

Russian Artists in Samarkand

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ABSTRACT: The article deals with the pilgrimage of Russian artists to Samarkand and their creative process of this period of the associated artistic life of this ancient city.

KEYWORD: depicting, illustrations, caravans, camps, drawings, expeditions, ethnographically.

Until the 60s and 70s of the 19th century, Central Asia remained unknown to wide circles of Russian society. The discovery of the beauty and original life of this region was made by N.N. Karazins by many Russian artists who, under various circumstances, visited Turkestan. The artists traveled a lot and looked with interest at a new country for them, striving to capture in its entirety a contradictory, little-known world in its entirety and ethnographically accurately.

Nikolai Nikolaevich Karazin in 1867 interrupted his studies at the Academy of Arts, where he entered in 1865 as a volunteer, already an established person, not in military service, and went to Central Asia. He subsequently described his impressions in a travel essay "From Orenburg to Tashkent" (1). The essay was illustrated by the author's drawings depicting "post stations, views of the areas through which he passed, caravans, camps, various types of Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, scenes from their life, bazaars, streets of Turkestan cities with their motley crowd" (2).

Karazin repeatedly refers to Turkestan impressions. The autobiographical essay "The Two-Legged Wolf" tells about the incredible difficulties and hardships that the Russian soldier had to overcome when crossing the waterless sands of Adam-Kirilgan. The history of this campaign is captured by him in a number of large watercolors, published in the form of an album (3). In 1874, the first scientific expedition was equipped to study the navigability of the Amu Darya basin. It also included N.N. Karazin, who thus became one of the pioneers of "peaceful" Central Asia. The works performed during the expedition brought European fame to Karazin.

At the end of the XIX century there was an intensive development of the Turkestan region. Together with scientists, artists /S. Dudin, P. Simakov, V. Litvinov, P. Pokryshkin / took part in the study of Central Asia, who in their drawings preserved for us the unique appearance of a number of architectural monuments of Samarkand. To a large extent, their graphics were also applied - fixing materials of an ethnographic nature and decorative and applied art. At the same time, the collection of the first collections of the folk art of the region began (4).

At the beginning of the 20th century, Russian artists made a real pilgrimage to Samarkand. They are attracted by the origins of Eastern culture, they strive to comprehend the national character of the

Central Asian peoples through their folklore, folk art, and architectural monuments. At this time, Albert Benois, R. Sommer, M. Mikeshin, S. Svetoslavsky visited Samarkand. The city in their work found a worthy display. So, for example, the architectural landscapes of Samarkand by R. Sommer / “At Bibi-Khanym”, “Street near Gur-Emir” / are distinguished by unusual freshness and picturesque perception of nature, although in the history of art the author is known as an artist distinguished by meticulous execution and academic stereotype of picturesque tricks. Impressions from the architecture of Samarkand, the life of the city were used by A.N. Benois in his famous sketches - panels for the Kazan railway station in Moscow (5). In the panel “Asia” the motif of the architecture of the Registan is clearly traced, in another panel / a variant of the same theme / the appearance of the Registan minarets is also felt.

Samarkand was also fascinated by K.A. Korovin, who came here to collect material for the World Exhibition of 1900 in Paris. Large panels were ordered for him for the department of Central Asia.

Fascinated by the life of a fabulous city, Korovin painted a lot of sketches, on the basis of which the Turkestan cycle of five huge interconnected canvases arose. The shape of the panel is reminiscent of the East. Exotic life is visible through the arches of Muslim architecture: crowds of merchants, colorful patterns of oriental fabrics, fragments of architecture and decor are scorched by the hot sun. The unusual composition was a huge success at the Paris exhibition and made it possible for Europeans to feel the fabulous charm of Central Asia, which so struck the artist himself.

Samarkand impressions were also used by Korovin in sketches of scenery for the ballet “Corsair”, staged at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow in 1912. The sketch “Slave Bazaar in the East” is an image of a city square, the character of which is clearly visible - this is Afrasiab with its domes and minarets (6).

The center of ancient Central Asian culture also attracted P.V. Kuznetsov. “For two summers”, he writes in his autobiographical notes, “I reflected the nature and life of this region in my works. The coloring of everything I saw there, peculiar for us Russians, gave me new emotions and a new approach to painting, dictated by the surrounding reality. Teahouse and visitors sitting on bright cushions in colorful iridescent robes, drinking refreshing, fragrant tea, ponds, pools, as if in a mirror reflecting this whole picture, powerful trunks of spreading plane trees stunned with their unexpectedness. I visited bazaars with their wonderful examples of pottery, bird markets with proud peacocks spreading their golden emerald tails in the sun like giant fans, baskets of fruits and vegetables, completely different people, with golden and brown faces, with slanting cuts of beautiful almond-shaped eye, animals, acrobats, trainers - everything was noisy, alive, seething ...” (7).

This is how the artist saw the “fabulous East”, and this is how he sees it in his works of the Samarkand cycle.

Shortly before the start of the First World War, Sergei Glagol /S.S. Sergeevich/ visited Samarkand. A well-known critic and art theorist was also an outstanding draftsman. In his sketches, perhaps for the first time among Russian masters, preference is given to a “pure” landscape. Such are his views of the desert, the banks of semi-high rivers and ditches (8).

Not without the influence of Russian artists who came to Uzbekistan, the talent of Leon Leonardovich Bure, who was born and raised in Samarkand, developed and strengthened. Even at an early age, he showed an interest in painting. The gifted young man was noticed by the artists S. Dudin, L. Kurennoy, who advised him to go to study. In 1904, he went to Moscow, where he studied at the private school of V.N. Meshkov, and later moved to St. Petersburg and continued his studies in the workshops of I.Ya. Bilibin and F.A. Rubo.

Already during his studies, L.L. Bure shows creative activity, participates in Samarkand sketches at the exhibitions of the Society of Moscow Artists /1905, Moscow/ and the Union of Russian Artists /1907-1911, St. Petersburg/. These are mainly architectural landscapes /“Afternoon at Bibi-Khanym”, “Samarkand”, “Registan Square”, “Shop with Red Pepper”/, distinguished by the nobility of color and variety of angles of architectural monuments.

A brief outline of the stay of Russian artists in Samarkand allows us to say that they managed not only to feel and convey the originality of the Uzbek national culture, but to a certain extent contributed to the awakening of interest in fine arts among the population of Samarkand. True, this could not yet give significant results in pre-revolutionary Turkestan, since religious prohibitions severely limited the possibilities of artistic creativity.

The development of the culture of Uzbekistan has passed a long and difficult historical path. In the conditions of endless wars and devastating raids of external enemies, many cultural values perished and were revived again by the hands of the industrious Uzbek people, who sacredly preserve the historical traditions of their culture.

Samarkand turned out to be a unique city in this respect. Firstly, medieval architecture in all its unique originality has been preserved here, almost to a greater extent than in other centers. Secondly, in this city, as nowhere else in Central Asia, ancient cultural traditions were honored and honored. This peculiar, semi-legendary “Memory of Ulugbek” attracts and fascinates. Perhaps, due to these circumstances, Samarkand, like nowhere else, has created favorable conditions for the integration of the all-Russian and local cultural traditions.

It was this phenomenon that became the basis that determined the specifics of a new historical stage in the artistic life of Samarkand.

Literature

1. N.N. Karazin. From Orenburg to Tashkent. SPb., 1886.
2. E.V. Nogaevskaya. N.N. Karazin. - Russian art. Essays on the life and work of artists of the second half of the 19th century. M., 1971. p. 359.
3. Ibid.
4. The idea of collecting materials of the people's art belongs to V.V. Stasov, who put forward in the 1870s. The idea of creating an Ethnographic Museum in St. Petersburg.
5. State Tretyakov Gallery. Works of Russian artists of the 18th - early 20th centuries. Catalog. M., 1984. p. 39.
6. Ibid. p. 223.
7. Quoted from: A. Rusakova. Pavel Kuznetsov. L., 1977. p. IZ.
8. Among the works of S. Glagol stands out a small sketch “On the banks of the Amu-Darya. Chardzhuy” / State Tretyakov Gallery, b / d. /. See: State Tretyakov Gallery. Works of Russian artists of the 18th - early 20th centuries. Catalog. M., 1984. p. 422.