

Section 4. Theory and history of art

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LANDSCAPE PAINTING OF UZBEKISTAN IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD (30–50-ies of the twentieth century)

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: To explore the specifics of the development of landscape painting in Uzbekistan in the context of cultural trends in art – the 30–50s of the twentieth century.

Research methods: Systematic classification and genre approaches of modern art history, including historical analysis of the development of landscape painting in Uzbekistan in the 30–50s of the twentieth century.

Results: The actualization of tasks for the formation of landscape painting in Uzbekistan, the development of plastic searches related to the trends and cultural heritage of Russian and world art, formed a new typology of images of nature, interpreted in various trends, which was necessary to improve creative research on the further development of the fine arts of Uzbekistan in in general.

Scientific novelty: The artistic process, which determined the general state, achievements and development of the fine arts of Uzbekistan, was based on the relationship and dynamics of such components as: a certain stylistic community, determined by the state of national culture, a set of unique traditions, as well as relations with the so-called modern style, established in the fine arts of Uzbekistan from the second half of the twentieth century; the combination of these factors contributed to the promotion of the landscape genre in art as one of the main ones that reflected the concept of modern culture.

Practical application: The study of the specifics of the development of landscape painting in Uzbekistan in the context of sociocultural trends in art – the 30–50s of the twentieth century, provides an opportunity for further comprehensive study of the development and transformation of landscape painting in Uzbekistan as a whole. The classification of the main trends in the landscape genre of the period under study can be used to create albums on the work of landscape artists, teaching aids, textbooks and monographs on the painting of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: *Art, landscape, culture, painting, miniature, landscape painting, traditions, easel painting, Central Asia, genre, artist, Uzbekistan, school*

Social success construction, the growth of new industrial centers, urban improvement, construction of irrigation canals, these are the main social transformations that characterize the state of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the 30s of the twentieth century. Naturally, all this provided rich material and contributed to the development of the landscape genre. The landscape is gaining popularity at art exhibitions in the second half of the 30s of the twentieth century. Landscape artists are eagerly moving from the exoticism of the old East to reflecting the dynamics of modernity. Along with the industrial landscape, the lyrical and lyrical-epic landscape exists and actively manifests itself. Artists of the older generation, such as P. Benkov, M. Novikov, P. Gan, A. Volkov, and younger, but already established painters, such as U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan, also perform in this genre.

The historical turning point in the fate of the country in the spirit of socialist realism was foreseen and then figuratively rethought in the works of avant-garde artists (A. Volkov, V. Ufimtsev, U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan). In the early years, some techniques of socialist realism turned out to be a means for a number of artists to express the romantic feeling of the advent of a new era and the transformation of their Earth (U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan).

The flourishing of the landscape genre in the late 30s is associated with the name of U. Tansykbaev; N. Karakhan, M. Novikov, the young R. Timurov, P. Gan, P. Nikiforov, K. Grigoryants and others are fruitfully working in this area (Lakovskaya, V. L., 1984).

The development of the landscape of the post-war period was somewhat dramatic, since from the point of view of the ideology of the period under review, the country needed landscapes where the main characters were people transforming their native Earth, and the image of nature served only as a background. Many artists who created paintings in the landscape genre (A. Volkov, U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan, P. Gan, P. Benkov, R. Timurov, Z. Kovalevskaya, O. Tatevosyan) of the post-war period still retained the trends that prevailed in the landscape of the pre-war

era. Still, it should be noted that it was the landscape in the work of many masters that served as the driving force, the impulse that would later lead to the creation of unique landscapes and become a recognizable feature of the national school of painting. And in the 50s. In the 20th century, landscape became one of the leading genres in the art of Uzbekistan. However, the landscape genre had trends in common with the development of other genres. Although the ideology of the period under review did not allow landscape, nevertheless, landscape played a complementary role in large paintings. And the most interesting finds can be seen in the sketches. It was the sketches made in the open air that determined the specific features of the development of the landscape of this period. Such, for example, are the works of A. Volkov in the last years of his work.

The war of 1941–1945 also affected the fate of the art of Uzbekistan. But painting still takes the leading position, where important changes are also noticeable. Having gone through the trials of war, the artists saw the nature of their native places in a special way after returning home. Hence the heightened sense of love for nature, a deep awareness of its newly discovered beauty. In the best works of landscape painting of the post-war period, this ideological concept of the artists is clearly revealed. The landscape of the time under study is closely connected with the traditions of Russian realistic landscape, Western European painting of the 19–20s, frescoes, and oriental miniatures. The decisive factor in the formation of its stylistic qualities was the communication of future masters (M. Saidov, R. Akhmedov, N. Kuzybaev, etc.) with living carriers of these traditions (the evacuation of Russian universities to Uzbekistan during the war), the study of monuments of world art from antiquity to contemporary period, as well as consanguinity with these traditions.

The creative achievements of such major masters as U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan, P. Benkov, R. Timurov, M. Novikov and others played a huge role in the development of landscape painting. Establishing the idea of a national landscape, these masters mastered

a wide range of artistic tasks with new pictorial means. In the landscape of this time, the problems of the light-air environment were solved and the tasks of the plein air were set. Observing the state of the atmosphere and changes in natural color depending on lighting, artists looked for more accurate tonal-color relationships in the landscape. New techniques of landscape composition were also formed, which made it possible to build landscape space not as a backstage decoration divided into plans, but as a fragment of living nature.

The turn of art towards socialist realism has been noted in the studies of many domestic art critics. At this stage, A. Khakimov's remark is important: "... The birth of the actual art of socialist realism in Uzbekistan dates back to 1933–1934, when the memorial style of the previous decade finally gives way to a new model of plastic and semantic interpretation. This is demonstrated by the paintings of A. Volkov "Construction of a brick factory" [1933], U. Tansykbaev "Autogenous welding" [1930s], "Loading of Martin" [1933], M. Kurzin's "Team of Woodworkers" and "Fire Brigade" (both – 1934). It was from two types of perception of the East (reality in general) – memorial (hedonistic utopia) and futurological (social utopia) – that the entire subsequent spectrum of the plastic language and genres of art of Uzbekistan was formed (Khakimov, A. A., 2010).

This also includes the words of N. Akhmedova: "...During the period under study, the bold searches by A. Volkov, M. Kurzin, U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan for the national dominant in Uzbek painting frightened critics as "manifestations of formalism and bourgeois Western influence" (Khakimov A.A., 2010) ...by the end of the 30s, it became clear that the bright individualism of these masters was beginning to "interfere" with the established Stalinist ideology, for which the main thing was the development of the principles of art, developing on the basis of proletarian internationalism and the unity of Soviet culture. The harsh ideological pressure and the establishment of the method of socialist realism radically changed the artistic situation (Akhmedova, N., 2004). Further, Akhmedova notes: The basis for development is the formulation "art is nation-

al in form and socialist in content." By the end of the 30s, these principles began to be considered fundamental, socialist realism was recognized as a unified stylistic method (Akhmedova, N., 2004).

During this period, the architectural landscape received sufficient development in the works of P. Benkov, O. Tatevosyan, Z. Kovalevskaya, R. Timurov. These artists try to convey the national peculiarity, the sunny flavor of the East in their landscapes. National features, namely this aspect of the issue is most prominently shown in architectural landscapes, and are reflected in the work of artists: the traditional complex, rooted in consciousness, although prohibited by Soviet ideology, implicitly pulsed and was constantly reproduced by it. Despite the revolutionary transformations, everything still persisted for a long time and influenced the tastes and needs of the broad strata of society. It is noteworthy, therefore, that in the early 30s, despite the demands of "modern", that is, Soviet, themes in the paintings of A. Volkov, P. Benkov, Usto Mumin (A. Nikolaev), O. Tatevosyan ... there are contemporary reality is still the traditional East and the nomadic steppe (The art of Soviet Uzbekistan. 1917–1972, 1976).

In the post-war period of creativity, a large place was occupied by the genre landscape with human figures, which essentially replaced the multi-figure genre painting characteristic of A. Volkov's work: "In numerous landscapes, the artist conveys the dramatic transitions of the state of nature and man in it – "Evening. Outskirts of the city", "Crossing the stream", "Autumn", "Autumn landscape" [1946–1956]" (The art of Soviet Uzbekistan. 1917–1972, 1976).

A number of artists of the older generation who made a significant contribution to the formation of the painting school of Uzbekistan in the 20–30s, in the 40s and especially in the first post-war decade sharply moved away from their previous quests, and not least – under the pressure of criticism, which dogmatically interpreted the principles of socialist realism. For O. Tatevosyan, N. Kashina, N. Karakhan and U. Tansykbaev, this period turned out to be contradictory, in some ways even a crisis. However, in their works one can also see an overcoming of the

nature-ascertaining direction due to their convergence with the principles of the “Benkov school” (Lakovskaya V.L.,1984). It is

known that Dorival considered impressionism “a variant of realism” (The art of Soviet Uzbekistan. 1917–1972, 1976).

Figure 1. *A. Volkov – Autumn. 1956, canvas, oil. State Museum of Arts of Uzbekistan, Tashkent*



This fact was reflected even more precisely in the study of N. Akhmedova – For A. Volkov, U. Tansykbaev, N. Karakhan, V. Ufimtsev, M. Kurzin, Usto Mumin (A. Nikolaev) – this was a complex, dramatic turning point in their aesthetic views. As M. Zemskaya rightly notes using the example of the evolution of A. Volkov, the transition from flatness, decorative and symbolic understanding of color to the “softening” of these components led artists to a peculiar impressionistic manner, which many of them associated in these years with working in the open air (Akhmedova, N. 2004).

As noted above, this period was marked by the development of the industrial landscape. In 1935, the artist U. Tansykbaev worked on creating landscapes of this type: “...In his paintings on industrial themes of these years, in the construction of volumetric plastic forms and partly in color with a predominance of locally associated, similar in tone colors (brown, blue or red scale) one can also feel the influence of the pictorial concepts of A. Volkov and, more distantly, P. Gauguin (Lakovskaya, V.L.,1984). Tansykbaev’s paintings are still experiments with color, impulsively written literate pieces

of Uzbek life in one breath, but already filled with light and air, the result of constant work in the open air, exploration of the surrounding world. Despite the fact that the artist creates these paintings in the traditions of post-impressionism, they fully contain the national characteristics of the Uzbek people.

Later, already in the 40s, U. Tansykbaev, working in the vicinity of Tashkent and in the valley of the Chirchik River, relying on numerous sketches from nature, created the painting “In the Valley of Chirchik” [1940], which exists in two versions. The main version was first exhibited at the spring exhibition of landscape and still life in Tashkent [1940]. Under the direct impressions of living nature, he created landscapes that were far from similar to diligent academic studies, moving on to free compositions, diversity and generalizations, the highest point of which would be the creation of the painting “Morning of the Kairakkum Hydroelectric Power Station” [1957]. But before that, U. Tansykbaev worked during the war at UzTAGA Windows, N. Karakhan, O. Tatevosyan, A. Podkovyrov worked with him. U. Tansykbaev creates a series of paintings “On the Roads

of War” [1942] – 15 paintings. The paintings are made in the landscape genre in muted tones, with a “severe” color scheme chosen. They cannot be called sketches from life, in the full sense of the word, but they are not yet full-fledged paintings, but rather executed as

plans, as sketches for a cycle of future historical landscape paintings. The canvases were designed as illustrations for written wartime documents. Together they create an atmosphere of horror, chaos and hopelessness. Each picture is a complement to the other.

Figure 2. *U. Tansykbaev – Morning of the Kairakkum hydroelectric station. 1957, canvas, oil. Museum of Oriental Art. Moscow*



A wealth of color solutions is inherent in the work of N. Karakhan, this is the extreme blueness of the sky and mountains. N. Karakhan – boldly uses orange, golden yellow with violet-blue spots of bright green, creating a major chord. The picturesque solution is emotionally impressive and convincingly conveys the unique beauty of the mountain landscape with wheat fields cultivated by man. Mountain sketches” [1937], “Kishlak in the mountains” [1940], “Bukhara sketches” [1943] (in the collection of the NBU), “Native land” [1948].

For this period, the work of P. P. Benkov is characterized by a more emotional intensity of landscapes. They become more lyrical, a slight sadness shines through them, and a feeling of loneliness of the author ap-

pears. The style of writing also changes, the stroke becomes more sweeping and free; detailed elaboration almost disappears; the coloring is calmer, muted. This will further lead to the creation of so-called “mood landscapes”.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it should be noted that by now two large traditions have been deeply rooted in landscape painting – the tradition of A. Volkov, which will receive a rapid dawn in the art of Uzbekistan in the 90s of the twentieth century, when the so-called iconic landscape, landscape-symbol, and also traditions, and laid down by P. Benkov, which is further transformed into chamber-salon landscapes.

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