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CATEGORY OF AESTHETIC SENSES TRANSITION (TO A QUESTION ON PERUSAL OF AN EPOCH)

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Aesthetic consciousness of modernism brought the new step of the development to the culture at the turn of the centuries which is defined as "transitive". Last two decades saw the rise of the notion "transitive period" / "transitive epoch" as a topical subject for investigations in many spheres (history, philosophy, studies of culture, art, literature and sociology etc). The studies of transitive epoch enable examining it as a cultural phenomenon with the peculiar features, structure, and functionality. So it has lead to the development of a separate scientific notion. It is reasonable to focus on some aspects of the phenomenon of transition since this cultural factor has played a leading role in the formation of a transitive aesthetic consciousness. Besides, it has caused its thorough interaction with the urban consciousness and literature.

It should be noted that despite the topicality and the interest of scientists, the notion of "transition" has hardly acquired the accurate terminology and scientific systemacy. In general, theoretical vision of a transitive epoch was limited either by historical chronology or by cultural cycles. For instance, I. Savelieva examines the transition as a peculiar feature of a historical epoch which separates one society in a "permanent" state from another one [Савельева, Полетаев 2002: 445]. Yu. Yakovets defines a "transition" as a period between two related historical cycles which is characterized by the crisis, disappearance of the archaic system and advent of a new one. According to Yu. Yakovets, the transitive periods do not fit the common frames of a historical periodization. They combine the characteristics of a disappearing and arising civilization, their confrontation, the burden of instability, drastic shift of historical events, the recurrences of the past and the movements of progress centers [Яковец 1999: 233]. K. Sokolov considers that the essence of "transition" lies in the well-established picture of the world (during relatively short spans of time) and its

mechanism is viewed by the scholar as an advent of different alternative pictures of the world and their confrontation, which is often severe, but it determines the way of society development [Соколов 2002: 57]. Studying the phenomenon of "transition" I. Kondakov highlights the categories of *chaos* and *order* as the primary semantic images that reflect the cultural transition from one paradigm to another one and, as a result, the semantic border of historical epochs is outlined [Кондаков 2002: 59]. N. Khrenov compares the notion of "transition" with the notion of "development". "The sense of transition consists in the historical development of its forms that is the transition from one stage, phase, cycle to another one showing both the progress and regress" [Хренов 2002a: 20] etc.

We believe that the concept introduced by E. Saiko is characterized by the most systematic approach to the phenomenon research. It identifies the transition as a mechanism and means of changing a historical state, reaching a new level or establishing a historically new state that means a discontinuity and a definite direction of the systemic movement to the integrity. E. Saiko notes that the transition being an element of development, a mechanism of change (its structures, orientation and content) is firstly an independent and compound phenomenon with the characteristics and qualities of a transitive state in general as well as the transition in terms of social movement. Secondly, it is a phenomenon of development with semantic and essential peculiarities of the latter. Thirdly, the transition is a phenomenon of a social world having the specificity not only in the content but also in the peculiarities of the realization [Сайко 2001: 19]. Considering the transition as a construct of development, the researcher emphasizes the transition capability to form a definite, particular state of development or a so-called transitive state with a high dynamism of the evolution. "It is the higher process mobility and a kind of «swaying», increased amplitude, affected stability that contributes to the breaking with the old" [Сайко 2001: 19]. Our opinion is based on one of the most important points of the E. Saiko's concept. The scholar observes the transition close to the concept of a human consciousness: "A transition to the new historical stage is always connected with the new level of historical subject development, its cognitive space, projective abilities and the possibilities to be presented at all levels ranging from an individual to the particular society" [Сайко 2001: 23]. The connection of the transitive process with the human consciousness is extremely important as, on the one hand, it discloses the essence of the "transition" phenomenon proper, on the other hand, it explains the sociocultural processes dynamics in the following way. The individual consciousness is a vital component of the historical paradigm setting the pace and direction to all the transitive processes. In other words, the transition is born in the consciousness and then penetrates into the history. This connection was also mentioned in V. Ivanov's work about Čiurlionis while defining the perception of a transitive period:

Some kind of mysterious common shift which is a sign of the times suffered is not just a change of all the values and the foundation of a spiritual life, but it has more profound meaning being a change in the perception of the surrounding, in the grounds of a spiritual life. That is another perception of an ego as well as a material world that is essential [Иванов 1916: 342].

Thereby, the structure of a transition includes three semantic phase dominants being interdependent and interconnected: transition as a state characterized by some uncertainty peculiar to the initial stage of the transitive process. The balance is observed in the stage of the transitive state in culture, society and art as it brought new forms of world perception which defined a new format of the human consciousness. Art formed new values, new styles despite the fact that it was closely connected with the traditions and obsolete norms that were used as a frame for a new paradigm of historic and creative thinking. The state of transition signifies a situation of anticipation when the new forms of history and culture appear. And this expectation is greater felt in art. The characteristics of such a state can be found in B. Pasternak's thoughts about art: "The history of culture is a chain of equation in images connecting the unknown with the known, where the latter is well-known and persistent being a legend that provided the basis for a tradition and the former is unknown and new. This factor stipulated the topicality of a current culture" [Пастернак 1990: 91]. As a rule, the transition as a state defines the artists' creative works described with the help of the prefix "pre-" (the Pre-Renaissance of Geoffrey Chaucer and Dante whose Devine Comedy synthesized the postulates of pagan and Christian cultures, drawing attention to the transition from the Middle Ages to the New Age: the Preromanticism of William Blake etc).

If there is a deviation from the balance in culture it is the type of a transition which is a *transition as a process* symbolizing the balance breakdown, new forms of human consciousness, social relationships, cultural values and priorities. Multiplicity and variability of the new tendencies in art and culture development lead to a drastic change of states, turn a transitive stage into a development phase. In art and culture logic of the transition as a process is illustrated by the bifurcation theory in physics introduced by I. Prigogine and I. Stengers. According to the theory, there are critical states in the processes of system development which are characterized by the breakup with the traditional tendency and advent of new alternative variants disturbing the balance in culture. In that case the culture as a system loses its balance and undergoes some stages of instability which represent the bifurcation itself. I. Prigogine and I. Stengers state:

At the bifurcation points, i.e. critical thresholds, the system behavior becomes instable and can evolve to some alternatives which correspond to the different stable modes. In this case we can only deal with the probabilities and any kind of "increased knowledge" let us predict deterministically which mode will be exactly chosen by a system... The outcome of the bifurcation is as unpredictable as a throw of dices [Пригожин, Стенгерс 2000: 61].

Under this theory, the critical state of the cultural and historical system (disintegrated picture of the world in art) is considered as a state of chaos (bifurcation point), turning into the order (cosmos) by means of a random choice, not deterministic, among the alternative ways of development. Overcoming of the bifurcation points in a variety of new pictures of the world means the transition from the stage of state to the stage of process, from the succession to the breakup with the former cultural tradi-

tion. In art this process symbolizes that a new type of the artistic consciousness is born in the varieties of the aesthetic tendencies alternative to naturalism and realism, transition to the new level of modus in artistry and artistic language, principle rejection from the former tradition (expressionism, surrealism, futurism, cubism, etc).

The discoveries made by I. Prigogine and I. Stengers in physics play an important role in the art and culture researches. Thus, analyzing the bifurcation theory, Yu. Lotman pays attention to the fact that the accentuation of randomness in the choice of vector for the cultural development in the process of transition activates an individual consciousness in the historical process which results in the activation of an artistic consciousness. In other words, the process of transition increases the role of the individual: "The choice of the way, that will be realized, depends on a range of random circumstances but, what is more, on the self-consciousness of actants" [Лотман 1996: 325].

Another important conclusion coming from the bifurcation theory is an affirmation that a breakup with the previous cultural paradigm takes place at the stage of transition as a process which firstly happens in art. A rejection of determinancy and an idea about the randomness of a new paradigm weaken the connection between the processes taking place in art as well as in the historical and cultural continuum. It is possible to conclude that the art is self-sufficient, it is developing in accordance with its peculiar laws not to display but to model different pictures of the world and outline the next steps of cultural development. Undoubtedly, this conclusion is grounded and can explain many controversial issues in the literature and art research at the turn of the centuries. However, we believe that it is important to avoid the absolutization of art because it allows stating that the art is autonomous at the turn of the centuries as well as in the early 20th century. Moreover, there is a gap between aesthetic consciousness and empirical reality (T. Adorno, V. Bychkov, N. Khrenov and others). We consider that to use the word "a lead" not "a breakup" is more appropriate while talking about the art. In this case the matter is not the empirical reality but the historical and cultural processes changing this reality. These processes are intuitively designed by the art before they take place.

It is necessary to mention that an aesthetic consciousness has not always been concentrating on itself in terms of sociocultural processes of the transitive period. The collapse in the system of values peculiar to the previous culture brought the necessity to find a unique pivot as a basis for a new axiological paradigm. It is realized by the aesthetic consciousness in two ways: the reflection of the distant past (return to a myth as a primary source of human culture, eternal value) and the present. A new urban consciousness formation interacting with the aesthetic consciousness was one of the sociocultural processes close to the modernism art at the turn of the century.

Finally, the third semantic constant of the «transition» is *a transition as a mechanism* of the development of system, the change of cultural paradigm possible in three ways: *shift*, *leap* and *burst*.

Transition as *a shift* describes a situation when the system of art (and culture) is balanced, that means an interaction of the classical and non-classical types of the artistic consciousness. It is expressed in the interaction in terms of one creative system of conventional and new modus in artistry (synthesis of naturalism and neoromanti-

cism in the works of Gerhart Hauptmann and Rudyard Kipling, the precondition for cubism in the late Victorian novel of Thomas Hardy¹, modernism tendency in the realistic works of Sergei Sergeyev-Tsensky etc). According to the terminology of N. Khrenov, the shift represents a type of the mediation transition: "In case of mediation a society has the values formed which are related to none of the poles (neither classical nor non-classical consciousness – A.S.). They are connected with the creation of new values, consequently, with the development, that is forming qualitative transformations – not destructive but gradual – in all the existing values" [Хренов 2002a: 21].

Transition as *a leap* characterizes a breakup with the previous artistic and cultural system contrasting with the classical and non-classical types of artistic consciousness, leaving the rational in favour of a sensitive world perception, focusing on the extremely different issues in literature and art, accepting new aesthetic values and ethic imperatives, providing close interaction of literature and aesthetic consciousness, accentuating new aesthetic tendencies opposed to the realism and naturalism (symbolism, expressionism, surrealism, cubism etc). The mechanism of a leap characterizes an inversion type of a transition directed at the destruction of the former values, according to N. Khrenov.

Transition as a burst signifies the intensity of the transitive process. Comparing the logic of a burst with the logic of a creativity which is unpredictable as well, Yu. Lotman states: "The moment of a burst is the point when the whole system has increased the level of available information. The curve of development takes an absolutely new path which is unpredictable and more complicated. Resulted from the burst, the dominant identifies the direction and it can be represented by any element of this system or any other system occasionally involved in the future movement by the burst" [Лотман 1992: 28]. In art a transition as a burst is connected with the semantic fields crossing. Under Yu. Lotman's theory, it happens when different forms of the contact – with a simple linguistic communication at one end and an artistic language at the other one – represents the shifts from the neutral central point either to simplifying understanding or complicating it. But the absolute victory of one of these ends is theoretically impossible and practically destructive [Лотман 1992: 16]. Here is not only the breakup with the previous tradition but also with the empiric reality reaching its pitch. The art is withdrawn into itself claiming to be a cultural code. "The destruction of the conventional artistic vocabulary undermining the artistic contact" [Кривцун 2000: 2] takes place at the level while a recipient is excluded from the creative process. Following the ideas of Oleg Krivtsun, such tendencies cause the necessity of the creative declarations, theoretical manifestations, explanation texts of artists, poets and musicians stating the initial intensions of the authors, forming the receptive attitude of the audience, setting the artistic aims [Кривцун 2000: 2]. Hereby, the concept of creativity is substituted by the creative strategy (surrealism, futurism, Dadaism, stream of consciousness and others).

¹ About tendencies of a cubism in T.Gardi's latest work: Абилова Ф.А, 2006, Роман Т. Гарди "Джуд незаметный": предчувствие кубизма, [in:] Литература XX века: итоги и перспективы изучения. Материалы четвертых Андреевских чтений, Москва, р. 71-76.

Summarizing all the said above, the "transition" can be described as a cultural phenomenon with a complex structure identifying a specific development of the cultural and historical process in the shift of the cultural paradigms at the level of the individual consciousness (including the artistic one).

N. Khrenov noted that the transition nature at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries is expressed by a transformation of the personality [Хренов 2002b: 12].

The features of a new transformed personality had already been shown in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the first who identified the process of consciousness transformation as a "transition": "I want to teach people how to follow the sense of the objective reality. It is an overman, a lightning from the dark cloud called a man... A man is something that has to be surpassed... Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the overman – a rope over an abyss. A dangerous crossing, a dangerous wayfaring, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous trembling and halting. What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal. What is lovable in man is that he is an over-going and a down-going" [Ницше 2007: 6, 14] (сотрате Fyodor Dostoyevsky "We are all the transitive creatures..." ("Все мы существа переходные..."). Later Andrei Bely wrote that Nietzsche had a presentiment that it he was a new type of person: "The human being will produce a new kind or will perish" [Белый 1994: 180].

The transition brought a "crisis of individual consciousness identity" to light, thus showing a tendency to extreme individualism and a person consciousness aspiration for going beyond the limits, reconsidering the objective reality, the role of existence. At this level the transition made itself known due to new forms of the aesthetic and urban consciousness in literature and art.

N. Khrenov marked that the transitive epoch centered the types of personalities gone unnoticed during the steady times [Хренов 2002a: 130]. At the turn of the centuries the literature and art actualized two types of personality defining the dynamics of transition. They were identified by W. Schubart as "heroic" aimed at the world supremacy and "messianic" capable to identify the orientation of values in the following epoch: "A heroic man sees a chaos in the world that is to be ordered with the help of a transforming force. Here everything is moving. The world has the aims set by a man... A messianic man judges from the feelings of integrity and harmony which he carries within and which he tries to restore in the scattered world" [Шубарт 2000: 10-11]. We believe that both these types realize the idea to transform the existing world and form a Faust-messianic type of the urban artistic consciousness at the turn of the centuries. This consciousness inherits the features of a rebel character ("Prometheus" type) and an artist character introduced by the romanticism. However, at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries these romantic types of personality are transformed into a single Faust-messianic type of an artist reflecting the tragedy of cognitive and sensitive consciousness solitude and defining the ways how the art and literature will develop in the early 20th century.

As Oleg Krivtsun noted, the features of a transition characterize the nature of the artistic consciousness. The interpretation of the creativity process as an act of self-surpassing shows the artist's ability to go beyond personal limits, beyond the limits of the world. The transitive nature of the artistic consciousness is seen in the desire

to look beyond the known, to excel not only the established schemes and codes of culture by means of a new creative stroke, but also the person who existed yesterday. Moreover, it is seen in the attempt to invent a new language of art capable of being the thing providing a common tone, expressing the important states of culture, including not only conscious [Кривцун 2000: 1]. During the transitive epoch the activity of artistic consciousness indicates the increased role of art and literature as the subjects of the "transition" resulted from the "unique ability to form and destroy the pictures of the world effectively" [Элиаде 1998: 66]. Spatial models created by art, types of consciousness adopted in literature, new modi of artistry indicate the creativity of the transitive epoch as "a leading, intuitive element of the culture", its predicting "organ". Now intuitiveness characterizes the literature and art as the subjects of transition. In this connection it is interesting to perceive the art as a playing form of understanding and transforming the reality. Analyzing the rituals and the ritual life of the Russian community at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, T. Bernshtam mentions the game as a type of transition where the extreme behavior patterns of the youth were realized:

The Community took in the features and qualities of the youth age reasonably as it was enabled to give way to the life energy, to express aggressive (destructive) inclinations and to try the conjugal ties in terms of a game which is a transition. In other words, they had a chance to mature and get rid of their biological and social uncertainty. This rational approach was described by the mythological and religious consciousness that founded a system how to regulate the way of living and ageing processes [Бернштам 1988: 47].

We think that the artistic creativity of the transitive epoch is subjected to similar processes – literature and art "play over" the possible variants how to develop an aesthetic and cultural consciousness. Sometimes it can be embodied into the forms – destructive and rejecting any world order (works of F. Kafka, A. Camus, expressionism and others). As M. Bakhtin stated, the moment of transition brings the situation of the "independent game with the sacred" [Бахтин 1990: 38], when by means of new poetical forms the literature forms the new archetypes, aesthetic values and ideals, forms of space and reasons of being, types of individual consciousness which allows the self-identification of a personality etc.

The major function of literature and art in a transitive epoch was to guide a man in terms of culture. It was possible to implement this function on condition that the art is *self-developing*; it is self-valuable and self-sufficient characterizing the literature and art as the subjects of a transition. The status of art as a vector of the cultural orientation brought out a need for the "aesthetic strategy of art autonomy, principle independence from any contexts out of art (social, political, religious etc), absolutization of the work representation as a new quantum of the objective reality which is distinctive and self-sufficient" [Бычков 2003: 305].

It should be noted that an ability to define and express a new format of individual consciousness formed during the transitive epoch was peculiar only to the literature that played a leading role among all types of art at the turn of the centuries. Analyz-

ing the specific nature of a transitive period, Yu. Lotman pointed out that the choice of way depends on the circumstances, but what is more, on the self-consciousness of actants. That is why the literature, language and propaganda acquire a special historical meaning in such moments [Лотман 1996: 325].

There is the increased responsibility of literature and art for sociocultural and historical processes mentioned by different researches. N. Khrenov says that

...during the transitive epoch a high status of art is explained by the fact that a disappointment about the rational formations is a reverse side of the interest to the forms of knowledge preserving the archaic pre-rational concepts. If all other spheres have already lost these forms, art is the only field cultivating them. During the transitive epoch these other spheres use actively the necessary elements of art. That is why the art becomes a sphere drawn interest of historians, philosophers and representatives of different fields of study. Literature often claims that history turns into art and philosophy is a kind of art and so on [Хренов 2002a: 71].

Studying the art and artistic criticism of the transitive epoch, the scholars emphasize the role of the aesthetic views in the formation of political tendencies. A philosopher Georgy Fedotov wrote about the death of the European culture accusing a new art of the crisis and approaching catastrophe:

Art does not reflect this death, art organizes and inspires it... And when a person is killed... the pressed human remnants expressing enthusiasm provide the ground for a new society... the dead sounds compose Stravinsky's music. Picasso and Stravinsky in a spiritual world can be compared with Lenin and Mussolini in a social one. But they are the founders and pioneers, not political leaders who make the last conclusions in the last field of activity which is the lowest one [Федотов 1936: 140].

Benedetto Croce points out the direct connection of the politics with art: "Anyone who has a sense of historical sequence can find the fascism ideology in futurism – in the readiness to go outside in order to impose his/her will and silence anyone who is against him/her, in the lack of fear facing battles and rebellions, in the urge of breaking up with all the traditions and in worship of the youth which is peculiar to futurism". In Russia Marinetti (close friend of Mussolini) would be considered as Mayakovsky and in Italy Mayakovsky would be considered as Marinetti [Соколов 2002: 74-75]. There is no doubt that such ideas (especially in case of Mayakovsky) are hyperbolized, but they reflect the actual tendency how to perceive the development of the aesthetic consciousness and the role of literature and art in the historical processes at the turn of the centuries and the first third of the 20th century.

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Summary

Category of transition aesthetic senses (to a question on perusal of an epoch)

The article is devoted to investigation in "transition" as a cultural phenomenon of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries boundary. Phases transition in culture and literature,

his aesthetic principles and actors are defined. The role of transitional processes in the development of artistic and cultural consciousness is analyzed.

Key words: transition, transition process, subject of transition, literary process, artistic consciousness