

## Illustrations Yevgenii Sidorkin to “KAZAKH NATIONAL GAMES

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**Abstract:** The article is devoted to the series of famous Kazakhstan graphic artist works of Sidorkin entitled “Kazakh National Games”. Methods of depicting national psychology of Kazakh people as excitement, will to victory, competition, risk, selflessness is the theme of study. Specific style of Sidorkin is based on the unity of symmetry, on the contrast of colors, distance and lines being the way to solve problems.

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### Introduction

Yevgenii Matveevich Sidorkin – the Soviet graphic artist was born in the village Lebyager Kirov district in 1930, May, 7, died in Almaty – Kazakhstan – 1982, September, 3. Sidorkin was awarded with titles “Honoured Art Worker” (1965). He finished Kazan art college, graduated from Art Academy in Riga, Leningrad Art institute after Repin (1957) [1], his tutor was Pahomov Alexey Fedorovich<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [http://artru.info/ar/12058/Pahomov Alexey Fedorovich, 1900-1973.](http://artru.info/ar/12058/Pahomov%20Alexey%20Fedorovich,%201900-1973)

Honorable artist of Soviet Union, real member of Artist’s Academy of Soviet Union, Lauriat of State award of Soviet Union, professor of Graphic, drawing and fine art. The master of easel graphic in lithograph and picture, created series of lithograph during Leningrad blockade years, illustrated books for children and youth, devoted series to Soviet people. Born in 1900 in the place Varlamovo, died in 1973. During 1915 - 1917 studied in Petersburg in Shtiglyts central college of technical painting. His teachers were Shuhaev, Chexonin, Dobujinsky. In 1917 – 1925 he studied at the painting department Vhutein in Leningrad, tutor – Savinov. He took part in exhibition from 1921. His main pictures are: «In the sun» (1935), «Sisters» (1935), «After swimming» (1935), «On the beach» (1935), illustrations to the poem N. A. Nekrasov «Frizzing, Krasny nos» (1938, State Russian Museum), series of printing «Leningrad in days of blockade» (1942—1944), «Leningrad in days of thaw 1945—1947» (State Tretyakov Gallery, State Russian Museum, Kiev museum of Russian Fine Art, Gorkov state Arts museum), illustration to novel N. Ostrov «Kak zakalyalas stal» (1948, Kremlin Museum Russian

Sidorkin worked in Almaty beginning from 1957. Most famous Sidorkin bookplates are illustrations of Kazakh national fairy tales “Liars” (1958), “Kazakh epos” (1959), of Saltykov – Shedin novel “The tale of some city” (1974–1978). In 1959 the artist was awarded with bronze medal of the international bookplate exhibition in Leipzig. In 1963 Sidorkin prepared the series of easel lithograph “Kazakh National Games”, in 1964 – “Reading Saken Sayfulin”, in 1971–1979 – series of autolithograph “Aksakaly” - “Old men” and illustrations of Muhtar Auazov novel “Abay way”, which was rewarded with Kazakh Soviet Republic state prize in honor of Shokan Valihanov [1].

One of thematic directions depicting specific genre group in Sidorkin graphic is lithograph “Kazakh National Games”. It is the second experience of the artist in studying folklore theme after illustrating Kazakh national fairy tales “Liars” prepared in huge lists in watercolors.

Relation to folklore defined the artist’s place in the Kazakh Art history. G.Shalabaeva writes: “Creative work of Sidorkin from one point is surely a typical phenomenon for Kazakh art culture of the XX century second half in accordance with demands of the period. From the other side, you cannot see social demands like painting great constructions, front – rank workers, bringing new tracts of virgin soil“ [2, 11].

It is not an accident that Sidorkin deals with folklore of Kazakhstan. It was not only touching contact with history, eternity, but also trying to understand present through past and visa verse. The

Federation), illustration to the story I.S. Turgenev «Bezhin lug» (1956, State Russian Museum), series of printing «In kolkhoz «Krasny partizan» (1960), illustration to collection of stories L. N. Tolstoi «Phillipok» (1968—1970).

explorer explains the idea of the artist as follows: “Depicting of everlasting themes of love, hatred, joy, existence, envy, nobility is equal on the object of any time period. It is of great importance to feel the theme of the society just in time. To my opinion the theme in art is actual just in time and has the right to exist only in case it has the features of past and future” [2, 11].

Lithograph is known to be beloved technique of Sidorkin. The painter use technique of lithography with great success, he use the experience of his forerunners and foreign painters. [3], [4], [5], [6], [7], [8]. The choice of that very technique in graphic shows not only the innovation the artist made in lithograph but also depicts his individuality to understand Kazakh folklore.

Sidorkin traveled to Senej to make lithograph as there were lithographic stones used by all Soviet artists, creative atmosphere, surrounding enriching the artist with new ideas that led to possibility of grinding artistic ideas.

Lithograph sometimes called “flat graphic” is done on the stone of special sort of lime stone. Technique is as follows: the picture is painted on the stone with fat pencil, then the surface is trampled with acid solution, then the color is rolled on.

Advantage of this technique is the possibility to code artistically not vivid ideas, use deep various semantic underground, wide field of associations. “Lithograph does not use sharp or strict lines like etching or xylograph but it has gentle velveteen melting changes, deep tone, wide lines of stroke. Lithograph is based on crossings and silence” [9].

Those crossings and silence are depicted in Sidorkin lithograph. The explorer underlines “very emotional thematic depth” of Kazakhstan artist as his specific feature, exclusive images having “deep perspective of underground text”. Characterizing main features of Sidorkin individuality Shalabaeva marks refinement of artistic forms, multifigureness, complexity of composition, true to life images [2, 14].

The presented article is devoted to Yegenii Sidorkin’s lithograph series “Kazakh National Games” to find out his specific depiction of images, analysis of folklore poetry, means of presenting national psychology.

The series “Kazakh National Games” consist of 4 lithograph: “Kyz kuyu” (95x72), “Baiga”(95x72), “Kokpar”(72x95), “Hunting with berkut”(72x95). The series is in the fund of Art Museum named after Pushkin and Kazakh State Museum after Casteev.

The theme of folk games used by the artist seem to explain his choice: “I was greatly expressed by courage and excitement of the games, I was anxious to pay attention to games` having no time boundaries,

everlasting for ages, that is games did exist 200 years ago and will be existing. People do love exiting and courageous competitions. These competitions show the spirit of the nation”[2, 51].

On one hand the choice of the object gives the artist possibility to comprehend national psychology of Kazakh people, on the other hand the author affirms the fact that makes the games stay actual forever. What is the thing that makes games to be powerful over the time and how the Kazakh nation spirit is depicted? An answer to these questions makes you understand the peculiarity of E.Sidorkin style and his mastership. How deep did the master depict Kazakh national psychology, what means of spectators` comprehension are used in his graphic?

It is important to mark that 4 lithographs are united by one idea of competition: a young girl and a young man, two young competing men, the hunter with his eagle – berkut – against the victim. Competition fills the picture’s idea with dynamic and somewhat like conflict.

Lithograph depicts scenes typical for the nomad life and moments of great emotional feelings. Three lithographs are made black and white, except “Kokpar” in colors.

The contrast of white and black not only strengthens the fight – culmination of the action, but also underlines the picture lines that have the function of the idea expressing the theme. The line has possess the semantic role, becomes the main method to distinguish the aim of the graphic composition. The method is in harmony with the psychology of the nomad as he deals with simple and vivid categories in his nomadic way of existence without any dilemma.

Lithograph “Kyz kuu” (catch up *the riding girl*) (Abb.1) is devoted to the game with lyrical and ironical-humorous plot. The young man has to prove his adroitness catching up the riding girl. If a success - he will be kissed. If not – the youth would be not only ashamed but beaten by the girl. The fact is that young girls of vast steppe were nice riders so the competition was a rather serious honorable event becoming test for a youth courage.

Nation’s psychology is described in lithograph from the point of excitement, courage, risk. Dynamics of the objects is shown in the idea of unity and contrasting. The youth left the girl behind, the position is marked by the disposition of figures, but

the face of the brave girl is turned to the observer. Swiftly riding did the girl raise herself on the saddle. Her profile, her face turned to a youth, flying race of the horse, her plaits flying make one unique object, as a rule, during competitions or at the battle women tied the plait to the belt. Mirror symmetry unites the race of two horse riders

underlines the spirit of fighting with no sense of hatred.



Abb.1. Kyz kuu. Autolithographic. 95x72

Lyrical – romantic feeling of lithograph is expressed in the silhouette of the youth. He also raised himself while racing and became a unique object with his horse. On the whole the composition is done in a peculiar way – the frame of the picture resembles a horseshoe, which is the symbol of happiness and guard – amulet of the house for Kazakh people. The artist aims a little bit to find such a symbolic decision but equality of two compositional parts makes one feel the harmony of the competing couple passing this harmony to every day life.



Abb.2. Baiga. Autolithographic. 95x72.

Lithograph “Baiga” (Abb.2) describes the competition of two young riders. Whose horse will be the first to finish – that is the idea of the game preserved from the ancient times. Specific peculiarity of the style that defines the author of “Kyz kuu” is seen in this work. That very law of symmetry in

placing figures, psychology of excitement depicted in raised on saddle bodies, that very dynamics, the very unity of the rider with his horse. There is innovation in depicting of folk theme. Sidorkin is marked by some monumental decision in describing folklore plot. In this work excitement is made somewhat heroic in some degree. Underlined is the sporting start of the game. The first picture pays attention to playing scene contrasting the girl and the youth, in the second lithograph numerous figures widen the composition field and has more portrait semantics. One should pay attention that the symmetry is shown by double dislocation of the participants of the game. Such composition makes the 4 participants equal, nobody is closed by another. At the same time, the artist describes difference of costumes and caps in details that shows the artist’s knowledge of nation’s costume peculiarities and his ability to use difference as psychological method.



Abb.3. Kokpar. Autolithographic. 72x95

There is a young man with a kerchief on his head at the front. There is a lash (*kamcha*) in his stretched hand. The second rider is wearing a sheep skin made cap (*tymak*). It is not strictly correct considering reality of the nation. The cap (*tymak*) has sharp wedge shaped ending tail that closes his neck. It is winter wear. The second rider leaned back on a horse. His right hand floating with the lash (*kamcha*) is a tradition characteristic for Sidorkin as a master portrait painter.

The third rider has driven him to a horse. Expression of the portrait shows psychological tensity of the painted action. The fourth rider in a round cap (*borik*) - completes the action in lithograph. Logical ending of the scene is determined by symmetrical position of the rider and some kind of identity of details, positions, simple expression of horses and costumes design to depict nation psychology according to which physical competition is equal to spiritual leadership.

Lithograph “Kokpar” (Abb.3) is made in colors. Art critic Shalabaeva notes that in linocuts to “Kazakh epos” Sidorkin found and used the circle method that would be developed in lithograph “Kazakh National Games”.

Kokpar is a competition between teams to take the goat away. Sportsmen have to demonstrate adroitness, catching the skinned goat while riding.

The circle method used by the artist is of great interest. From one side, the epicenter of fight is defined, though not important. The center of composition is the three riders united as one whole figure. This unity is depicted by the circle made by 3 figures. Battle tension is described in stretched hands, flying fillets of the belts, stretched bridles, wide spread fingers. The circle is made by the horses of the riders too. The artist paints mane, tails, croup, heads, hoof of the horses thoroughly. Every part of the body becomes a part of the whole. It is a peculiar characteristic of Sidorkin style proved by every work of the series. That is the way how the author interprets the idea that a game has no time limit, a game is imperious the situation. Excitement, will to win, ready to risk, comprehension of social and moral result of the game expressing exclusiveness make philosophical force of the series.

Lithograph “Hunting with berkut” (Abb.4) – eagle associates with the poem of XIX century Kazakh literature master Abay Kunanbaev “Kansonarda burkitshi shygady anga”(Kazakh language) is known in S.Lipkin’s interpreting as “The rider with berkut rides on the early snow” [10].

The unity of the poetic plot and artistic decision should be marked. One verse of three parted poem is the scene of hunting. Sidorkin depicts hunting not only as a game [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16].

Actually public entertainments of pre – revolution Kazakh village had that kind of element. In XX-XXI centuries this entertainment is revived and has become a kind of ethno component of presenting national traditions to foreigners. Ethnographical foundation of the game has competitive character too.

The lyrical foundation of the game is defined in work similar to the first lithograph. It is shown in the composition, uniting details of the scene into one unity, each part being a completed scene.

The center of composition is a rider on a horse and his hunting bird. The rider is painted carefully, making one figure with his horse but the bird is turned round. It is not only realistic picture of flight but also subordination of the minor character - bird – to his owner.

Peculiarity of the lithograph is triune of hunter’s dogs, stretched fingers of dogs and the rider make illusion as if looking at the picture from the top. Flat

plane of the distance and figures is not only graphic demand, but also strengthening of rider’s dynamic figure.

These are 4 lithographs of the series “Kazakh National Games”. Their peculiar characteristic methods to show Kazakh national psychology are: excitement, will to victory, competitiveness, ready to risk, selflessness. Methods that define Sidorkin style peculiarities are symmetry, contrast of colors, space filling, semiotic status of lines as the main decision of problems.



Abb.4. Hunting with berkut. Autolithographic. 72x95

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