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TAHIR SALAHOV'S WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL THINKING

Abstract. The article is devoted to Tahir Salahov's work, the famous Azerbaijani artist, laureate of the USSR State Prizes. The article deals with the features of national and transnational thinking, which are characteristic for the artist's work. The subject of the research is the Russian theme in T. Salahov's work. It is noted that the Soviet and now Russian theme is widely represented in his portraits, among which are especially interesting portraits of the composer Dmitry Shostakovich, the sportswoman Olga Rukavishnikova, the poet Andrei Voznesensky and many others. Tahir Salahov as a representative of two countries – Azerbaijan and Russia brought our peoples closer together with all his multifaceted works and wide public activities through multiplying and strengthening what had been achieved with new creative achievements.

Keywords: Tahir Salahov, fine arts of Azerbaijan, national and transnational thinking, painting, portrait.

Introduction. Tahir Salahov was one of those brush masters whose work had gone beyond the national framework. The young artist already took the path of rapid creative development with his famous dissertation – “From Watch” (1957). There were and continue to exist different criteria in evaluating Salahov's work, art historians have emphasized those and other features of his artistic method. The artist's paintings were highlighted on the plane of the embodiment of the everyday work of our days' heroics, human psychology, maternal feelings, Roman countries, and finally, multiculturalism. Our definition – Russian theme – although not new (in an unnamed form), occupies an important place in the artist's work, which are represented by a large number of works.

The interpretation of the main material. The Russian theme for Salahov is not foreign. This is a special theme, which embodied in the Master's work, in fact, is a successful example of artistic understanding and fusion of two cultures - Azerbaijani and Russian.

Early Salahov represented a merely local, Azerbaijani school of painting. There were national schools promoted by the ideology of that time during the Soviet period. These schools (especially in the east) were needed to demonstrate the cultural achievements of peoples. But, mildly speaking, this is hardly noticeable on the example of Salahov's work. The national core was always present in his canvases, but it was a peculiar, specific perception and manifestation of the national spirit. And the theme was modern. His paintings described the everyday life of oil workers, repairmen and fishermen. All this was original, national and most importantly, clearly not in the spirit of socialist realism. The artist looked for and found new visual forms for the embodiment of his thoughts. And it is not surprising that young Tahir already acquired a reputation as one of the leading artists of the "severe style" along with Viktor Popkov, Pavel Nikonov, Viktor Ivanov and some others in the early years of his creative life. Moreover, many consider him not only a representative, but even the founder of this style [4]. Except for Izzat Klychev, Tahir Salahov was almost the only "national" painter who chose a "severe style" for the embodiment of his creative fantasies. In addition, Alexander Kamensky introduced this term to denote the young artists' work at the end of the 50s-60s, i.e. just for the time of Salahov's arrival in the "big" art. So, the stylistic direction was determined for the young Tahir almost from his student days and he remained faithful to this direction at least until the early 90s, until new tendencies emerged in his paintings. "Tahir Salahov rehabilitated 19th century art, – said People's Artist Viktor Ivanov. – He did not break with the traditions of art of the past century, which was then considered correct, but found for it a living form of expression, not a reconstruction of techniques, but a continuation of living art" [5].

Salahov's work is national, which was invested in international. This last word can be perceived as a synonym for the Russian realistic school of painting, which received a new round of development (acquiring a new theme and meaning) already in the Soviet, more precisely in the post-Stalin period. It was exactly this art that had a core influence on the Salahov's work and creative searches. Hence the apartness, originality of his national

theme, which has absorbed the best examples of the most advanced by those standards of Soviet painting.

The path to Olympus was not long, but not easy either. Salahov was born in Baku in 1928. He graduated from the MSAAI named after V.I.Surikov in 1957. The 38-year-old artist was already elected a corresponding member of the USSR AA in 1966. By this time, the Salahov phenomenon had already become an integral part of Soviet culture, at the same time retaining the features of the national.

He painted, painted with love, painted the Caspian Sea, Baku, other cities, old buildings, bullfighting, palm trees, mother, close friends, celebrities, familiar girls - beautiful and not so beautiful. The main feature manifested in all this - unless, of course, not counting the high skill, talent - is love, a constant craving for favorite profession, which runs like a red thread through all the artist's work. Salahov strives for love in everything - and art is his everything.

T. Salahov became "Russian" from the first years of his successful progress. At the same time, there are works on a Russian theme that relate to the artist's "Azerbaijani" period (it can be considered one of the synonyms for "early Salahov"). The most famous work of this type can be considered "Window. Morning of Moscow", which was painted in 1959. The young artist created this work two years after graduation. He already felt a spiritual need to reflect a realistic, at first glance not very romantic image of the city, which became his home. However, romanticism is not unfamiliar to the artist's handwriting. His romanticism is peculiar, included in the severe touches of a realistic embodiment. "Window. Morning of Moscow" is no exception. Despite the snow-covered roofs of neighboring houses – and they form the compositional basis of the panorama of the city that opens from the window – there is a lot of sunlight in the work, which is associated with peace of mind, joy, kindness. "Window. Moscow Morning" is a work in a work, or almost a work in a work, which is often called a double exposition. A narrow panorama of Moscow houses and yards, windows of the upper floors opens up, but the artist showed all this from the window, from the artist's window. Besides the panorama, the viewer sees the window from the inside, its frame, the window sill, on which there is an empty can of brushes and a couple of squeezed out tubes next to it. All this creates not only a romantic, but also a creative atmosphere, a feeling of closeness of a creative person. As if there is not a

viewer at the window, but Salahov himself, who admires the panorama of the capital bathed in the rare winter sun. The viewer sees the city through the artist's eyes and this is undoubtedly the great merit of this work. It should be noted that the fate of this early painting on a Russian theme turned out to be successful, like the fate of most of Salahov's paintings. The work still evokes associations, becoming the object of new research. In our opinion, the painting is also interesting because it is Salahov's first known work on the Russian Soviet theme.

Double exposition is not so typical for the artist's compositions, although there are exceptions related to a later time. Some paintings from the Venetian series come to mind involuntarily, where the artist returns again to a similar type many years later. Particularly, these are the landscapes "Venice. View from the balcony. Hotel "Terminus"" [Fig. 1] and "Venice. View from the window. Hotel "Terminus"" (both 1999). One of the researchers of Salahov's art, corresponding member of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, professor A. Salamzade writes by drawing attention to this feature: "Such a double exposition is presented on the painting "Venice. View from the Window. Hotel "Terminus". Double exposition as a window to the world can be realized both with the help of the window and with the help of a mirror in the fine arts" [1, p. 27-29]. The researcher had in mind the equally well-known work by Salahov on the Italian theme "Cafe Greco" here, in which the effect of the double exposition is achieved with the help of a mirror, not a window. However, let's return to the Russian theme in Salahov's work.

Summing up the primary results, it can be noted that the Russian theme is represented mainly by the landscapes that we talked about in Salahov's early work. The Russian theme is much more widely represented in the subsequent periods of the artist's work and portraits come to the fore. Portraits become the key to unraveling the secrets of the human soul. However, like most genre paintings. "What pleases most here is that any Tahir Salahov's work – paintings painted over the years or hastily made sketches - is always an image: of a person, time, era ..." [6].

Of course, one of the best works of the early period of the artist's work is the portrait of the composer Dmitry Shostakovich, which was painted in several versions (1974–76) [Fig. 2]. The portrait did not succeed right away. At least everything turned out much easier with the portrait of Gara Garayev. "The artist admits that he did not succeed with the portrait of

Shostakovich until he put the composer on an ottoman without elbows” [3]. Salahov thought about the composition for a long time. And Dmitry Dmitrievich was not very “obedient”. From Salahov’s memoirs: “After a while Shostakovich did call me and said: “I’m waiting for you, come!”... I did not immediately manage to find the right position there, at the dacha in Zhukovka, in which the composer would feel at ease and as it were, forgot about me. But even then, when the pose seemed to have been found, I noticed his some nervousness, anxiety and tragedy for a long time, which were seen even through external correctness and I tried to express this feeling in a large watercolor, which I painted then. Later I came a couple more times to make separate sketches of the hands and head – after all, I was simultaneously working on two versions of the portrait in oil – full face and in profile” [2]. The portrait got to be somewhat philosophical. The composer’s thoughtful gaze is directed far away. The prevailing cold tones give the painting a slightly excited, emotional character. Here is what the honored journalist of Azerbaijan G.Mikeladze says about this work referring to one of the catalogs of the artist’s works: “Later, a note appeared in the catalog: “The portrait of the composer D.Shostakovich by T. Salahov is a philosophical portrait of a Human who bears the burden of responsibility for the fate of the 20th century”” [6].

The portrait in Salahov’s work underwent significant changes in the post-Soviet period. The pose of the depicted also changed, acquiring a freer, relaxed character. For example, the portrait of the master of sports of international class, athlete Olga Rukavishnikova, painted in oil (1998). The athlete’s free, relaxed manner, who is sitting in the chair, clearly goes beyond the “severe style” and warm color tones no less herald new beginnings [Fig. 3]. The portrait of Ira Strueva (2000) was created in the same spirit. The portrayed woman, on whose delicate shoulders is thrown a black coat, is portrayed almost in full face, from a medium distance. Her quiet, calm, at the same time attentive, penetrating gaze is directed to the viewer. However, the pinnacle of Salahov’s “post-severe” style (our definition – auth.) on the Russian theme should be considered the portrait of Mstislav Rostropovich (2000), the famous Bakuvian and at the same time Muscovite as Salahov himself.

The work arouses interest for many features, for example, the symbolic details, which are included in the composition. Music stands or music scores are used as such details. The artist depicted many such music stands, real and surreal, surrounding the cellist from all sides. There are practically no

cold tones in work. The painting was painted in dark and light red, less often brown. Rostropovich's position in the picture is also interesting. He sits, holds his head high and slightly presses his feet against his favorite musical instrument, which he plays, as if he has forgotten about everything in the world. The maestro has an unnatural, excited mood caused by playing the cello. He is wearing a white shirt with a bow tie on the collar and a brown suit that stands out noticeably against the background of light brown music stands. The painting reflects the emotional mood of the virtuoso performer during the performance in realistic tones. There is no such stiffness, immobility and silence that we saw in early portraits, for example, in the portrait of Shostakovich. This is another example of the evolution of Salahov's artistic style in the mature period of creativity [Fig. 4].

The significance of Tahir Salahov's personality as a symbol of Azerbaijani and Russian friendship and creative relationships not only does not diminish, on the contrary, it steadily increases in the post-Soviet period. First, this theme acquires new qualities in the new historical and political conditions, serving as a symbol of the development of cultural relationships. Secondly, Salahov's interest was growing in this topic, which can be confirmed by the increase in the number of works created by him on this topic. Let's also talk about one nuance. We believe that the Russian theme in the artist's work is best manifested in the Azerbaijani art history. Since it is usually considered "in the order of things" without special emphasis in Russian art history. Moreover, this belongs to a greater extent to the "late" Salahov, i.e. to his work of the period of independence.

The portrait of the poet Andrei Voznesensky (2005) is an interesting and intricate, which was created in oil. The poet sits motionless in an armchair, leaning on the handle and intertwining his fingers in front of him. His trusting, straightforward gaze is directed at the viewer, although the poet is compositionally portrayed in three-quarters. He is wearing a blue jacket and a red scarf around his neck. The successful combination of blue and red creates a certain coloristic rhythm in the composition. The curtain, which falls down behind the armchair in which the poet sits, is also red. We have already said that the features of severity, which are characteristic of Salahov's work, noticeably recede in the mature period, yielding primacy to warmer tones. The portrait of Voznesensky is the best example of this transformation, which manifests itself not only in colors, but also in the general mood of the composition, particularly in the image of the person being portrayed.

Conclusion. Salahov's Russian theme is interesting, colorful and multifaceted. Not everything has been studied in it yet. We have highlighted only about the most significant works based on the theme and method under consideration. The allocation of the Russian themes into a separate structure in Salahov's work, its scientific substantiation is the key result of the study. A fundamentally new formulation was formed in assessing Tahir Salahov's work in it, which had already become the object of art historical analysis according to the classical scheme. The discovery of new features and the interpretation of original interpretations confirm the inexhaustibility of the forthcoming formulations in the method of studying the artist's heritage and the possibility of putting forward new reasoning. Hopefully, further research will continue in this area.

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Xəzər Zeynalov (Azərbaycan)

TAHİR SALAHOVUN YARADICILIĞI MİLLİ VƏ TRANSMİLLİ TƏFƏKKÜR KONTEKSTİNDƏ

Məqalə görkəmli Azərbaycan rəssamı, Dövlət Mükafatları laureatı Tahir Salahovun yaradıcılığına həsr olunmuşdur. Məqalədə rəssamın yaradıcılığı üçün xarakterik olan milli və transmilli təfəkkür xüsusiyyətləri nəzərdən keçirilir. Tədqiqatın predmetini T.Salahovun yaradıcılığında rus mövzusu təşkil edir. Qeyd olunur ki, öncə sovet, indi isə rus mövzusu, onun portretlərində geniş təmsil olunmuşdur. Onlardan bəstəkar Dmitri Şostakoviç, idmançı qız Olqa Rukavişnikova, şair Andrey Voznesenski və bir çox başqalarının portretləri xüsusi maraq doğurur. İki ölkəni – Azərbaycanı və Rusiyanı təmsil edən Tahir Salahovun çoxşaxəli yaradıcılığı, böyük ictimai fəaliyyəti xalqımızı daha da yaxınlaşdıraraq əldə edilmiş nəticələri çoxaldır və yeni yaradıcılıq nailiyyətləri ilə möhkəmləndirir.

Açar sözlər: Tahir Salahov, Azərbaycan təsviri sənəti, milli və transmilli təfəkkür, rəngkarlıq, portret.

Хазар Зейналов (Азербайджан)

ТВОРЧЕСТВО ТАИРА САЛАХОВА В КОНТЕКСТЕ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОГО И ТРАНСНАЦИОНАЛЬНОГО МЫШЛЕНИЯ

Статья посвящена творчеству известного азербайджанского художника, лауреата Госпремий СССР Таира Салахова. В статье рассматриваются особенности национального и транснационального мышления, характерного для творчества художника. Предметом исследования является российская тематика в творчестве Т.Салахова. Отмечается, что советская, а ныне российская тема широко представлена в его портретах, среди которых особенно интересны портреты композитора Дмитрия Шостаковича, спортсменки Ольги Рукавишниковой, поэта Андрея Вознесенского и многих других. Будучи представителем двух стран – Азербайджана и России, Таир Салахов всем своим многогранным творчеством и широкой общественной деятельностью сближает наши народы, преумножая и укрепляя достигнутое новыми творческими свершениями.

Ключевые слова: Таир Салахов, изобразительное искусство Азербайджана, национальное и транснациональное мышление, живопись, портрет.

FIGURES



Fig. 1. Venice. View from the balcony. Hotel "Terminus".
Canvas, oil. 1999.



**Fig. 2. Portrait of the composer Dmitry Shostakovich.
Canvas, oil. 1976.**



**Fig. 3. Portrait of Olga Rukavishnikova.
Canvas, oil. 1998.**



**Fig. 4. Portrait of Mstislav Rostropovich.
Canvas, oil. 2000.**