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**STUDYING LIFE AND CREATIVE WORK OF ACADEMICIAN OF
PAINTING PYOTR ZAKHAROV-CHECHEN**

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Abstract

The paper analyses the challenging issues of life and creative work of an Academician of Painting Pyotr Zakharov-Chechen. A small number of research papers devoted to this topic are available nowadays. Basically, the majority of researches proceed from the monograph of N.Sh. Shabanyants. The scientist worked on the monograph over the period of almost twenty years and stated that there still remained a lot of undivulged secrets in the life of the artist and the researches should be carried out with the objective to reveal them. During the All-Union applied research conference “Academician of Painting Pyotr Zakharov” which was devoted to the 160th anniversary of the artist and was held on the basis of Chechen-Ingush State University in the year 1976 it was stated by H.I. Ibrahimov that nobody has thoroughly studied the biography and creative work of Pyotr Zakharov and his name was forgotten, though his fine art paintings have gained recognition and he is considered to be a talented portrait-painter. As H.I. Ibrahimov stated, the study and popularization of Pyotr Zakharov’s creative work will be continued in the future. N.Sh. Shabanyants expressed the same idea, namely, he announced that the material and documents about Pyotr Zakharov would be searched for by the students of the republic higher educational institutions and their findings would make a significant contribution to the upcoming anniversary of their compatriot from Dada-Yurt in 1976.

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Keywords: Pyotr Zakharov, artist, Shabanyants, biography, Dada-Yurt, archives.



1. Introduction

Scientific (bibliographic) research of the life of people of art (particularly the artists) is rather widespread in art and historical science (Hendrickson, 2018; Moshnik, 2018; Ayupova, 2017). The bibliography of Pyotr Zakharov's life and work is rather poor. More than 100 years ago a historian F.M. Umanets (Umanets, 1912) wrote that the Russian school great artistic power was represented by Pyotr Zakharov and it is rather difficult to say why he is little known to the general public and his biography, closely related to outstanding people and events of that time and of the present time remains unknown even in general terms, all we know about him is that he was a Chechen, nothing else. (Ibragimov, 1976).

2. Problem Statement

Thus, in spite of the fact that nowadays there is a certain range of literature sources devoted to Pyotr Zakharov, however, there are a lot of blind-spots concerning his life. In addition to it, a lot of facts concerning Pyotr Zakharov's life are doubtful.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the present study is life and creative work of Pyotr Zakharov.

4. Purpose of the Study

The objective of present study is to analyse the sources and researches with the purpose to answer the questions related to life and work of Pyotr Zakharov.

5. Research Methods

The methods of analyzing archival sources were used in this study, in addition to general logical methods (analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction). The sources were analyzed in two archives: the Institute of Foreign Studies of the State Historical Museum (department of written sources of the State Historical Museum) and the Russian State Archivist Academy of Architecture. For the first time, the diary of Pyotr Nikolayevich Yermolov was carefully studied and completely deciphered. The mentioned study contains much of the previously unknown information, especially, that Baron Rosen came to visit the Yermolovs, and was accompanied by a young Chechen poet, who could only be Aibulat Rosen (1817-1865).

The materials of dozens of archives in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Pyatigorsk, Grozny, Tbilisi and other cities were analyzed as well. A lot of new information about the life and activities of P.Z. Zakharov, unknown letters and documents of that time and more than two dozen previously unknown paintings by Zakharov were found there.

6. Findings

The Great Encyclopedic Dictionary contains many people with the surname Zakharov, including those who lived in the nineteenth century. However, there is no reference to P.Z. Zakharov. Although, there is the following note: "Zakharov (Zakharov-Chechen), Peter Zakharov, a painter and draftsman, who

worked in 1816 in the village of Dada-Yurt (Terek region) and died in 1852” in the bibliographic dictionary “Soviet artists”. This short notice contains a lot of inaccuracies starting from the dates of birth to toponymy. For example, Terek region did not exist at that time, moreover, according to the official cartography of the Russian Empire of the first half of XIX century the Chechen village Dada-Yurt was a part of so-called unclaimed territory. “The fundamental work Russian art: essays on the life and work of artists of the first half of the XIX century” marked by Academy of Sciences of the USSR states in the introduction that the book provides the data concerning all the academics belonging to the Russian Academy of Arts of that time. However, there is no reference to P.Z. Zakharov and his name is not stated even in the general list. Although here are the materials about the artists who were not awarded with the title of academicians and whose very few paintings have survived until the present time and some of their works are known only by name. Appolon Nikolaevich Mokritsky (1810-1870) studied at the Academy of Arts together with P. Zakharov and became even more famous by leaving us a remarkable work being the “Diary of the Artist Mokritsky” rather than by the created paintings (Diary of the Artist Mokritsky, 1975). The author mentions Zakharov in this work. This book and the book “Memories of A.G. Venetsianov and his disciples” contains Mokritsky ‘s recollections about the situation when Venetsianov came for a visit to Bryullov together with his brother Feodor and later Zakharov and Kraevsky (whose portrait was made by Zakharov) came as well and Kraevsky recited a wonderful poem of Pushkin “Galub” (Mokritskiy, 1931), namely the scene describing the Chechens’ living (Yakushkin, & Yushko 2014). P. Zakharov was a talented portrait-painter, the master of his craft. According to Umanets (Umanets, 1912), Gorbunov (Portrait of the musician Bilibin, 1850, №183) and Zakharov recommended by the Venetian portrait “Portrait of the Ermolovs children” (1839), a bellicose “Self-portrait” (in a felt 1843), “Portrait of the historian Granovsky” (1845, No. 286) and “Portrait of Postnikova” (1845, No. 287) appear to be the talented portrait-painters. At the request of the director of the Chechen-Ingush Museum Zaurbek Sharipov, a self-portrait of P. Zakharov was transferred to the Tretyakov Gallery in 1929 (Shtanko, 1975). The “Dictionary of Artists of All Time” (“Thieme Becker “Kunstler-Lexikon”) published in Leipzig in 1935 assigns a worthy place to P. Zakharov being one of the prominent pre-revolutionary artists whose works deserve universal recognition. The first article which was large and full of numerous facts confirmed by archival documents from the life and work of Zakharov-Chechen, was the article by Said-Emin Ibriev “Akademik Zakharov” (in Chechen), published in August 1958 in the Chechen-Ingush republican newspaper “Lenin Nek (Leninsky way)”. Judging by the article, the author had quite extensive material about this unique artist. It is noteworthy that C.E. Ibriev previously studied other “Yermolov Foundation” documents about Pyotr Zakharov. They were kept in the Soviet archives. By virtue of circumstances C.E. Ibriev had to interrupt his research on the fate of the artist. And N. Shabanyants (1976) meticulously collected data about P. Zakharov for many years. He was the first to compile a chronicle of his life and work. As well, N. Shabanyants was the first to compile a list of works by Zakharov, and he found many paintings by the artist, including the paintings that were unknown until that time. In addition, N. Shabanyants together with I. Shinkarenko, S. Boyko and other researchers proved that the portrait of the great Russian poet M. Yu. Lermontov, previously attributed to F.O. Budkin is a copy of a painting created by Zakharov. Consequently, Zakharov was not only familiar with the famous poet, but also painted his portrait more than once. In the thesis of T.A. Mazaeva “Artist Pyotr Zakharovich Zakharov-Chechen, 1816-1846”, it is noted that Alexandre Benois gave a high estimation of P. Zakharov’s

work and called him one of the best “Russian portrait painters of the Bryullov time”. The attitude to the artist is expressed more specifically by N.N. Wrangel (Mazaeva, 1982). In his article devoted to a portrait exhibition in the Tauride Palace of St. Petersburg he wrote that the name of Peter Zakharov could be “on the same board with Tropinin” (Mazaeva, 2007). In 2016, the publishing house "DS HOUSE" published a book by T. Mazaeva entitled “Academician of Painting Zakharov-Chechen from Dada-Yurt”. The article by S. Stepanova in the magazine “Young Artist” for 1987, No. 12, “Peter Zakharov-Chechen”, states that his contemporaries were quite aware of his creative work. But later, the artist was nearly forgotten, and almost no documentary information was preserved; especially, the master painted the portraits of private individuals. G.D. Kropivnitskaya also performed the art review of P.Z. Zakharov paintings in the article “New facts about the artist P.Z. Zakharov. G.D. Kropivnitskaya (Kropivnitskaya, 1977) applied a really new approach to the artist’s creative development and put forward bold and reasoned hypotheses. However, this article is also based on the materials of N.Sh. Shabanyants, as well as the article N.M. Molevoy “Who are you Mtsyri?” and the fundamental work of Yu.S. Stepanova, the academician of RAS, entitled “Proteus: Essays on Chaotic Evolution (artist Peter Zakharov)”. (Stepanov, 2004) The research of L.A. Markina (Markina, 2011) named “The works of the artist Peter Zakharov in the collection of the Tretyakov Gallery” should be noted as well as the material created by N.V. Markelov “I lived not long, and lived in captivity ...”. In 2014 and 2018 the studies on this topic carried out by one of the authors of the article were published (Ibragimov, 2014; Ibragimov, 2018).

Pyotr Zakharovich Zakharov was born in 1816 in the village of Dada-Yurt in Chechnya. This information is given in all dictionaries and encyclopaedias. This date (1816) is also indicated on the grave of Peter Zakharov, but it can also be questioned, since his age was determined roughly like “being about three years old” when was captured in September 1819.

However, in the letter to N.A. Samoilov, written in 1825, P.N. Yermolov reported that he wanted to send his pupils Pavel Zakharov and Pyotr Zakharov to the Academy of Arts, and noted that they were 10 or 11 years old (Archive documents, 1860-1890). And in the letter to N.V. Shimanovsky, written by P.N. Yermolov later in 1830, he interceded for a “Petrusha-Chechen” and reported that he was already 14 (Archive documents, 1860-1890). And then it turns out that the year of Zakharov’s birth is 1816.

At the same time, there is a strictly official document, a Residence permit, issued by the Moscow provincial gendarmerie, where everything must be more reliable and realistic. And this Testimony issued on April 11, 1833, P. Zakharov’s age is defined as follows: “being 15 years old”. According to this official document the year of P. Zakharov’s birth is not 1816, but 1818.

The true date is probably between these years and there is another fact which confirms this. When the village of Dada-Yurt was carried by assault one more boy who later became a poet named Aibulat Rosen was taken away. And his year of birth was defined as 1817. Consequently, Aibulat Rosen was approximately 2 years old but he knew, remembered and later kept his name Akbulat. Nevertheless, later he never mentioned neither Dada-Yurt nor Chechnya in his works. It seems that P. Zakharov, had he known his native name, would have proclaimed it just like Dada-Yurt, as a word “Chechenets”, but he did not know his native name as he was too small. The P.N. Yermolov’s daughter Ekaterina Petrovna will write in his memoirs: “A wounded infant found near a dying mother” (Archive documents, 1860-1890).

Thus, Pyotr Zakharov was one year, maybe two years, but hardly three years old in 1819. Consequently, as it is indicated in the official Certificate, Zakharov was 15 years old in 1833, and most likely he was born in 1818, or at least 1817. However, as it is known, the year 1816 was accepted as being his year of birth.

According to official archival documents, it is known that Zakharov's wife Postnikova died from consumption on June 13, 1846 and in the document about her death she was recorded as a wife of P. Zakharov and not as the widow, which means he was still alive at the moment. But in the "Report of the Imperial Academy of Arts for the past 1845-1846 academic year" the conference secretary V.I. Grigorovich reported at the general meeting of the Academy on September 29, 1846 that in the past year, the honorary free associate of the Academy, Professor Gaidon, the rector of the Academy Demuth-Malinovsky and academicians Mikhail Shamshin, Zakharov and Kukharevsky died. Zakharov being Chechen by birth is known to be a distinguished and unusually promising artist in his kind of painting (Archive documents, 1860-189)

Thus, the date of P. Zakharov's death is in the scope of June 13 and September 29, 1846. And the literature provides the information, however, without any reference, that Zakharov died in September (Yakushkin, & Yushko 2014).

P. Zakharov's grave site was unknown for a long time, but in 2017 M. Shakhbiyev's, the candidate of philological sciences, who also studies P. Zakharov's life and work, discovered his inscription on a gravestone at the Vagankovo cemetery in Moscow.

7. Conclusion

The found archival, historical and literary data in some cases enable to perceive the life of P. Zakharov in a new way, to trace the origins of his art, to clarify the facts of the biography, to identify the artist's environment and conditions of creativity, for example, the painting "Portrait of an Unknown. School K.P. Bryullov. The first half of the XIX century. Unknown artist." in the Tula Regional Art Museum.

According to many characteristic features, it can be assumed that this portrait depicts the same lady as in the portrait of P. Zakharov "Portrait of an Unknown Lady with Children" (private collection), and that this is none other than Anna G. Yermolova (Obolonskaya).

However, this does not mean that the study of the life of Zakharov can be considered as fully completed. It is evidenced by the repeated getting of researchers around to this issue. We hope that there will appear new publications, in which previously unknown materials will be revealed by clarifying and sometimes modifying and supplementing the adopted versions. It is desirable that it was so, because the life of Peter Zakharov is multifaceted, instructive and weighty.

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