

## MAGAZINE ILLUSTRATION AS EPOCH INVESTIGATION SOURCE (“AISILU” (1959) BY BAQI URMANCHE AS AN EXAMPLE)

Albina Nasyrova

Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia

Aidar Khabutdinov

Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia

Milyausha Khabutdinova

Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia

### ABSTRACT

In this article we investigate the magazine illustration named “Aisilu” (1959) by Baqi Urmanche. It was drawn as a visual component of the «Azat Khatin» (“The free woman” 1959, №12) magazine content. Baqi Urmanche (1897-1990) was the founder of professional Tatar fine arts. His works include easel and monumental painting, arts and crafts, sculpture, theatrical arts, drawings, graphics and illustrations. The genre diversity of his pictures ranges from multigure thematical pictures and historical compositions to landscape, still life, portrait in painting, from plastic to monuments in sculpture. The works of Baqi Urmanche has enriched not only the Republic of Tatarstan culture but has become the phenomenon of fine arts of Russian and former Soviet Union republics, presently Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS) countries.

In this work we outline the specifics of graphical illustration and define it’s place in the visual context of the female magazine. We analyzed the genre’ specifics of “Aisilu” illustration and outlined the stable trends in the ways of it’s visualization. In this article we investigated the connection types between the illustration and the context of magazine, their formal, functional and cognitive aspects. This analysis proved our thesis that Baqi Urmanche has outlined his public position by means of this graphical illustration.

**Keywords:** *graphical illustration, visual component, «Azat Khatin» magazine, painter Baqi Urmanche, symbol.*

### INTRODUCTION

Historians, sociologists, art historians, literary critics study the illustrated magazines and newspapers of the second half of the XX-th century more closely: portraits, the images of facades and building interiors, the kinds of historical events, government agencies and educational institutions, caricatures, etc. These studies help to create a deeper idea about the era. The magazine illustration in the eyes of scientists transforms into the mirror of everyday life, which allows to reconstruct the public mood.

As part of periodical design they considered the illustration by V.V. Tulupov [Tulupov, 2006], V.V. Volkova [Volkova, 2003], N.I. Voron [Voron, 2004], I.N. Tabashnikov [Tabashnikov, 1994], A.L. Svitich [Svitich, 2015], S. Myer [Myer, 2008], K. O'Donnell [O'Donnell, 2006], P. Sinnema [Sinnema, 1998].

The object of our study was Baqi Urmanche watercolor picture «Aisylu» (watercolor, paper, 23x29,5), which was used in "Azat Khatyn" magazine ("Free Woman") in 1959 [«Azat Khatin» ("Free woman") (1959, №12). This picture was used for cover design [Urmanche, 1959].

Baqi Urmanche (1897-1990) gained his fame as Tatar Michelangelo [Michelangelo Buonarroti]. The art expert S.M. Chervonnaya wrote the following: "Highlighting the universal talent and the diversity of Urmanche personality, we must bear in mind not only the unique phenomenon of his abilities and his artistic professionalism uniformly displayed in such different types and genres of art as sculpture, painting (portraits and historical, the remarkable examples of common life genre, landscape), book illustration, drawing, watercolor, graphic miniature, but also different areas of that cultural, educational and ideological work, artistic pedagogy, the Tatar national movement, with which his name, the memory and the legend about him are related" [Chervonnaya, 2012].

The creation of Baqi Urmanche is illustrated by two albums [Baqi Urmanche: Album, 2005], [Gabdulla Tukaj in Baqi Urmanche creation: Album, 2007], A. Novitsky's monograph [Novitsky, 1994], Y.G. Nigmatullina's monograph [Nigmatullina, 2002], the collections of articles [Baqi Urmanche and Tatar culture, 2005], [Baqi Urmanche spiritual world, 2005], [Baqi Urmanche creation and the actual problems of national art, 2012]. However, none of the studies provides the analysis of Baqi Urmanche watercolor «Aisilu» [Aisilu] (watercolor, paper, 23x29,5). This analysis is the novelty of our work.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

As the part of a systematic approach the authors of the article used content analysis method. The main tasks of content-analytical research: to identify the place of B. Urmanche [Baqi Urmanche] illustration in the visual content of the magazine "Azat Khatyn" ["The free woman"]; to consider the types of relationship between an illustration and a text both at the micro ( material) and macro (publication) level; to explore the genre specifics of an illustration, to analyze the peculiarities of graphic illustration artistic and expressive means; to identify an individual author's thought-experience in visualization methods. During the analysis of B. Urmanche illustration [Baqi Urmanche] we focused on the codificator designed by A.L. Svitich [Svitich, 2015].

## RESULTS

"Aisilu" by B.Urmanche [Baqi Urmanche], published on the cover of the magazine "Azat Khatyn» ["Free woman"], belongs to the category of associative and symbolic illustrations. These are the "graphics images based on comparison principles, analogy and the comparison with a displayed object. The basis of the illustration genre is a visual metaphor (Greek - "transfer"). According to its information significance the symbolic illustrations are superior to other genres, because in addition to an explicit sense they also have additional values that arise in the process of associative and symbolic number decoding" [Svitich, 2015].

Baqi Urmanche strives to express his individual author's thought-experience of the era in the watercolor "Aisilu". The system of images in a magazine illustration draws the readers into the fascinating process of a unique author's symbolism learning.

We wondered why he called his watercolor picture as "Aisilu", as the folklore primary source demonstrates the girl named Zuhra [Zuhra] (See. Tatar tale "Zøhrə Yoldyz" ( "Zuhra-Yoldyz") [Zuhra-yoldiz, 1986], and the similar Bashkir legend [Zuhra-star, 1978]. This is the tale from the series of tales about the opposition between a stepmother and a stepdaughter. In this fairy tale the stepmother assigns Zuhra with an impossible task: "to pour river water into a bottomless pot". The star performs the role of a patron which "embraced by its rays" the girl exhausted from overwork and "lifted her up, up to the moon". The tale explains to some extent the appearance of blurred spots on the moon - it turns out, that "the girl's silhouette with a yoke on her shoulders» [Zuhra-yoldiz, 1986]. Zuhra-yoldiz is the Tatar name of the planet Venus, the constant companion of the moon.

Bashkir version is almost identical to the Tatar one. However, the range of pests was added by Peris here. In mythological dictionary they state that they are "wonderful supernatural creatures which appear in the images of women", "the servant of good and evil". Zukhra was not lucky in the legend: evil Peris started to chase her. The moon acts in the role of the savior.

If we turn to the dictionary of Tatar names, it is easy to find out that the name Aisilu is a two-part one: Ai - moon, sylu - beautiful. This is a Bulgar-Tatar name. The name meaning: "Beautiful as the moon"; "Lunar beauty". Thus, the name of the character corresponds to the illustration content.

We can safely assume that the "lunar beauty" is an aesthetic ideal of an artist, which incorporated its idea of beauty. It does not conform to an official, ideal of working woman in a work dress which blurs the line between a woman and a man. published in the official press. The creators of the magazine countered the illustration made on the basis of B.Urmanche watercolor paper by contrast, with the photo of a girl in an overalls with a newspaper in her hands, representing the ideal of a working girl on the front cover of the women's magazine.

Baqi Urmanche dressed his Aisilu in national costume. She wears a flounced dress, an apron with ruffles, underlining the girl's posture. An apron was a festive clothing item for Volga Tatars. According to the researcher R. Mukhamedova richly ornamented aprons were called "Almaly alyapkych" ("an apron with apples"), "chikkən alyapkych" ("an embroidered apron"). Aisilu has the apron, decorated with flounces and frills - "kanatly alyapkych" (literally "an apron with wings"). This image works implicitly for the idea of flight.

Kalfak provides grace to Aisilu's appearance. R. Mukhamedova pointed out that «a girlish kalfak was a kind of a long hood, one end of which ended in the cone, to which a brush was sewn. It was put on the head, and the tapered end leaned back (or was located on a side). Maiden kalfaks were covered by nothing, except for a frontlet ukachachak, which was the part of this item traditional complex» [Mukhamedova, 1997]. The fact that a girl's neck was not covered with kalfak indicates that she is not married.

Coral beads become an important detail stressing the swan neck of the heroine. Coral gives wisdom to a woman, protects against temptation. The clarity of the line of beads strikes one's eyes. The space orbit is represented by this line.

Leather shoes (ichigi (chitek) Kauschy (kəvesh), shoes (shoe)) were the most popular among Tatars. However, the B. Urmanche's character has the European shoes with heels. We are sure that this detail is the link with the present. Pointed shoes are shaped like a rocket, whose orbit is depicted by the artist through a girl's yoke and her hands, which resemble wings due to ample sleeves.

The year 1959 in the history of our country was covered in the romance of space achievements. October 4, 1957 - the first artificial Earth satellite (AES) was launched. The launch of the first AES happened during the peak of the "cold war." Two superpowers were fighting for space supremacy.

The yellow color of the dress becomes a bright color spot of the work attracting the attention. The focus is not on the rocket, but on a beautiful girl. On the compositional level, it is highlighted by a clear outline of the moon. The girl's look demonstrates pleasure and pride for the sons of earth, mastering the vastness of the Universe in the twentieth century.

The moon acts as a compositional center. This is natural, because its image supports the image of a lunar beauty. However, the absence of Venus - Zuhra-yoldiz near the moon attracts one's attention. Saturn in the illustration does not fulfill the decorative function of a background picture. On the contrary, it plays a

crucial role in the semantic potential of the drawing. The planet is named after the Roman god of agriculture Saturn. According to the legend, he taught people to cultivate land, grow plants and to build houses. The time of his alleged reign is described as the "golden age of humanity" [Myths of peoples all over the world, 1997]. Thus, having placed the planet Earth and Saturn on one horizontal line, the artist embodied the dream of millions of Soviet citizens to acquire the paradise on earth - the creation of communism. The creation of an idyllic mood is promoted by a heavenly background: blue watercolors give a shimmering tone to the drawing. Saturn in the artistic space of the illustration symbolizes the "golden age", a paradise. Millions of Soviet citizens believed that they will prosper through hard work and will beat the quagmire of poverty [Galljamova, 2010, pp. 107-138].

The illustration "Aisilu" by B. Urmanche is a kind of public sentiment barometer in the USSR in 1959. This figure reflected the joyful attitude of the artist, his hopes for a brighter future. After the return to Kazan in 1958 "B. Urmanche [Baqi Urmanche] created a national myth primarily in the form of sculptures and portraits of national leaders, from Kul Gali through Marjani to contemporaries" [Khabutdinov, 2012, p. 8].

The moon and the lunar beauty make up the composite center of the work. This is the author's version of the folk story about the girl Zuhra. B. Urmanche [Baqi Urmanche] called his character Aisilu, otherwise he could be accused of Soviet reality slandering. The meeting with the realities of that time proves that the state behaved like a stepmother concerning its people - Zuhra. Industrialization, spaceflights were a heavy burden placed on the shoulders of ordinary working people.

1958-1959 became the years of warming in respect of the national issue. May 21, 1958: the Resolution "On the state and the improvement measures concerning" was adopted during the III-rd Plenum of the Tatar Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). It stated the following: "1. Take the work of Tatar schools under strict control, strengthen the work for them". Tatar children studying in Russian schools had to pass examinations in Tatar language and literature [Tatar history from ancient times in 7 volumes, 2013 p. 876]. The deputy of Science, Schools and Culture Department head of the CPSU Central Committee V. Derbinov stated during the Plenum that 95% of Tatar children studied using their native language in the Tatar ASSR during 1947/48 academic year and 70% in 1957/58 [Sultanbekov, 2002, pp. 208-209]. Aisilu's image was the reflection of the public mood: an unanimous determination to revive the culture of the Tatar people prevailed during the plenum. In July 1957 the Russian Federation (RSFSR) Council of Ministers adopted the decree "On the provision of aid to Tatar ASSR agriculture". Thus, the standard of the republic peasants living increased, many of them lived in poverty [Galljamova, 2010, pp. 34-35].

However, the "thaw" concerning the national question in the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic lasted less than two years. In January, 1960 during the plenary session of the Tatar Regional Committee of CPSU S.D. Ignatiev called for the abolition of the plenum resolution from the Tatar CPSU Regional Committee "About the state and the measures of Tatar school work improvement". The reporter on this issue was the Secretary of the Tatar Regional Committee of CPSU F.A. Tabeyev [Sultanbekov, 2002, pp. 144-146], and he replaced S.D. Ignatiev as the first secretary of the Tatar Regional Committee of CPSU in 1961. Already in the mid-1960-ies "according to the results of questionnaires conducted at the Kazan enterprises, the number of children from the families of Tatar workers studied at schools in Russian made almost 88%» [Galljamova, 2010, pp. 190-198].

## SUMMARY

In "Aisilu" the aesthetic ideal of the author made its manifestation. Baqi Urmanche saw in a working woman as a beauty in her clothes, which does not freak her natural beauty and stature. So the artist expresses his protest against the "fashion trends" imposed by the state. Due to a working overalls, a

woman lost her unique female form, started to resemble a man, which is contrary to the national aesthetic ideal [Khabutdinova, Bayanova, 2013]. Production problems prevented her realization in the most important thing - in motherhood, in the education of children according to national traditions. Three months after the birth of a child a woman had to go to work.

Thus, the magazine illustration Baqi Urmanche "Aisilu" is an invaluable mine of information about the daily life of late 1950-ies.

## CONCLUSION

A peculiar style of the artist is presented in "Aisilu", where the constructive composition, the sense of color and rhythm and stylization are present. Baqi Urmanche manages to express the spirit of fairy tales, to use the local color solution efficiently and at the same time emotionally. This helped to summarize and revitalize the image. It was the artist's appeal to the folklore and the search for the national characteristic of the era. Folklore image becomes a walking stick here, based on which, the artist goes directly to the present in order to see it with his own eyes and talk about it in his own way. The desire of the artist to a form symbolization, its ambiguity and layering is clear.

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