
Public and Creative Activities of V.V. Obratsov in 1920-1930

Dr. Bayishbek Dakibaevich Budaichiev

PhD., National Academy of Arts named after T. Sadykov, Bishkek city, Kyrgyz Republic

Corresponding Author: Dr Bayishbek Dakibaevich Budaichiev, E-mail: bbudaichiev@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: October 02, 2020

Accepted: November 15, 2020

Volume: 2

Issue: 6

DOI: 10.32996/jhsss.2020.2.6.27

KEYWORDS

culture, folk art, formation,
studios, graphics, painting,
amateur artists, creativity,
tradition, exhibitions.

ABSTRACT

The article examines the work of V.V. Obratsov, one of the founders of Kyrgyz painting in 1920-1930. The main attention is paid to the work of V. Obratsov on the creation of the first studios in schools and enterprises, holding exhibitions of amateur artists and others. The artist's contribution to the development of newspaper graphics, which was of exceptional importance in the formation of a new art in the republic, is especially noted. The analysis of paintings by V.V. Obratsov, reflecting the past and present of Kyrgyzstan.

1. Introduction

The problems of the development of the distinctive features of the art of peoples, the enrichment of their own artistic fund and interaction with other nations are one of the most important in our time. In this light, it is natural that the enormous attention that contemporary art criticism shows to the study of the problems of the formation and development of the art of peoples, the formation of which took place within the framework of the former USSR. Of particular interest in this regard is the professional art of Kyrgyzstan as an integral phenomenon. At the same time, in the field of art history of the republic, there are still not enough publications devoted to studying the problem of the origin and development of the genre and species system in Kyrgyz art, which made it necessary to fill this gap in this work.

2. Literature Review

The purpose and objectives of the article. The main goal is to identify the main trends, historical patterns in the process of formation and subsequent development of types and genres of fine arts in Kyrgyzstan in the period 1917 - 2010. Accordingly, with the goal of the work, the following tasks are set:

- to identify the conditions for the formation of professional fine arts in Kyrgyzstan in 1920-1930, associated primarily with the arrival of the artist V.V. Obratsova;
- to generalize and systematize factual materials on the opening of the first cultural institutions in the early 1920s: an art workshop for the production of various visual products, the creation of a kind of network of art studios in schools and enterprises, the organization of the first exhibitions of amateur artists to introduce local youth to realistic art;
- using the archival materials of the periodical press of the 1920s of Kyrgyzstan, to study all the graphic works of V.V. Obratsov, which quite often appeared on the pages of newspapers and played a huge role in the formation of new art in the mountainous region. After all, they accelerated the political growth of the population, strengthened and developed Russian-Kyrgyz artistic ties, increased the general level of culture and people.
- to analyze the best paintings by V.V. Obratsov, who, along with newspaper graphics, actively contributed to the emergence and growth of new genres in the fine arts of Kyrgyzstan.

The scientific novelty of the article lies in the fact that it undertakes a characteristic of the cultural life of Kyrgyzstan in 1920-1930, directly related to the multifaceted activities of V.V. Obratsova. All this had a beneficial effect on the process of formation and development of types and genres of professional fine arts of the people.

The formation and development of the fine arts of the Kyrgyz people from 1920 to 1934 was closely connected with the social and creative work of V.V. Obratsova. However, in the scientific literature there have been no studies revealing with an exhaustive completeness the work of this original artist. General information about social, organizational and pedagogical work was given in a concise form [Aitiev, p.123, 124; Volosovich, p. 7; 5, 1; Orlova, p. 327, 393; 9, 19; Umetalieva, p.7; Usabalieva, p. 2,3,4; Yushkova, p.5] and briefly about his work, referring only to paintings [11, p.9-10; 15, p. 189; 16, p. 339]. Some editions published some paintings by V.V. Obratsov [Aitiev, ill. 126,127; Oreshkin, ill. 38; 13, ill. 46; Yushkova, ill. 73].

Among the first researchers who noted the bright talent of V.V. Obratsov can be called B.V. (Weimarn, 1939 p. 7). A. Romm devoted his essay to the study of the creative path of a remarkable painter, full of intense pictorial searches (Romm, 991, p.45-46). Among the publications that consider in sufficient detail his pictorial heritage, but to a lesser extent his graphics and social activities, one should mention the work of V. Chikichev (1976, p. 10-13).

3. Methodology

This is qualitative research using the content analysis approach. About twenty works and other materials are used to Public and Creative Activities V.V. Obratsov in 1920-1930. Besides that, the researcher had used journals, manuscripts and articles to collect data related to the research.

4. Results and Discussion

Vladimir Vitalievich Obratsov was born in 1891, and until 1914 was in the petty bureaucratic service, but "mainly studied, prepared himself for the activity of an artist." During the First World War, fate threw him to Ashgabat. Here, since 1916, for the first time he began to teach drawing classes in the elementary grades of the city school.

Soon the artist was transferred to Tashkent, where since 1919 he taught at the M.Yu. Lermontov. Simultaneously Obratsov began to study in a special "head class" of the Turkestan art school in the studio of the painter A.V. Isupova. Students in this class received the official right to conduct classes on "elementary drawing" in general education schools.

In the summer of 1920, Obratsov arrived in Kyrgyzstan with the task of organizing an art workshop. Its purpose was to promote realistic art and to train young painters and graphic artists. This task, which was difficult for the conditions of that time, was successfully solved. Soon after the arrival of Obratsov, on July 15, 1920, the workshop began to work.

Obratsov was not only the organizer, the permanent leader, but also the direct executor of her orders until March 1922, when, due to financial difficulties in the department of public education, the workshop ceased to exist.

In describing the early activities of Obratsov, it should be especially noted that, in addition to various works performed in the workshop, he paid close attention to the development of graphics in Kyrgyzstan. While many Russian artists took an active part in the design of individual editions of the Kyrgyz press, but the majority of newspaper and magazine illustrations in Kyrgyzstan belonged to Obratsov.

Creativity Obratsov-graphic, in contrast to his painting and teaching, social activities, relatively little coverage and research. The integrity of the prevailing opinion about the meaning of his initial works, in particular, the newspaper graphics of 1925-1934, does not yet exist in the special literature. There are only brief, general characteristics of some engravings or mentions of his activities in newspapers.

The most fruitful period in the work of Obratsov was 1925-1927, when he took a direct part in illustrating a number of major publications of the republican press.

Obratsov paid the main attention in the schedule to works related to the actual topic of the day - the modernization of the village, which was carried out by the Soviet government. The pictorial solution to this topic was directed primarily against patriarchal-feudal and religious vestiges, against the inertia of life and illiteracy, the still strong influence of the kulaks and bais and their attempts to restore their power. In the artist's satirical linocut, the illustrator's talent was organically combined with the knowledge of the depicted facts and events from the life of the collective farm peasantry and dekhkantsa.

This direction of Obratsov's work was clearly revealed in a number of works and, in particular, in an untitled engraving published in the newspaper *Krestyansky Put* (1925, August 23, No. 24), where a scene typical of village life appeared before the reader and viewer. The foreground shows the tall, hunched and thin figure of a barefoot poor man. A bowed head, a face covered with palms, bent legs, as if unable to withstand the collapsing disaster, all this expresses despair. In the center of the sheet, in a precisely found scale relationship with the first plan - a black spot, an expressively highlighted silhouette, a fist is shown leading the last horse of the poor man. Successfully contrasting sheet solution. It clearly contrasts with the expressive silhouette of the fist - the plasticly interpreted figure of the peasant, executed with a wide, dense line, softly running around the contour of his figure.

Often, the artist's satirical works were accompanied by well-aimed, successful signatures, which sometimes were of great importance in revealing the ideological content of the topic. As an example, we can cite engravings - "Lord help! ..." ("Peasant Way", 1925, August 16, No. 21/42). These illustrations attracted the reader with the vitality of sharply noticed images, grotesque artistic interpretation of them and a plot that reveals a deep the social meaning of the depicted.

For a better perception of graphics by the reader, Obratsov tried to find his prototypes in the surrounding life, in the circle of ordinary phenomena well known to the mass audience. At the same time, he strove to endow the images with characteristic and easily recognizable features. The artist consciously resorted to exaggeration of forms, exaggeration of details. So, in the image of fists, he showed them with rare exceptions, fat, self-righteous, hypocritical, greedy and vicious.

The masterful use of these techniques in his work is clearly and convincingly traced in a series of works where, angrily denouncing class enemies, he defended the interests of farmers and peasants. For example, in the cartoon "Our houses, ours!" ("Peasant Way", 1925, September 18, No. 46) - huge, shaking, greedy hands of kulaks hung over the tiny houses of fellow villagers. In the picture "What happens to exploitation of workers?" ("Peasant Way", 1925, August 27, No. 26), with an expressive composition of the sheet - a seated figure of a man shown through the thick bars of an iron grating - Obratsov was able to vividly and figuratively answer the question posed by the newspaper.

The art of newspaper graphics in Kyrgyzstan in 1925-1934, as already noted, was closely associated with political propaganda and agitation and served to popularize the policy of the party and the Soviet government in the field of economic and cultural construction. Considering the composition of the newspaper's readers, Obratsov tried to reveal the meaning of party slogans in an understandable and accessible form using specific examples from the life of Kyrgyzstan.

Obratsov devoted his work to creating posters timed to coincide with the new revolutionary holidays - the anniversary of the Great October Revolution ("Peasant Way", 1925, November 7, No. 53); International Women's Day ("Kyzyl Kyrgyzstan", 1928, February 21, No. 20/279) and other holidays. The artist also responded to one of the most pressing topics for the entire Soviet East - the topic of the ascension of a woman. Among these sheets, it should be noted a composition depicting Kyrgyz and Russian girls with a banner in their hands, transmitted in a dynamic movement, as if striving forward to a new life. Their figures are outlined in a light outline that emphasizes this dynamism and strong-willed impulse. ("Peasant Way", 1925, September 20, No. 36).

It will not be an exaggeration to say that Obratsov was the first in Kyrgyzstan to pay great attention to the issues of educating national personnel. He enjoyed especially great respect and love among the novice Kyrgyz artists. Obratsov organized lectures and courses in drawing, drawing, painting and the basics of sculpture in Pishpek (in 1926 the city was renamed Frunze), as well as for the first time created circles and art studios.

The most popular among young artists was the studio he opened at the Institute of Education in 1926 (in 1928 the Institute was transformed into the Kyrgyz Pedagogical College). This art studio had the honor of being the first in the history of the fine arts of Kyrgyzstan to begin training national artists and organize exhibitions of their works.

This studio, according to the memoirs of K. Sooronbaev [Sooronbaev, p.19], was created in the winter of 1926-1927. The management of the institute ordered twenty simple easels. The students were supplied with the necessary materials - paper, pencil, charcoal and other as far as possible - by the educational part, but most often disinterestedly by Obratsov himself. Drawing classes took place here at first once a week, and since 1928 - twice. K. Zhantoshev, S. Sasykbaev, A. Maldybaev, K. Sooronbaev successfully worked in the older group of students - students, who in the 1950s - 1960s will become famous cultural figures. Later G. Aitiev, as well as Ch. Ibragimov, I. Saadaev, A. Aydarkulov began to visit the studio.

Exemplary's deep understanding of the tasks of Soviet culture and constant creative fervor were passed on to his students. Not without the influence of the teacher, the students of the art studio took part in the public life of the pedagogical technical school - in the publication of wall newspapers, in the creation of slogans and posters, in the design of classrooms and the club with portraits of prominent scientists, in decorating educational buildings on holidays.

Obratsov's undoubted merit consisted in the desire not only to give good professional skills to his students, but also to bring up the best human traits in them. With his assistance, the People's Commissariat for Education of Kyrgyzstan sent several talented amateur artists to art schools and universities in the country.

One of the first in 1926 to successfully pass the entrance exams to the Moscow Art School in memory of 1905 - A. Vasiliev. Later, he entered VKHUTEIN. In the summer of 1928, K. Sooronbaev was sent to the same university, who, on the advice of his teacher, decided to enter the preparatory department. But to his chagrin, this course was no longer at the Institute. Obratsov's great efforts to obtain in 1932 permission for G. Aitiev to enter the Moscow art school were not crowned with success [20]. During these years, Kyrgyzstan experienced an acute need for Kyrgyz teachers, therefore G. Aitiev, at the suggestion of the People's Commissariat for Education, went to Jalal-Abad, postponing for a while a trip to Moscow.

Simultaneously with teaching and managing a studio at the Kyrgyz Pedagogical College, Obratsov has repeatedly organized art circles in the city. And although they acted irregularly, their role was still significant.

The largest among them was the circle, opened in 1925 at the school named after P. Morozov. Here, the basics of drawing were comprehended by students and working youth. In a short period of its existence, this evening studio gained such popularity among art lovers that even the headmaster of the school attended its classes. Among the regular participants of the circle one could meet L. Deimant, I. Romadin, A. Vasiliev, K. Cheprakov - a number of future artists of Kyrgyzstan.

In 1930, the Kyrgyz Theater, Music and Art College was opened in Frunze. The new division (of fine arts) under him was supposed to be made the forge of national cadres of artists - newspapermen, book illustrators and decorators. Obratsov here, too, launched an active career as the head of the educational department and the art department. Along with this, he directed classes in painting and the basics of sculpture.

Obratsov played an important role in organizing and holding the first exhibitions in the capital of the republic. In the summer of 1928, a reporting exhibition of works by Kyrgyz students, pupils of his art studio, opened at the Kyrgyz Pedagogical College. The first creative examination, passed by the pupils of the art studio, contributed to the fact that the organization of annual reporting exhibitions has become a tradition in the pedagogical educational institution. Similar expositions of works (sketches and drawings) by students were held until 1930 with the participation of Obratsov, later, until 1933 - under the leadership of A. Ignatiev.

In the spring of 1930, a personal exhibition of Obratsov's works was held in the art studio of the technical school, which aroused great interest among the public and art lovers of the Kyrgyz capital. Here, the audience for the first time got acquainted with many of the artist's works, performed by him since his arrival in Kyrgyzstan. Genre sketches, portraits, and landscapes were shown.

A decisive role in the development of professional art of the Kyrgyz people was played by the creativity of visiting artists. In 1926, G. Petrov, L. Kasatkin, A. Prostev arrived in Kyrgyzstan from Moscow, G. Solodovnikov from Leningrad in 1929, S. Soldatov from Tashkent, a student of I.E. Repin V. Rozanov, in 1930 from the Belgorod region - A. Ignatiev. From the first days of their stay in Frunze, they embarked on the path of popularizing art through the design of various publications of the local press, public and educational buildings.

During these years, when interest in a comprehensive and systematic study of the mountainous region increased especially, Obratsov's turn to the topic of the past was natural. The choice of subjects in this series is not accidental. Obratsov wanted to convey in them the sequence of the birth, development and defeat of the popular uprising, while not only showing episodes of its history, but revealing the theme of the explosion of popular anger against the enslavers, the theme of the liberation of the people, and characterizing the movement itself, its features and national flavor. In these canvases, different in skill level and manner of execution, Obratsov tried to comprehend the events depicted from the point of view of modernity.

Of the works of this circle, *The Conspiracy* (1931, KNMII named after G. Aitiev) is considered the best work. The picture takes us to the situation preceding the beginning of the popular uprising. The figurative beginning in it is built primarily on the

expressive juxtaposition of the bulk of the mountain slopes and a small group of rebels in the foreground. The originality of the artist's skill was revealed in the construction and drawing of a seemingly static composition of the picture. The artist clearly, rhythmically placed the figures of farmers, horsemen, and successfully found the character of the figures. To create a holistic image of people united together, Obratsov builds the color of the canvas on a combination of local spots. Discarding secondary details, he depicts men and boys in bright shirts, robes and headdresses, which are dominated by combinations of contrasting tones inherent in Kyrgyz folk art - blue and red, blue and orange, pink and purple.

Another painting of the painter "On the Way to China" (1932, KNMII named after G. Aitiev) was also distinguished by the depth of disclosure of the content. The main idea of the work - the defeat of the Kyrgyz uprising of 1916, the cruel persecution of its participants and the entire indigenous population of the region by Tsarist Russia was expressed by Obratsov extremely truthfully.

Convincing is the interpretation of women, children and old people, exhausted by hunger and thirst, a long, many-week road. The painter fully found the much needed expressive language of gestures and poses. Expressive images of a dying young man in the foreground and a grief-broken woman with a child in her arms. The color scheme of the canvas is distinguished by restrained light yellow orange, brown, light blue tones. By penetrating into the essence of the topic, conveying folk images, this canvas is one of the best in the work of Obratsov and in the Kyrgyz fine arts.

The work "Partisans" (1933, KNMI named after G. Aitiev), which made a great impression on contemporaries, is distinguished by the realistic accuracy of the sharpened psychological characteristics of the figures of rural bays, who look gloomily and with hostility at the detachment of farmers who have decided to openly defend the gains of Soviet power in Kyrgyzstan. Obratsov's most successful paintings, reflecting the events of the popular uprising of 1916, are directed towards the future with their content, imbued with a sense of humanism.

Success accompanied the painter in the creation of works on the theme of modernity. They convince in the originality of V.V. Obratsov, in his desire for the social sound of the work, in the desire to rise above the ordinary. This was clearly manifested in the work "Return from the Red Army" (1930, KNMI named after G. Aitiev), which clearly expressed the realistic orientation of Obratsov's work, his knowledge of the life of the Kyrgyz people. The scene of the meeting in the village by the family and friends of the brave Red Army soldier is perceived as a real picture of life, in the context of which, however, the associativity of the figurative vision is invariably present. The composition of the canvas is clear. Warm sunny day. In the distance, one can see brownish-purple mountain ranges with green grass in the foothills. The news of the return of a soldier who had served in the army gathered a group of people at one of the yurts. In the foreground is the dynamic figure of the father, ready to hug his son in a fit of feelings, and the slender figure of the Red Army soldier, who gives his military salute at attention. The joyful faces of fellow villagers in national clothes, kids looking at the soldier with curiosity, girls in rich-colored dresses, scarves and with genuine interest, watching what is happening - all this is served with a kind smile, create a genuine feeling of the festiveness of the event.

In the canvas "Listening to the Radio" (1930, KNMI named after G. Aitiev), the artist was attracted by a moment characteristic of the life of a Kyrgyz village in the early 1930s. Sultry summer day. Cozy rural courtyard. In the background is the wall of the house, the lower part of which is brightly sanctified by the sun. In the foreground of the composition, on a low trestle bed, there are seated figures of family members (men, women and girls), next to them is a boy leaning against a tree. Everyone's attention is riveted to the voice of the announcer from the radio, standing on the table. In this moment, time seemed to be compressed, allowing the viewer to feel something unusual in the appearance of adults and children, in their feelings when they first listen to a radio broadcast in their native language. In a private episode shown in the canvas, an event was guessed that became an important phenomenon in the life of Soviet Kyrgyzstan.

Obratsov also paid much attention to the creation of portraits. The painter's attentive attitude to the characteristic features of the national type, the psychological state of people made his best sketches true portraits. An important place among them was taken by canvases dedicated to children and imbued with warmth and love for them: "Girl - Dungan" (1932, KNMII named after G. Aitiev), "At the globe" (1934, KNMII named after G. Aitiev). Particularly successful among them is the remarkable work "Girl" (1932, KNMII named after G. Aitiev), which was written quickly, perhaps in one session. The artist subtly caught and conveyed with the expression of painting the childish spontaneity and charm inherent in a girl, a keen look at the world.

5. Conclusion

Among the series of "Self-portraits" created by the artist in graphics and painting, the "Self-portrait" (1933, KNMI named after G. Aitiev) attracts special attention with its pictorial and plastic solution. Here V.V. Obratsov showed himself in a state of inner concentration, intense work of thought. Large facial features are plasticly sculpted. Composure of the composition, color, sustained in a light, almost monochrome color scheme (harmonious relations of light yellow, pink, gray, orange tones), contrasts of light and shadow contribute to the creation of an image of a highly spiritualized person.

In the history of the artistic culture of the Kyrgyz people V.V. Obratsov entered as a prominent representative of Soviet art, who stood at the origins of the formation of professional fine art in Kyrgyzstan. He enriched Kyrgyz graphics and painting with a number of original works, actively contributed to the emergence and growth of new types, genres.

References

- [1] Altyn Kazyna (Gold Fund) of the Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts named after G. Aitiev [Text]: album / author. entry Art. Yusupova M.A. (2005). Bishkek, pp.123-124.
- [2] Art of the Kirghiz SSR [Text]: catalog / entry. st.B.V. Weimarn (1939). Moscow, Art, p.7.
- [3] Art of the Kirghiz SSR [Text]: album / ed. entry Art. O.P. Popova: scientific. ed. B.V. Weimarn (1972). L, Aurora, p. 9.
- [4] Artists of Kyrgyzstan for 60 years (1924-1984) [Text]: album / comp. O. Yushkova (1984). –Moscow, Sov. artist, p. five; Fig. 73.
- [5] Artists of Soviet Kyrgyzstan [Text]: anthology / ed. text and comp. L.A. Prytkova (1982). Frunze, Kyrgyzstan, p.189.
- [6] Artists of the Kyrgyz Republic [Text]: reference book / comp. M. Akynbekova and L.A. Prytkova (2008). Frunze, Kyrgyzstan, p. 339.
- [7] Chikichev, V (1976). Vladimir Obratsov [Text]: creative. portrait / V. Chikichev. Frunze, Kyrgyzstan, pp. 10-13.
- [8] Field material of the author of the article B.D. Budaichiev (1972). From a conversation with K. Soronkulov.
- [9] Field material of the author of the article B.D. Budaichiev (1972). From a conversation with G. Aitiev.
- [10] Fine arts of the Kirghiz SSR [Text]: album / ed. entry Art. O.P. Popov (1974). Moscow, Sov. artist, p.1.
- [11] History of Kyrgyz art [Text]: a short sketch / Ed. A. Salieva (1971). Frunze, Ilim, p.19.
- [12] Kyrgyz State Museum of Fine Arts [Text]: album of reproductions / comp. D. Oreshkin (1972). Frunze, Kyrgyzstan, p. 93, ill. 38.
- [13] Kyrgyz State Museum of Fine Arts [Text]: album / editorial board of K.N. Usubalieva, S.A. Asanbekov, A.S. Melniker and others; ed. entry Art. K.N. Usubalieva (1985). Frunze, Kyrgyzstan, p. 2, 3, 4; ill. 46.
- [14] Oreshkin, D. (1967). Women in the works of artists of the Kyrgyz SSR [Text]: album / D. Oreshkin. Frunze: Kyrgyzstan, Ill. 22.23.
- [15] Romm, A (1941). Fine arts of Kyrgyzstan [Text]: essay / A. Romm. Moscow, L, Art, pp.45-46.
- [16]
- [17] The art of the peoples of the USSR. Volume 7 / Art of the Peoples of the USSR from the Great October Socialist Revolution to 1941 [Text] / Ed. L.S. Singer and M.A. Orlova (1972). Moscow, Fine art, pp. 327, 393.
- [18] Umetalieva, J. (1987). Features of the formation of the Kyrgyz art school [Text] / J. Umetaliev. Frunze, p. 19.
- [19] Umetalieva, J. (1970). Kyrgyz genre painting [Text] / J. Umetaliev. Frunze, Ilim, p.7.
- [20] Umetalieva, J. (1978). Fine arts of Kyrgyzstan [Text] / J. Umetaliev. Frunze, Kyrgyzstan, pp.9-10.
- [21] Volosovich, S. (1957). Fine arts of the Kirghiz SSR [Text] / C. Volosovich. Moscow, Sov. artist, p.7.