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ПЕТРОВ-ВОДКИН К. ПАРАДОКСЫ ТОТАЛИТАРНОГО ВКУСА

Аннотация: содержание эстетического вкуса определено исторически и связано с различными политическими, идеологическими и религиозными сторонами жизни общества. Концепция вкуса отражает метафизику, поддержанную культурой. Тоталитарный вкус – производное тоталитарного государства. Пропаганда оптимизма, лестный реализм, фотографическая конкретность, театрализация официальных церемоний, и частной жизни превратило искусство этого времени в смесь фальшивки с героизмом, что одинаково фальсифицировало культуру народа, а также имело разрушительный эффект на эстетику и этику тихого большинства. В статье сделана попытка определить основные признаки тоталитарного вкуса в рамках эстетической интерпретации творчества русского художника начала XX века – К.С. Петрова-Водкина.

Ключевые слова: Кузьма Сергеевич Петров-Водкин, тоталитарный вкус, парадоксы эстетической интерпретации.

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PETROV-VODKIN K.: PARADOXES OF THE TOTALITARIAN TASTE

Abstract: in our research we have to open the contents of aesthetic taste. It is determined historically and connected to the various political, ideological and religious sides of life a society. The concept of taste reflects the metaphysics maintained by culture. Totalitarian taste – derivative the totalitarian state. Propagation of optimism, flatter realism, photographic concreteness, staging of official ceremonies, and private life has transformed art of this time into a mix of a forgery with heroism, that equally forged culture of people, and also had destructive effect on an aesthetics and ethics of the silent majority. In papers we attempt to determine the basic attributes of

totalitarian taste is made within the framework of aesthetic interpretation of creativity of the Russian artist of the beginning of XX century – K.S. Petrov-Vodkin.

Keywords: *Kuzma Sergeevich Penrov-Vodkin, totalitarian taste, paradoxes.*

Semantically speaking, «taste» is a complex notion. It's crucial for all the forms of discourse in aesthetic consciousness of a society or an individual, as well as the sign of their cultural level. The concept of «taste» is operative in art criticism and aesthetic theory, especially in the theory of aesthetic experience and value judgment. It's also common in the developmental psychology of children.

Aesthetic taste is taken to be shaped culturally and historically, affecting and being affected in everyday life. Historically determined, the content of aesthetic taste is subject to various political, ideological and religious interpretations. The concept of taste reflects metaphysics espoused by a culture.

Taste is operative in any aesthetic experience consisting, according to most scholars, of «attention arrest», «affect» and «judgment», especially for the latter two, because it is exactly taste that affects the judgment. Our perceptions, choices, actions and relations are ultimately aesthetic. Our body is aesthetic, since its real object is beauty, and its means is art. Our taste manifests itself in our choices regarding arts, communication, ways of life, and manners. It affects our ability to react to beauty and ugliness. Being the mixture of the rational and the sensuous, and being historically determined, taste is subject to progression as much as it is capable of deviation.

Totalitarian taste is a product of totalitarian state. In the first half of the 20 century in Soviet Union it was affected by a centralized power and the naive masses, a fixed system of values, the devastation of forms and tropes of art, dishes, and a symbolical and mythological thinking. An ideal character was a loyal, indistinct «Homo sovieticus», a man with no qualities other than prescribed by the current regime, which however pretended to the defender of the traditional as well as universal values. In effect, everything incompatible with the party line became subject to marginalization and elimination. There was a canon of correct and appropriate perceptions, behaviors, and expectations. Images of boys and girls at work, playing sports, procre-

ating or defending the nation became archetypal. So did the images of a great leader compassionately greeting the crowds passing by below in a joyous celebration of the military or athletic prowess, the images of men in combat or with family. These images symbolized an ideal of soviet good life, or eudemonia, as Aristotle would have it. Propaganda of optimism demanded of art exaggerated visuals, flattering realism, as well as simple-minded forms of delivery, such as near photographic concreteness, anesthetization of politics, theatricality of official ceremonies, and private life. The mixture of fake heroic and equally fake folk culture had devastating effect on the aesthetics and ethics of the silent majorities.

In its bare essence, the totalitarian taste comprises the following:

- the cult of the magnificent;
- love to grandiosity;
- the cult of the healthy body;
- programmatic optimism («all is right, everything's gone be all right»);
- lack of humor, irony, or the grotesque;
- imitation of pleasure;
- monologue in place of dialogue;
- bad aesthetics, theoretically and practically speaking;

A style came first, in form of rules which affected arts, by order, from architecture to utensils, from tea cups with kitsch pictures, to pictures of red arms lieutenants with their complacent wives and equally moronic looking kids which adorned the walls of ugly communal apartments. Social realism was a system of rules pertaining not only to the contents but to the forms of the arts as well. The most highly valued pieces praised the freedom of the people pursuing communist ideals under the guidance of the communist party. The historical novels presented not so much sagas or historical events but the descriptions of the past party meetings and congresses. Historical paintings depicted enthusiasm at work, scenes of patriotism and heroism in the morality tradition. Artists were expected to create according to thus prescribed meth-

od of social realism, again, the one that praises the party in the forms the latter finds pleasurable and easily accessible for the masses, that of course affected the forms.

The image of movement as the symbol of global restructuring and harmony hence otherwise unexplainable love for the subway, manifesting itself in its excessive decorations. A spectator was supposed to be overwhelmed by the feeling of speed, freedom, and light through space towards light, achieved through chiaroscuro and the juxtaposition of unexpected perspectives in the composition of the picture. Light in soviet pictures and poems played positive role. It illuminated the path for the soviet heroes, enlightened their aged child-like faces as if to emphasize both their spiritual youth and experience.

Totalitarian taste transformed mass culture into grandiose, ornamental, theatrical, and neo-classically pathetic. In fine arts and literature real conflicts and characters gave way to unconvincing plots, characters and actions, with the ornamentation and didactic messages. That blunted the moral sensibilities of both creators and perceivers, and made it easier to manipulate their natural expectations for the future for the purposes of the totalitarian regime.

Totalitarian taste, paradoxically also combined mass entertainment with the elite or high art, classic motifs and high standards with kitsch and fake primitivism. Social realist artifacts were disseminated in mass, rather than appreciated in a free dialogical exchange. At first sight the works by K.S. Petrov-Vodkin possess the main features of totalitarian art. Totalitarian taste in the works of a certain artist is expressed in two ways:

- 1) as a condition of the deliberate creation of an ideological myth;
- 2) as a volitional manifesto of his own school. These two principles in the works by Petrov-Vodkin K.S. are reflected in a more complex semantics and synthesis.

The aesthetic interpretation of his works has polar contradictions:

- the monumental character cosmic images and intimate, fragmentary composition;
- psychology, metaphor provoking complex associations and rationalism in the compositions, lapidary style;

- the stylistics of old Russian icons and close connection with Russian Avant-garde;
- at the same time intimate and infinite;
- simultaneous dynamics and statics;
- the silhouette and graphic character his works, which at the same time are picturesque, etc.

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