

Summary

Theory as a Revolutionary Practice

Oleg Aronson's article "Aesthetics as a Practice of Equality" makes an attempt to trace the path of development of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline from its orientation on sensual cognition to contemporary artistic intellectual critique of society. In this form, aesthetics becomes a practice of equality, a fact which Kant already grasped in his antinomy of taste, discovering in it a moment of *sensus communis* which is not reducible to any individual manifestation of sensuality. When the *sensus communis* is introduced as the basic principle of the aesthetics of equality, affective images take the place of philosophical concepts, affecting the public, and the distinction between sophisticated and naïve perception is lost. Like the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses, these are action-images, transversal to established institutions, including democratic institutions that affirm equality as a value. But equality is not a value; it is a practical principle that needs to master the critical potential of art in order to become a principle of thinking.

Helen Petrovsky's essay "From Contemplation to Action" deals with three

main groups of questions, i.e.: 1) continuity between nature and society; 2) images of action; 3) a special semiotics of forces. The idea of a continuity between nature and society is based on Peter A. Kropotkin's vision of a material method that has "included the study of social institutions in the sphere of natural-scientific investigations". Materialist philosophy in general appears as anti-metaphysical, including its most recent versions. An exploration of action brings together the understanding of revolution as a means of transforming social matter and a reading of M.M. Bakhtin's philosophy of the act. Bakhtin emphasizes the "unitary plane" of an act, which does not allow to split apart two worlds, namely, the world of culture, where an act is always objectified, and the world of life, where it is actually performed. Finally, a semiotics of forces has to do with ways of registering material changes that stand in stark opposition to traditional linguistic models of signs. In this perspective special attention is given to the concept of image according to Spinoza and Deleuze as well as to Charles Sanders Peirce's semeiotic.

Historical Imaginary in Literature

Hayden White's article "Against Historical Realism: A Reading of *War and Peace*" translated from English by Anna Kudalina (edited by Andrei Oleynikov) offers and develops the notion that art, primarily literature (whether fiction, non-fiction or auto-fiction), cinema, music,

etc., becomes a cultural space for generating alternative forms of "historical" (and perhaps also types of historicism).

In **Anatoly Korchinsky's** article "*My Past and Thoughts* by Alexander Herzen: The Performance of History and the Dia-

lectics of Non-negation” some aspects of the narrative poetics of *My Past and Thoughts* (Byloe i Dumy) are considered from the point of view of a hypothetical reconstruction of A.I. Herzen’s historical imaginary. In this book the writer carries out a cardinal artistic and philosophical critique of the understanding of history prevailing in the middle of the 19th century, revealing non-obvious ways of working with different layers of historical time and correcting the very principle of historicism and practical action in the historical field. This thought trend suggests an understanding of history as an anachronistic contingent process that can be represented as a specific literary and intellectual gesture that deactivates and transforms the dialectical model of historical movement.

The article “Information, Experience, and Historical Teleology in F.M. Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*” by **Jens Herth** analyzes the novel as an exploration of the epistemological and mediatic conditions of the narrative representation of Russian society in the post-reform period. W. Benjamin’s essay on the “storyteller” serves as a conceptual framework. Benjamin’s distinction between the world of rapidly consumed “information” on the one hand and the auratic “story” (*Erzählung*) rooted in personal experience on the other makes it possible to highlight the tension that characterizes the concept of narrative in Dostoevsky’s last novel. The conflict between the modernity and topicality of the genre of the novel and the echoes

of pre-modern narrative modes is finally suspended by the underlying actualization of a teleologically conceived history of the Russian state.

Anna Kudalina in her article “In Search of Another Modernity: Modes of Historicity in L.N. Tolstoy and M. Proust” examines the peculiarities of historical representation in Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* and M. Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* through the prism of the concept of “regime of historicity”. The author seeks to show that both novels unfold a critical reflection on the temporality and historicism of the modern era. Criticism of historical narrative also plays a major role in the organization of such a statement, and the alternative to it is literary writing, which can resolve these contradictions in the composition of a statement about the past.

Karina Razukhina’s article “Autofiction as a Medium of Cultural Memory: E. Limonov’s Novel *We Had a Great Epoch*” raises the question of studying autofictional texts as mediators of cultural memory. Since the work of J. Assman, cultural memory is understood as a phenomenon capable of preserving symbolic reconstructed meanings of history in the collective memory of subjects. In Limonov’s novel the narrator’s individual memory, based on urban folklore and intertexts, recreates the image of history in the memory of the generation of the 1950s, contrasting an alternative version with the dominant historical narrative.

Opera in Russia in the 19th Century: National and Transnational

The article “*Der Freischütz* by Carl Maria von Weber in Russian Culture of 19th Century (Agathe’s Prayer Over Wolf’s Glen)”

discusses the reception history of *Der Freischütz* in 19th century Russia from the first reactions in the Russian press in

1820s to Chekhov's *The Seagull*. **Elena Vereshchagina** and **Andrei Zorin** analyze the history of everyday usages of the opera, critical reviews, literary allusions, ideological and artistic interpretations. The success of the opera and its importance for Russian culture were shaped by the specific constellation of romantic demonology, the image of self-sacrificing angelic heroine and realization of the ideal of nationality in music.

Ekaterina Smirnova and **Evgeniya Litinskaya** in their article "Olonets Mermaid', or Dido inside out: Classical Heritage in the Repertoire of the Provincial Theater of the Early 19th Century" examine the history of the comic opera "The Olonets Mermaid", presented at

the Petrozavodsk Theater in 1809, and banned from showing shortly after the premiere. The theories about the sources of the play are reviewed and the reasons for its prohibition are analyzed, among which the most important is the indecency of the image of Queen Dido in the opera, perceived as a mockery of Catherine II. Theater lovers in the provincial city of the early 19th century, firstly, had an interest in the ancient heritage and its interpretations in the works of metropolitan authors, and secondly, ran their own experiments on adapting famous ancient plots to local conditions, and not only for the entertainment of the audience, but also involving them in the discussion of topical problems.

Mikhail Yeryomin: New Approaches to the Study of Poetics

Alexey Masalov in his article "Mikhail Yeryomin and Hermetic Poetry: Between Poetics of Cipher and Poetics of Emergent" attempts to look at Yeryomin's poetry in the broader context of hermetic poetry actualized in the second half of the 20th century (Italian hermeticism and Paul Celan). In comparing the poetry of G. Ungaretti, S. Quasimodo, M. Yeryomin and P. Celan, the author highlights the transformation of the function of the poetics of the cipher, as well as the role of the hybridization of the natural and subjective plans. The complication of form, the suggestive enigmatic metaphor becomes not just a riddle and a cipher, but a way of depicting the complexity of the world, its connections, essences and details. Thus, the poetics of hermetic texts can be considered as an emergent poetics and endless metamorphosis.

Anna Rodionova's article "Mikhail Yeryomin: 'Self-Sufficient' Terms, 'Poly-

meric Chimeras'" examines the manifestations of scientific, technical and natural philosophical discourses in the poetry of Mikhail Yeryomin, and analyzes the role of technical and natural motifs, scientific terminology and neologisms in his poetics. Referring to the cultural context, the heritage of the avant-garde and the peculiarities of the poet's style, the author determines the specificity of the technical imagination in Yeryomin's practice and finds a tendency to overcome the dichotomous thinking of modern rationality.

Ivan Onosov's article "Fermata" starts with an observation that words in Mikhail Yeryomin's poems (owing to the polysemy, to the associations that they cause, and/or to the references to other poems) as well as other peculiarities of his idio-style (the rigidity of the chosen form, his predilection for interrogative constructions, for sentences without lyrical subjects, for infinitives and the conjunction

“whether”) make his poems work in a certain way, either premeditated by their author or not. Endings of his poems contribute especially: even though they conclude the reading per se, they create conditions that make a poem keep ringing (this time in a different way) or prolong an aforementioned theme or a situation. This effect is described by the figure of fermata, a musical symbol that extends the duration of a sound based on the performer’s wishes (often until a sound dissipates completely).

Aleksandra Tsibulia in her article “Ekphrasis and Intermediality in Mikhail Yeryomin’s Poetics” examines how Yeryomin experiments in the genre of ekphrasis and integrates picture writing into the tissue of a poem, engages

names of maritime signal flags used to communicate with ships, and hence converts his poems to the post-medium condition. In 2010s, Yeryomin prefaces his poems with the intermedia epigraphs. This gesture is an innovative method in the Russian context. Using of the intermedia epigraphs is the expansion of the Yeryomin’s experiment aimed at creating polylingual poetical works and universal poetic language.

Iuliia Valieva’s article “A Letter of Mikhail Yeryomin to Lev Loseff about Pasternak” introduces a letter containing Yeryomin’s memoirs about Boris Pasternak. The publication outlines its genre and stylistic features, and gives both real and philological commentary to the text.

Special Language of Silence and Darkness

This block explores the specificity of sensory experiences of becoming d/Deaf and blind based on the poetic texts by d/Deaf and blind people. The monologues of **Igor Markaryan, Natalia Zalevs-kaya, Natalia Demyanenko, Irina**

Ekimasheva, Elena Volokh, Vladimir Rachkin are accompanied by the preface “Inside Louis Braille’s Six Hiding Places. Deafblindness and Documentary Poetry” by **Vladimir Korkunov**.

In Memoriam: Boris Ostanin (1.10.1946—22.09.2023)

This memorial block is dedicated to the writer, essayist, editor, and translator Boris Ostanin. This issue presents memorial essays by **Boris Konstriktor, Pyotr Kazarnovsky, Alexey Konakov, Sergei Zavialov, Mikhail Kurtov**, and

two unpublished texts by **Boris Ostanin**: “Lecture on Dragomoshchenko” and “Presentation of the Poetry of Alexander Gornon at the House of Scientists in Lesnoe”.

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