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**NATIONAL FORMS OF INTERPRETATION
OF THE CITYSCAPE IN MODERN AZERBAIJANI FINE ARTS**

Abstract. The article deals with the theme of the cityscape and the peculiarities of its national interpretation in the modern fine arts of Azerbaijan. The author notes that the cityscape as an independent genre emerged in the art of Azerbaijan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But, the real flourishing of this genre happened in the middle and in the second half of the last century. Representatives of the classical generation of Azerbaijani art created wonderful panoramas of Baku and other cities by glorifying the beauty of their native land during this period.

The genre got a new round of development during the period of independence. Unlike classical art, motifs of folklore theme, national symbolism, decorativeness and sometimes abstractionism prevail in the cityscape of the post-Soviet period. Particularly, such are the cityscapes by Jamil Mufidzadeh, Altai Sadikhzadeh, Ismail Mamedov, Isa Mamedov, Gurban Melikov and many other artists.

Key words: Art of Azerbaijan, cityscape, painting, graphics, Icheri Sheher (Old City)

Introduction. Cityscape as an independent genre dates back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Azerbaijani art. This was a period when the bases of realist national fine arts were gradually formed under the influence of European and Russian painting in Azerbaijan. Watercolor on paper and paintings with tempera in the household genre dominated at that time. Elements of cityscape were already reflected in these paintings and these elements formed the basis of the composition in some cases. The bases of academic

painting were formed at that time and there were also landscapes dominated by city buildings. So, the work “View of the Bibi Heybat Mosque”, which was created by the famous artist, educator and national ideologist Alibay Huseynzadeh at the beginning of the last century, can be partially attributed to this genre. But, the real development of this genre began in the 20s of the last century and flourished in the 50s and 70s. Cityscapes, first of all views of Baku are found in the works of almost all well-known representatives of the classical generation of Azerbaijani painting. The views of Baku, its separate parts and buildings were glorified with great love and patriotism in the works by Taghi Taghiyev, Baba Aliyev, Ayyub Mammadov, Ayyub Huseynov, Mahmud Taghiyev, Nadir Gasimov, Ogtay Sadigzadeh and others. “View of Baku”, “View of Baku from the Sea” by Nadir Gasimov, “Baku”, “Baku Bay”, “Yacht Club” by Tagi Tagiyev, “Evening in Bilgah” by Kamil Khanlarov, “Baku. Rainy Day”, “Baku. Night Landscape” [2, p. 19], “Nizami Square” [2, p. 22] by Elmira Shakhtakhtinskaya are among them. Alakbar Rzaguliyev’s series of engravings is dedicated to old Baku; the motifs of household genre prevail in those graphic sheets. A unique creative imagination is reflected on the basis of the idea-aesthetics and composition of Tahir Salahov, Mikayil Abdullayev, Togrul Narimanbeyov, Elbay Rzaguliyev and others’ paintings depicting the landscapes of Baku. The harmonious reflection of the beauty of the architectural image and landscape of the city, the unique perception and embodiment of the image of the native city are the main features of their creative ideology.

The interpretation of the main material. The forms of Tahir Salahov’s artistic interpretation are peculiar and deeply individual. He created canvases depicting his hometown in the 60s and 70s of the last century. At the same time, Icheri Sheher, which is a kind of citadel of the capital of Azerbaijan, served directly as the leitmotif of cityscapes. One of the artist’s best works on this topic is the composition “Palace of the Shirvanshahs”, created by him in 1966. Large and deaf flats of houses, deep chiaroscuro and contrast, rounded black-green tree crowns - these are the characteristic features of this picturesque composition, which can be considered one of the best examples of the “severe style” represented by the author [Fig. 1]. The artist’s subject and style change quite, acquire new features, which is most evident in the urban theme in the post-Soviet period, especially after the 2000s. Instead of cold flats and contrast, hot tones are increasingly penetrating into the artist’s composition, decorative elements appear, which emphasize the national character of his

canvases. An important indicator of Salahov's creativity during the period of independence is national symbolism, which was little noticed in his works previously. These features can be seen in the famous triptych "Land of Fires" (2007), the symbolic motives of which are associated with Baku. This is a large floating oil production platform in the open sea, which is a symbol of the power of Azerbaijani, the Maiden Tower and the Temple of Fire Worshipers in Surakhany. There is a thesis that embodies the history and modernity of the developing, growing Azerbaijan in the ideological and aesthetic basis of the triptych.

The theme of Baku has received a new round of development in the famous painter Toghrul Narimanbeyov's work since the 60s of the last century. Unlike Salahov, Narimanbeyov used characteristic details and symbolism actively from the very beginning, which became the basis of his colorful compositions. The image of a person and a city merged together in Azerbaijani painting for the first time, which is an original method in praising the beauty of the native city and showing the spiritual world of the person being portrayed. This also manifests itself in the environment of symbolism – the artist often portrayed himself against the background of the monuments of the old city by creating an association of unity, a figurative fusion with Baku. It is no coincidence that one of Narimanbeyov's self-portraits was named "Baku portrait".

Besides himself, Narimanbeyov often portrayed his friends – famous composers, poets and artists against the background of his hometown. For example, such are the portraits of Mstislav Rostropovich, Emin Sabitoglu, Fikret Amirov. Often the artist made written explanations in the composition, which is his favorite style. For example, there is a note made by the artist's hand in French: "Mstislav Rostropovich in his hometown of Baku" on the canvas in the portrait of Rostropovich.

Since gaining independence, Narimanbeyov's work didn't undergo any significant changes. This is explained by the fact that the artist defined his lyrical and decorative style saturated with national symbols from the early stages of his work, despite attacks from conservatively-minded partocrats. There was no need for him to change his style and worldview in the post-Soviet period. He remained faithful to his style for the rest of his life.

Besides Baku, the view of other cities of the republic is widely represented in the Azerbaijani artists' works. Artists painted Ganja, the second largest city in Azerbaijan, Nakhchivan, famous for its rich historical and architectural monuments, Shusha, the cradle of national musical culture, and Sumgayit,

the symbol of giant chemical enterprises throughout the All-Union in the 40s and 70s of the last century. These cityscapes reflected the thematic features of lyrical-romantic, industrial, portrait and other genres; the demonstration of national character, the dialogue between generations, the unity between the past and the present were embodied in the image of the city. Descriptions of Ganja by Sharif Sharifov, Nakhchivan by Ayyub Huseynov, Baku streets and suburban settlements by Boyukagha Mirzazadeh make an interesting impression and create a rich thematic impression. Elturan Avalov's graphic sheets were painted in the spirit of architectural symbols and Shusha, Sheki and the whole estates and individual buildings of Icheri Sheher, the historical center of old Baku were depicted in these works with great love. The embodiment of historical and architectural monuments is an integral part of Shamil Fatullayev's artistic heritage, who is an architect and an artist; his works amaze with the richness of beautiful architectural pearls and their details, as well as a deep sense of volume and space, a demonstration of their elegance and architecture [1, p. 180].

The period of independence opened a new page in the development of the cityscape. The older generation of artists continued to work in the traditional style in the 1990s, despite declining public order, they created large-scale paintings depicting Baku landscapes in the spirit of Soviet monumentalism. A number of compositions created by Mikayil Abdullayev, Davud Kazimov, Taghi Taghiyev, Boyukagha Mirzazadeh, Kazim Kazimzadeh and other classics in the last years of their lives are of this kind. The painting by Ayyub Huseynov, which depicts Baku Boulevard and Maiden's Tower, is interesting. This work, which was created in 1996, is entitled "Baku. Evening". The artist, who was a master of bright colors and very interesting light and shadow, addressed the theme of the Baku landscape previously [5, p. 23]. But, the author preferred the evening view and reflected the crowded Baku Boulevard and surrounding area, which are lost with electricity. The artist depicted the familiar silhouette of the Maiden Tower and the surrounding buildings, which are illuminated by electric lamps against a dark sky [Fig. 2]. The painting was painted in the traditional style, peculiar to the artist's work and the classical perception of the concept of "cityscape". Other works were created in approximately the same spirit by representatives of the older generation on the eve and after gaining state independence.

The changes that took place in the socio-economic life of the 90s left a significant impress on the nature of the development of artistic culture and

particularly art. The attitude towards the cityscape has also changed. The situation was changing dramatically in this direction by the 2000s, although works created in the classical style can be found today. The genre of the cityscape underwent significant changes, as well as the thematic features of native fine arts in general during this period. The main characteristic feature of the cityscape of the 2000s is a kind of thematic synthesis with a pronounced national theme, in which such features are distinguished, such as decorativeness, existentiality, figurativeness, folklore motives and of course, the figurative and philosophical thinking of artists. The multi-layer transformation of artistic thinking into the area of growing national consciousness and the search for new forms especially among young people gave rise to original forms that did not pass by the cityscape.

Moreover, nowadays the cityscape with highlighted symbolic motives acts as a generalizing background, successfully emphasizing the plot-thematic combination of the composition. These are themed paintings using a characteristic city background with easily recognizable architectural landmarks. Taking Baku as an example, this is the Maiden Tower, the Palace of Shirvanshahs complex, Ateshgah in Surakhani and a number of other structures. The successful combination of these symbols with folk motifs determines the direction of the development of the modern cityscape. This tendency is also clearly manifested among the works of the older generation of artists. First of all, the folklore component itself is presented even wider than the cityscape in the graphic compositions by Arif Huseynov. Such compositions by the artist as "The Girl-Grenade", "Flight on the Moon", "The Good Girl", "Dream" and "The Carpet Seller" are noteworthy in this respect. A beautiful girl emerges from the opened grenade in the composition "Grenade Girl"; the audience also sees a miniature panorama of Icheri Sheher, against which she stands. Fairy-tale characters - a guy and two girls, as if saddling the Moon like a horse, fly over Baku in the composition "Flight on the Moon". Delicacy, sophistication and richness of decorative motives are the characteristic features of these works.

No less interesting interpretation of the cityscape in the context of historical themes can be found in the graphic and painting works of another oldest artist Jamil Mufidzadeh. The artist, who possessed a peculiar artistic style and worldview, created a whole gallery of views of Baku, especially its historical core - Icheri Sheher [4, p. 46]. These works that were created in black and white graphics convey the mood and spirit of the old city in their

own way, which is a kind of bridge between the past and the present. Artistic interpretation in the spirit of realistic perception with representative indents, which manifested particularly in the excessive enlargement of individual structures and giving them expressive, arcwise or on the contrary, zigzag outlines, is a characteristic feature of the Baku series of Mufidzadeh's works.

Many Azerbaijani artists created cityscapes with national content during the period of independence. We can mention artists such as Ashraf Heybatov, Altay Sadigzadeh, Ismayil Mammadov, Mir Teymur Mammadov, Anvar Asgarov, Isa Mammadov, Inna Kostina, Vugar Ali, Ilyas Alov, Gurban Malikov [6] and many others. Houses and streets full of cars in Baku are painted in an expressive avant-garde style in the existentialist cityscapes by Altay Sadigzadeh [Fig. 3]. The views of the native city reflect the author's characteristic style in these works. The cityscapes by our compatriot Ashraf Heybatov, who has been living in Germany for more than 30 years, also leave a deep impression. His cityscapes include interesting views of old Baku, architectural monuments, scenes of everyday life of the city's residents. Ashraf Heybatov is one of those who are actively introducing national themes into the cityscape. He places his existential heroes in the most unexpected places - sometimes at the top of the old tower, sometimes along the city walls. The characteristics of his heroes are also impressive. They can be lovers, who are quietly admiring the twinkling of stars in the night sky, a belated passerby hurrying home or just an artist making a sketch from nature. Well-known master of ceramics and artist Mir Teymur Mammadov's works of national content are of great interest – Icheri Sheher is an inexhaustible source of creative inspiration and plot-content discoveries for the artist. The artist, who inspires by the unique beauty of the old streets and houses, glorifies about them in his graphic and ceramic works. Ismayil Mammadov's work, who dedicated many works to the Old City, is also noteworthy [Fig. 4]. His paintings show a deep love and respect for this ancient land. A number of works by Zakir Huseynov and Ilyas Alov focus not on cities, but on suburban settlements, which can be considered as a diversity of modern cityscapes. In general, it should be noted that the number of artists who have created works on this subject is not small. This topic, which has entered the field of national content and symbols, has become popular especially in recent years. The works by Rashad Mehdiyev, Ilyas Alov, Anvar Asgarov, Ali Ismayil [3], Gurban Malikov, Intigam Agayev and others attract attention with their variety of

styles, characteristic features of the describing the city and its surroundings. Anvar Asgarov's work "Megapolis" is noteworthy. The composition of this work is completely covered with cube shape elements of the same type, which embrace modern skyscrapers and their tastelessness. The lack of greenery of the landscape, as if urges the audience to be careful and creates in him a feeling of almost the end of the real world.

Conclusion. Today, the cityscape is experiencing a new period of development in Azerbaijani fine arts. Besides the traditional symbols reflected in historical and architectural works, the new architectural symbols of modern Baku – the Flame Towers, the Heydar Aliyev Center, the new high-rise building of SOCAR and other buildings reflecting the latest achievements of architectural and construction techniques stand out. They are reflected in the works by more young artists – Faig Ahmad, Rahim Hashimov, Rashad Alakbarov, Elshan Ibrahimov, Narmina Safarova and others. These artists, who develop the national features of the creative imagination at the crossroads of past and present, imagine the importance of the cityscape in a unique way, first of all, they see a suitable platform for the reflection of national themes – sometimes it is realized in the abstract. The future of this important genre is connected with these nuances.

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Sevinc Əliyeva (Azərbaycan)

MÜASİR AZƏRBAYCAN TƏSVİRİ SƏNƏTİNDƏ ŞƏHƏR MƏNZƏRƏSİNİN MİLLİ TƏFSİR FORMALARI

Məqalə müasir Azərbaycan təsviri sənətində şəhər mənzərəsinə və onun milli təfsir xüsusiyyətlərinə həsr edilmişdir. Müəllif qeyd edir ki, şəhər mənzərəsi müstəqil janr kimi Azərbaycan incəsənətində XIX əsrin sonu –

XX əsrin əvvəllərində yaranmışdır. Lakin bu janrın həqiqi inkişafı ötən əsrin ortalarına və ikinci yarısına təsadüf edir. Bu dövrdə Azərbaycan incəsənətinin klassik nəslinin təmsilçiləri doğma yurdun gözəlliklərini vəsf edərək Bakının və digər şəhərlərin gözəl mənzərələrini yaratmışlar.

Müstəqillik dövründə bu janr yeni inkişaf mərhələsinə qədəm qoymuşdur. Klassik incəsənətdən fərqli olaraq postsovet dövrü şəhər mənzərəsində folklor mövzusu, milli rəmzlər, dekorativlik, bəzən isə abstraksionizm xüsusiyyətləri üstünlük təşkil edir. Cəmil Müfidzadə, Altay Sadıqzadə, İsmayıl Məmmədov, İsa Məmmədov, Qurban Məlikov və bir çox başqa rəssamların yaratdığı şəhər mənzərələri bu qəbildəndir.

Açar sözlər: Azərbaycan incəsənəti, şəhər mənzərəsi, rəngkarlıq, qrafika, içərişəhər.

Севиндж Алиева (Азербайджан)

ФОРМЫ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ ГОРОДСКОГО ПЕЙЗАЖА В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ИЗОБРАЗИТЕЛЬНОМ ИСКУССТВЕ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА

Статья посвящена теме городского пейзажа и особенностям его национальной интерпретации в современном изобразительном искусстве Азербайджана. Автор отмечает, что городской пейзаж как самостоятельный жанр возник в искусстве Азербайджана в конце 19-начале 20 веков. Однако подлинный расцвет этого жанра происходил в середине и во второй половине прошлого столетия. В этот период представители классического поколения искусства Азербайджана создали замечательные панорамы Баку и других городов, воспевая красоту родного края.

Жанр получил новый виток развития в период независимости. В отличие от классического искусства, в городском пейзаже постсоветского периода преобладают мотивы фольклорной тематики, национального символизма, декоративности, а иногда и абстракционизма. Таковы, в частности, городские пейзажи Джамиля Муфидзаде, Алтая Садыгзаде, Исмаила Мамедова, Исы Мамедова, Гурбана Меликова и многих других художников.

Ключевые слова: Искусство Азербайджана, городской пейзаж, живопись, графика, Ичери Шехер.

FIGURES

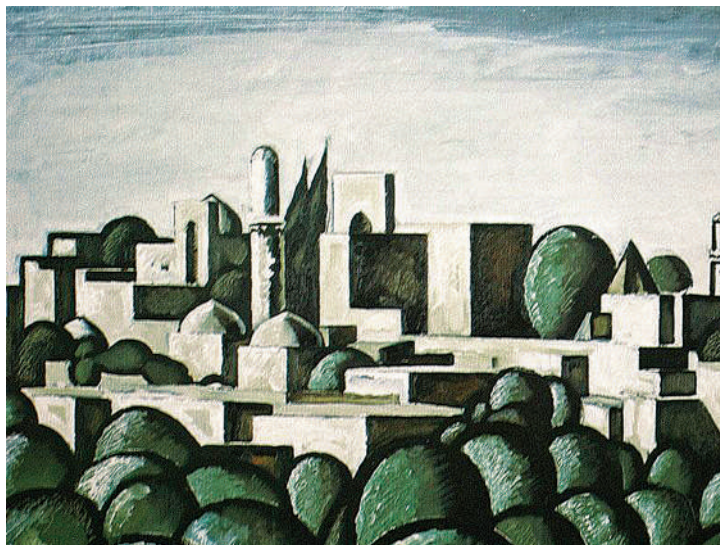


Fig. 1. Tahir Salahov. "The Palace of Shirvanshakhs".
Canvas, oil paint. 1966.



Fig. 2. Ayyub Huseynov. "Baku. Evening".
Canvas, oil paint. 1996.



**Fig. 3. Altay Sadigzadeh. "Baku evening".
Canvas, oil paint. 2000s.**



**Fig. 4. Ismayil Mammadov. "One day in Icheri Sheher".
Paper, mixed technique. 1998.**