, we have attracted extensive factual material in a wide time range - from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. As a first approximation, dividing it chronologically into the following sections:

1. The period of formation of painting in Kazakhstan 1920-40s;
2. The period 1905-60, which can be conditionally designated as social realism;
3. The period of Soviet romanticism 1970-80 associated with the political processes of the "thaw";
4. The period of radical transformation and change of cultural paradigms in 1990-2000;
5. Painting of the new Kazakhstan of the era of independence.

In total, the work of 50 artists was studied, whose names brightly and convexly appeared in the Kazakh painting of the twentieth century.

In each of these periods, the iconic vision of the city in Kazakh painting developed in a special way, and was expressively different. Therefore, typological analysis became more important and interesting, as a result of which several semantic types of the picturesque images of the city were revealed.

1. Natural-idyllic image of the city (painting by A. Kasteev);
2. Industrial image (S. Sanosyan, D. Kalachev, A. Sapugov, Yu. Evsev);
3. Emotional-impressionistic (A. Cherkasskiy, R. Velikanova, N. Tansykbaev, N. Nurmukhamedov, A. Utkin, E. Fridlin, K. Kulbatyrov);
4. Romantic (A. Dzhusupov, U. Azhiev, K. Mamakov, D. Aliyev);
5. Symbolic (A. Noda, K. Bazaraliev, Ch. Nogaibaev, R. Slekenov, D. Usenbaev);
6. Actual image (S. Suleimenova, N. Sautbekov, A., M. Zhumagulov, G. Madanov);

The object of the study was the painting of Kazakhstan in the dynamics of its historical development. The subject of the research is the problem of the artistic image of the city in different periods of development of the painting school of Kazakhstan.

The purpose of the work is to determine the semantic meaning of the artistic image of the city in the painting of Kazakhstan in different periods of its development.

Research objectives:

- study the artistic image of the city in the painting of Kazakhstan in the context of historical development;
- identify the conceptual foundations and typological features of the artistic image of the city of the Kazakh painting school;
- to designate the formal and stylistic variety of variants of the artistic image in the painting of Kazakhstan;
- reveal the role of the artistic image of the city and show its significance in the discourse of the development of artistic practice and the fine arts of Kazakhstan as a whole.

A few words about the appearance of which cities are we considering in the present study? These are the two brightest cities of Kazakhstan - Almaty and Astana. Each of them has its own history, its own symbolism and its own changing image. In the last decade, they have been changing especially rapidly, becoming modern megacities with very interesting contemporary architecture and this is no coincidence. The best modern architects are involved in shaping the image of the capital: the famous Japanese architect K. Kurokawa, the British Architect N. Foster, the Italian Architect M. Nicoletti. Each of them managed to create an image of place and time. Through their efforts (and not only) our capital has acquired its own unique and expressive look, which inspires many contemporary painters. Expressive cosmic new architectural forms become bright artistic images of modern painting in Kazakhstan.

The city of Almaty has a longer architectural history. This is the history of an ancient place. Which in the 21st century continues to be the center of the world of our culture and art. Here, changes in the architectural appearance do not occur so radically and rapidly. But still, among the recent positive changes in the appearance of the city of Almaty, Jan Geil, a Danish architect and urban design consultant from Copenhagen, played a huge role. In a short time, he managed to create an emotionally warm environment for urban space (so far, these changes have affected only the city center). Large green pedestrian and park areas, a city open to people (without fences), social advertising that gently changes social habits and urban culture in general. The city of Jan Gale is emotionally benevolent, inviting, as if turning around to face the person. Encourages him to social responsibility, reducing the level of stress and aggression associated with the intense rhythm of life of a modern person.

In the Kazakh painting of the last decades, the artistic image of the city is becoming more and more popular and plays an ever greater role. The space of the city is interpreted by young artists as a continuation of the inner space of their life, their soul.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The basic method of the presented scientific research was the method of comparative analysis (analytical-synthetic method based on the principle of historicism), with the help of which the systematization of the existing variants of the artistic image of the city in the painting of Kazakhstan was carried out.

The study within the framework of the stated topic was carried out using the historical-analytical method. As the main theoretical paradigm in the study, a systematic approach was used, within which the following methods that were applied:

- the comparative historical method made it possible to identify the general and special in the historical development of the image of the city, as an important theme of the Kazakh painting school
- the historical and typological method allowed to determine the place of the artistic image of the city in the dynamics of the artistic and historical process
- the concrete historical method made it possible to explore the characteristic features of individual stages in the development of the artistic image of the city in Kazakh painting.

In the study of the topic, the semiotic-hermeneutic method was also used for a deeper understanding of the symbolic subtext in the pictorial representation of Kazakh art.

The methodological basis of the study is based on general theoretical works in the field of classical and modern art history: V. Hoffman "Fundamentals of Contemporary Art" <sup>(3)</sup>. The diversity of perspectives of the problem under study is supported in the text of the article by the scientific results of the following studies: A. Zis "Art and Aesthetics" <sup>(4)</sup>, A. Khrimli "The Aesthetic Problem of Conventionality" <sup>(5)</sup>, A. Mikhailova "On Artistic Conventionality" <sup>(6)</sup>.

Questions of methodology related to the material under study are indicated in the scientific article by S.M. Daniel "The Art of Seeing" <sup>(7)</sup>, V.N. Prokofiev "On Art and Art Studies" <sup>(8)</sup>, N.V. Serov "Chromatism of the myth" <sup>(9)</sup>, A. Panarin "Life world and aggression of rationality" <sup>(10)</sup>, A. Yakimovich "Problems of realism in realistic art history" <sup>(11)</sup>.

In view of the vastness of the studied material, the list of scientific sources used is quite voluminous. To characterize the general issues of the development of painting in Kazakhstan for such a chronologically long period, the author used the results of scientific research by the leading Kazakh art critics of the first generation: A.K. Sarykulova <sup>(12)</sup>. (Bernstein, 1979). In the works of these art historians, the results of the artistic practice of the initial stages of the formation and development of easel painting in Kazakhstan were collected and systematized for the first time. The problematic issues of the artistic image in the framework of the development of the painting school are contained in the articles of B. Nurzhanov "The City and the Steppe" <sup>(13)</sup>, A. Kodar "The Worldview of Nomads in the Light of the Steppe Knowledge" <sup>(14)</sup>.

With gaining independence, a different understanding of the role and significance of the Kazakh fine arts came. The new reality required a fundamentally different approach, which was demonstrated in R.A. Ergalieva's fundamental

scientific study “Ethno-cultural traditions in the contemporary art of Kazakhstan” <sup>(15)</sup>. As well as works: “XX century. Fine Arts of Kazakhstan” by K.V. Li, “Fine Arts of Kazakhstan” by B.K. Barmankulova. Thus, with the abundance of scientific studies of the Kazakh fine arts of a general nature and works dedicated to the work of individual artists, up to now the specificity of the artistic image of the city, presented at each stage of Kazakh painting in all the diversity of worldview and artistic concepts, has not been a special subject of comprehensive scientific analysis.

### 3. RESULTS

If the chronological framework of different periods of development of the painting school of Kazakhstan has already been quite fully identified in the works of many art critics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, then the conceptual and typological features of the artistic vision of the city in the painting of Kazakhstan have not yet been considered and formulated in the discourse of historical development and in the context of modernity <sup>(6)</sup>. As a result of the study, based on the study of the work of 50 prominent artists of Kazakhstan, in whose paintings the iconic vision of the city became a key one, it was possible to formulate the following classification of types of the artistic image of the city.

1. Nature-idyllic
2. Industrial
3. Emotionally impressionistic
4. Romantic
5. Symbolic
6. Actual

Urban space as a pictorial subject in the contemporary art of Kazakhstan goes beyond the scope of narrative, but becomes a relevant and important topic, which accumulates aspiration for the future, optimism, faith in progress and development.

At the first stage of the formation of the painting school of Kazakhstan (1920-40), the realistic character of the image of the city is determined by milestone tasks: natural development of nature within the framework of a new artistic practice.

Further, in the 1950s and 60s, the artistic image of the city develops in line with the socialist realist canon (or overcomes it), but acquires original features: deep emotional fullness, intimacy, idealization, symbolization. On the one hand, the most important imperatives of the Soviet utopia are realized in the artistic images of the city of this period, on the other hand, they become the focus of an individual, emotional, personal perspective. The impressionistic manner within the framework of the socialist realist canon determines the nature of the artistic image of the city in the 1950s. In the era of the “thaw” (1970-80s), the artistic vision of the city changed radically. These changes affected the pictorial-plastic and figurative-content aspects. The expressive sharpness and decorativeness of the interpretations of the images of the city reflected the change in cultural paradigms of the thaw era. The interpretation of the image of the city takes on a symbolic, metaphorical character, gradually the stylization of forms leads to a symbolic, conditional painting of the urban landscape.

At the stage of formation in Kazakh landscape painting, for the first time, an industrial landscape appears, in which the natural world is replaced by a man-made, created by human efforts, new nature. In the industrial image of the city, the new Soviet mythology receives its visible expression. In the future, the industrial landscape will retain its relevance, developing and transforming in line with the school of painting: from plots equivalent to the scope and scale of socialist construction projects, to the sharply poignant motifs of industrial landscapes of the 1980s, the deformation of forms of which was an adequate reflection of the tragic disharmony, violation of unity and integrity of the natural and human world.

Innovation in the field of forms and colors, the search for other expressive means, original artistic manner in the 1980s was of a sharp, radical nature. The creative vector of artists in the 1980s was concentrated on the search for new visual means immanent to the deep inner experiences of the artist himself, who felt himself an integral part of the era. Formal radicalism was adequate to the metamorphoses and upheavals of the 1990s. Contemplation and lyricism, which became in the process of development of the Kazakh landscape school, the integral qualities of the urban landscape, were not completely canceled, but were transformed into a symbolic, metaphorically saturated form.

In the 1990s, in Kazakh painting, it was the image of the city that became an indicator of ongoing changes. There was a transformation of storylines and structures in general. The optimism and aspiration to the future, expressed in the dominant themes of the 60s: “Morning”, “Youth”, “Spring”, “Happiness”, in the 90s are replaced by: “Darkness”, “Night”, “Twilight”. The feeling of the end of an era and the unpredictability of the further course of events in the

landscape genre is manifested not only at the storyline and thematic level, but figuratively and plastically. The deformation of forms, the expression of color, the radical change in formal techniques were determined by the very course of the historical development of events. The rejection of illusory clarity and material persuasiveness in solving the artistic image of the city took on a radically pointed character. As never before, artists now seek to express their own feelings and anxieties through urban motifs. Problems of sign-conditional interpretation of real forms comes to the fore. The transfer of space and volume, the issues of illumination of the light-air environment remain outside the scope of attention of the painting of the 90s.

Kazakh painting of the twenty-first century is being updated, enriched with new meanings, tasks, forms, techniques, expressive means. The image of the city is becoming more relevant than ever. It accumulates all the actual problems of the development of a person, personality, society of the new time, with its hopes for progress, optimism and striving for the future. But also all the anxieties, contradictions, problems of our time.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The discussion field of the presented scientific research can be the process of classifying the typologies of the artistic image of the city in the context of the historical development of the painting school of Kazakhstan. In this classification, it is not the chronological principle that is of paramount importance, but the conceptual features of the artistic image, the expression of the cultural codes of the era, and the understanding of the archetypes of national consciousness. “The dualism of heaven and earth, which existed from ancient times among the ancient Turks, was inextricably linked with the third component - a person who was originally thought of as an intermediary between these cosmic forces, as an earthly conductor of the will of Heaven”<sup>(14)</sup>. The process of transformation of national consciousness in the modern urban world, the processes of self-identification as the most relevant topics of contemporary art in Kazakhstan, can be traced in the process of evolution of the artistic image of the city. Where the picturesque embodiment of the image of the city becomes an indicator of ongoing socio-cultural changes.

1. The natural-idyllic type of pictorial embodiment of the image of the city occurs at the stage of formation of the national painting school and is associated with the work of its founder Abylkhan Kasteev. “He managed to embody the fundamental concepts and coordinates of the national worldview”<sup>(15)</sup>. The national worldview manifested itself in his work not only in the themes and plots of the paintings, but also in the way of pictorial expression. Panoramic, inclusiveness of view, desire and ability to artistically feel the diversity and unity of all objects, all elements of space, as confirmation of the integrity of human existence, its organic connection with nature - these are the ideological foundations of his work, which are present in every urban landscape of the master. Artistic images of the city in Kasteev's paintings are humanistic in the highest sense, since the main concepts of A. Kasteev's paintings are examples of art on a universal human scale and perspective. They are permeated with the search for the harmony of the world and man, the feeling of its presence in every element of nature, in every moment of human life<sup>(15)</sup>. Drawing, Kasteev, as it were, puts things in order in the overall picture of the universe, puts everything in its place. Hence such a favorite compositional technique - a clear horizontal division of space into plans: in early landscapes - front, far, middle, later - only near and far. This construction is carried out with the utmost clarity and clarity, growing from the deepest aesthetic ideas of Kazakh folk art. In this touching enumeration of all the details, the artist's attitude to what he sees and writes is hidden. The attitude is biased, filled with emotional excitement, awe and warmth. Revealing the beauty of everyday, unremarkable moments of life, he discovered that eternal values grow from ordinary and familiar things - love for one's home, for one's land – this is love for Motherland. This is something that is taken for granted, a priori, for a person of any nationality. Peace of life and the need for daily work (mainly the work of maintaining order in one's house, and, consequently, in one's soul) - isn't this the meaning of human life? Such a philosophical mood runs like a refrain through all of Kasteev's work, but is especially noticeable in his urban storylines.

2. The industrial image of the city manifested itself in the work of many artists of the first generation of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In Kasteev's painting, these images are always social. They are very difficult in relation to society, both external and internal, their own - the author's. They clearly indicate the personal attitude of the artist to the depicted moment in time. Behind the outward optimistic, approving acceptance of all the signs of the new time that were sharply noticed and slowly listed in detail, sometimes there is a tension that is felt in the hard silhouette lines of the staffing figures of people, in the general compositional static. Through a comparison of the old and the new, the traditional and the revolutionary, the main conflict of his works is realized. The juxtaposition of the old and the new will be noticeable in industrial landscapes. Kasteev treats industrial attributes without any caution, even enthusiastically, admiring the strength and power of technology, but in most paintings he assigns it the role of the antipode of man, a substance outside of nature, and therefore devoid of harmony. Although in mature works Kasteev

will animate, inspire, give vitality to the most non-picturesque industrial landscapes. The industrial landscape has become an expression of the main imperatives of Soviet mythology. The new collectivist religion finds its fullest and most accurate reflection in this genre. Soviet artists live, taking utopia for reality. The most striking and significant examples of the industrial landscape in Kazakh painting belong to A. Kasteev, U. Tansykbaev, A. Ismailov. The industrial landscape, like all painting of the Soviet period, was determined by the ideological principles of the system, which does not detract from its artistic significance. Evolving, the industrial genre in the 1960s and 70s takes on an increasingly pompous, official and decorative character. A futuristic, inhuman vision manifested itself in the cold aloof geometry of industrial landscapes by Yu.S. Evseev (“Chimkent Phosphorus”, 1969). The subject of industrial buildings of the period of developed socialism (1970-80s) continues to interest many painters of Kazakhstan (E.D. Gorovykh, V.D. Dmitriev, A.I. Laptev, D.R. Kalachev, M.M. Abylkasov and other).

3. The emotional-impressionistic type of artistic image appears in the painting of Kazakhstan in the 1940-50s. The picture of Kazakh painting of this period is variegated and diverse, both in terms of personalities and variants of statements. The Kazakh school of painting, developing in line with the Soviet artistic space, was isolated from world processes along with it. In all republics, a single style existed according to the same rules, and if differences and peculiarities appeared, then, firstly, rather contrary to, and not thanks to generally accepted practice, and secondly, and this is significant, due to the talent of individual masters. The impressionistic vision determines the nature of the artistic image of the city in the 1940-50s and determines the features of the artistic method of A.M. Cherkasskiy, with his close attention to changes in the atmosphere at different times of the year, day, etc. The artist insists on the primacy of color in painting. Color in his works is an essential emotional principle. The pronounced lyrical nature of the image of the city is the originality of the works of A.M. Cherkasskiy. A monologue, a quiet and unhurried conversation with oneself, but at the same time an invitation to share the enjoyment of the natural harmony of recognizable landscapes. His urban landscapes are devoid of official pathos (he goes into the landscape genre to avoid it in his work), grandiloquent claims to the eternal. These are, rather, short, but passionately emotional statements about the most secret impulses of one's soul. Painting conceivable in its poetic key, without majestic pomposity and solemnity. Painting as poetry, poetry as a dream. The most common theme in the work of A.M. Cherkasskiy is spring, which gradually turns from a season into a global theme of his creative biography. Spring, as the embodiment of hopes, as a thirst for renewal, freedom, primarily inner, spiritual freedom, understood as liberation from the clichés and standards of the ideological bias of Soviet art, and, in an even broader sense, freedom of creative expression as the highest goal of art. Kazakhstan, its nature and people became for Cherkasskiy, in the end, those most important life hypostases that awakened new creative impulses in his soul, gave him lost hope for the future, inspired and led to the renewal of the worldview and pictorial systems. Without the human warmth, participation and friendliness that he met here, the artistic phenomenon of Cherkasskiy could not have taken place. The artistically authoritative figure of A.M. Cherkasskiy had a serious influence on the further development of the Kazakh painting school. His methods, methods of work, pictorial priorities one way or another will manifest themselves in the works of the best artists of the 1960s and 70s.

4. The romantic image of the city appears in the Kazakh painting of the “thaw” era. “Life dictates to artists the most essential and topical themes, which are often developed by many masters” <sup>(16)</sup>. An optimistic aspiration for the future is expressed both in the storyline and in the change in the plastic language, which has become more conventional and decorative. The image of the city that we meet during this period is joyful, sunny, spring. Where space and seasons are now becoming conceptual, philosophical categories. A city experiencing its youth, youth, happiness. The transformation of the artistic vision in the images of the city is already manifested in the works of M. Kenbaev and K. Telzhanov, but this process acquires a pronounced character in the work of S. Mambeev, complete and self-sufficient. According to the exact definition of R.A. Ergaliyeva, S.A. Mambeev: “... brought the relationship between the formal and the content to the level of creating his own meta-language” <sup>(15)</sup>. This concentration of Mambeev on the search for fundamentally new artistic forms and expressive means led to the emergence of a special, unique pictorial system, which was focused on the metaphysical, poetic perception of the surrounding reality. Poetic contemplation, self-absorption, a certain philosophical detachment, distance from the concrete details, from the momentary life, appeal to eternal values, the experience of the creative process as the highest pleasure of human life - these are the main concepts of his painting. According to A.F. Losev: “The symbol is based, first of all, on the contemplation of reality. Therefore, he is its reflection” <sup>(17)</sup>. Such a symbolic transformation of reality underlies the landscape art of S.A. Mambeev. The painting style of S.A. Mambeev is built on the principles of stylization, interpretation, in which the artistic structure (color, composition) has a hermeneutic and ontological significance. In the dilemma of “how to say” and “what to say”, the first question becomes a priority.

5. The symbolic type of the artistic image of the city appears in the 1960s, when the genre of the urban landscape of Kazakhstan evolves from painting-stating to painting-analysis. The impressionistic tendency is finally overcome,

giving way to semantically more complex art forms. The processes of rethinking existing cultural paradigms actualize new methods and images of pictorial comprehension of the world. The symbolic beginning, manifested in the landscape painting of S.A. Mambeev, A.M. Stepanov, G.N. Mezentshev, live, sounding in full force of colors, his painting has in common with M. Vrubel and N. Roerich; V.N. Baranova ("The Road to the Chemical Plant", 1977), with its refined and strict stylization; V.M. Larionov ("Breath of Spring", 1984), with his airy-transparent poetic restraint. Transforming and transforming in the metaphorical expressions of the works of A. Zhusupov, S. Romanov, Zh. Dusenbaeva, M. Narymbetova.

6. The current type of artistic image refers to all the pictorial experiments of recent years. A special era in the history of art in Kazakhstan was the time of "Transformational changes" it became the starting point for the new fate of our country, the demarcation line between different, almost opposite ideologies. The closed, puritanical world of Soviet art, in the bosom of which Kazakh painting began, in the nineties was rapidly included in the diverse world of all the radical artistic experiments of contemporary world art. The Center for Contemporary Art at the Soros Foundation, which opened in Almaty in 1992 and lasted more than ten years, radically changed the trajectory of the development of our art, opened up new formats and forms of contemporary art for many artists of Kazakhstan, and most importantly, gave them the opportunity to become participants themselves international art process. The new generation of artists of Kazakhstan has actively joined the practice of many current art institutions (biennials, residences, international plein airs, performances, actions, etc.). The names of many of them today are better known abroad than in our country. E. Meldibekov, S. Atabekov, S. Suleimenova, A. Menlibayeva are currently holding their collective and personal exhibitions around the world (Paris, Berlin, Hong Kong, Seoul, Jakarta, Venice). Cellophane painting by S. Suleimenova is not only an artistic, but also an ecological project, a study of the problems of the modern world, the city and the person in it, which has been going on for several years. The modern city appears in the works of the new generation of artists as a futuristic place not in form, but in meaning. The place of realization of all dreams and realization of all abilities. The space is creative and free. Only in such a space is the only possible successful development of the individual and society <sup>(18)</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

A consistent study of the problem of the artistic image of the city made it possible to determine not only its typological features, but also its semantic foundations. Chronologically, the stages of development of the city vision as a pictorial storyline in the fine arts of Kazakhstan were formed in the following order: the artistic image of the city at first reflected simply the joy of seeing the renewal of the world; expressions in a new, different one, native, beloved, fundamentally important. In the future, more and more took place - the symbolization of the artistic vision of the city, as a form of self-affirmation, a sign of self-identification. And, finally, the city - as a space of freedom, a space of the future. The artistic image of the city in modern painting of Kazakhstan has become one of the most relevant and in demand, it accumulates hopes and optimism, faith in the future, the experience of freedom and new development opportunities. That is why in the work of the young generation of artists of New Kazakhstan, the image of the city appears as a bright, joyful air space. This is almost the same image of an ideal city that we meet in Raphael's work "The School of Athens". The image of an ideally beautiful world in which each hero feels like a demiurge.

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