

ИЗОБРАЗИТЕЛЬНОЕ ИСКУССТВО

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RUSSIA — USA. THE ART OF THE YOUTH: REFLECTION ON CULTURAL EXPERIENCE AND NOVATION

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The article is devoted to several aspects of Russian-American culture. The purpose of research is to identify opportunities for intercultural communication in the context of transforming the world and trace the formation of a new mentality based on the principles of tolerance and experiencing one united history.

The relevance of the study is determined by an attempt to create a general conception of contemporary art of the younger generation. The methods of interdisciplinary analysis are utilized which are capable of identifying areas of possible cooperation between Russian and American culture. The paths of development of modern science are closely related with the possibility to conduct a Russian-American scientific dialogue.

Russian and American cultures conceptualize modernity, society, the individual and his place in the world differently. At the intersection of these differences appears something new that can enrich each of the cultures under examination.

Based on case studies of fine art and literature, the possible connection between methods and analyses of artwork are illustrated that serve to emphasize the reflection on cultural experiences and novation in the works of the older and younger generation. Refs 20.

Keywords: Russia, USA, tolerance, culture, literature, graffiti, Warhol, Miller, dialogue, generation.

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РОССИЯ — США. ИСКУССТВО МОЛОДЫХ: РЕФЛЕКСИЯ КУЛЬТУРНОГО ОПЫТА И НОВАЦИИ

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Статья посвящена некоторым аспектам российско-американской культуры. Цель исследования — выявить возможности межкультурной коммуникации в контексте трансформирующегося мира и проследить формирование нового менталитета, основанного на принципах толерантности и переживания единой истории.

Актуальность исследования определена попыткой создания общей концепции современного искусства молодого поколения. Предлагаются методы междисциплинарного анализа, способные определить направления возможного сотрудничества между культурами России и США. Пути развития современной науки тесно связаны с возможностью вести российско-американский научный диалог.

Российская и американская культуры по-разному осмысливают современность, общество, человека и его место в мире. На пересечении этих различий и возникает то новое, что способно обогатить каждую из исследуемых культур.

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На основе конкретных примеров изобразительного искусства и литературы показываются возможные варианты соединения методики и анализа творчества, подчеркивающие рефлексию культурного опыта и новации в произведениях представителей старшего поколения и молодых. Библиогр. 20 назв.

Ключевые слова: Россия, США, толерантность, культура, литература, граффити, Уорхол, Миллер, диалог, поколение.

In the modern world there is not a single perception about modern art of the younger generation, active in the first decade of the 21st century. The paradigm of cooperation has not been considered and cultural and political tendencies have often been neglected in research. The methods of interdisciplinary analysis, which could help to identify areas for possible cooperation between Russian and American culture, have yet to be developed. Moreover, there is no database for artists of the younger generation. The search for answers to these questions, even their clarification, is vital for the development of modern science and may serve as a basis for scientific dialogue.

The goal of the following work is to discover the opportunities of intercultural communication in the context of a transforming world and trace the development of a new mentality based on the principles of tolerance and experiencing a united history. The work has been conducted within the framework of a large project “Three poles of a multipolar world. China. Russia. USA. The art of the youth,” presented for the first time at the international scientific conference which took place in St. Petersburg State University¹.

Currently there does not exist a general vision and conception of modern art of the younger generation- those who became artists at the beginning of the 21st century. This deals firstly with leading countries in the field of visual and verbal art such as USA, Russia, and China.

The comparison of creative trends among young artists from Russia and the USA is of great interest. The uniqueness of the cultural development of these countries is quite clear, its current state and perspectives in this difficult and complex world demands further study. The convergence, rather than clash of civilizations as well as culture and people, is vital for the cultural experience of the 21st century- for modern development of humanity that is undergoing a crisis of old ideas and vaguely formatted new conceptions². Russian and American culture has different views on modernity, society, and a person's role in the world. New ideas arise at the crossroad of these differences that can enrich each culture.

The study and analysis of connections and differences in American and Russian modern art form an essential new approach for the general history of art. In the resolution of this task, reflection on the creativity of young artists is necessary: Russian and American young artists who impart a personal touch to art and the world. This is precisely what we should identify and understand to better the role of young artists today.

The paradigm of development and interaction of art as well as cultural and political trends has yet to be analyzed. Also, it is important to note that methods of interdisciplinary analysis, which could unveil areas of potential cooperation between the cultures of

¹ International Scientific Conference «China. Russia. USA. Peculiarities of the Reflection on Cultural Experience in 21st century» (organized by T.S.Yurieva) took place in SPSU in the Bobrinsky palace Dec. 1–3, 2016.

² Юрьева Т.С. Вступительное слово к конференции и презентация проекта. СПб.: Изд-во С.-Петербурга, ун-та, 2016. С. 4.

America and Russia, have not been developed. Due to the differences of scientific approaches in the noted countries as well as organization of the scientific community and professional institutions, a universal corresponding cross-disciplinary terminology does not exist. Moreover, there is no database for modern young artists who should be the object of research and basis for a scientific dialogue. The above-mentioned project “Three poles of a multipolar world. China. Russia. USA. The art of the youth,” was focused on solving, albeit partly, this problem. A publication of works by Russian and American scientists as well as leading experts will be published in two languages and will include compositions of young artists. In such a manner, absolutely new and never before researched material will be introduced into the humanities. Fields of study such as museum management, art history, cultural studies, sociology, history, and philosophy can offer new topics and discussion questions for courses of Russian and American universities which is vital for modern liberal arts education.

Russian and American art of the 21st century should not only be presented with new illustrative material, but one should be acquainted with the works by American artists in different medium; from traditional to modern (paintings, video-art, exhibits, performance, etc.). It is necessary to clearly understand and research through art how Russian and American artists of the younger generation perceive life. Consequently, through lectures and a monograph a new perception of life will be analyzed in a generation that grew up in a transforming world where different religious denominations, worldviews, national traditions and values do not create borders, but lead to a universal history of world responsibility and aspiration for freedom.

Events that occur in our countries have an impact on people’s lives all over the world. Modern art, contemporary and on issues of current day by nature, instantly react to these events. It is precisely this ability to reflect problems that are universal which makes the art of young artists international and directed towards the future. Together with this, art initiates an uncompromising discussion about the political and social situation in a country. Art conveys reflection on the topic of existing stereotypes, associations, misbeliefs and fears that the new generation encounters and tries to overcome in their creative works. With the help of theoretical works and exhibitions, it is possible to create a critical but bright and honest portrait of our era.

It is important that initial impulses and dimensions of creative works by young artists in Russia and America differ. At the foundation of young art in Russia lies an appeal to both world classics and possibly most importantly, Russian avant-garde for its harshness, boldness, and aggressiveness. This is the principal difference from the art of the youth in America which is primarily based on the search of the artist who has become an icon for future generations the artist’s searches — Andy Warhol and pop artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Tom Vasselman, and James Rosenquist. They are committed to the philosophy of «mass culture». Though they are certainly well acquainted with the classics of American art — Andrew Wyeth, Edward Hopper, nevertheless each of them has their own preferences which sometimes diametrically oppose the classic. They may vary from abstract expressionism to minimalism and conceptualism.

A figure who made a large impact on the artistic world was the American sculptor George Segal (1924–2000), whose career started on the wave of pop art. Segal was not just the creator of movement Environment, he also created mass-media images. He created his own theater stage; in plaster casts of a human figure, he created a new way of representing

a person with the sensation of a somewhat elusive, nostalgia for the past, the state of loneliness (and in this manner, he followed E. Hopper). He became the father of exhibits where he converted human figures into objects. He is known as the official state artist of the United States as he has created a portrait of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a massive emotionally moving piece dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust, and a multi-figure monument to the Korean War veterans that was placed in a park.

American artists of many generations followed in his footsteps. The most notable among them was Mark Jenkins who currently lives in Washington. He creates street exhibits made from packing tape that are seamlessly integrated into street life in the American capital. Despite this, the scope of his talent is limited.

It can be stated that the creative works of young Russian and American artists have become a sort of cryptographic writing where the universal codes are held by those to whom the works were addressed in order to better understand each other in a multicultural society. The artist, opposing himself to the majority, still wants to be recognized by society. Interpretation has turned to be the central element of contemporary art. The work of contemporary art, devoid of decoration and free from the necessity to depict physical reality, is created and exists as an object for interpretation.

In the art of the first decades of the 21st century it is still relevant what the well-known sociologist and jurist Gustav Radbruch (1878–1949) said: since the first half of the 20th century in the works of young artists a combination of humanity and barbarism, good taste and bad taste, truth and delusion have been present — apparently, they have changed only in proportion.

As a result the conceptualization process and analysis of implanted trends of young artists can only be based on the synthesis of different approaches: historical-cultural, art history, and comparative which highlight distinctive movements in Russian and American art. At times bright, often controversial, individuals represented leaders of basic artistic ideas of a certain movement.

As an example of implementing such methodology, the approach to evaluating the art of Andy Warhol can be used. Warhol greatly influenced Russian and American art as well as world art.

Biographies exist that are useful for young people who dream of a certain career about how to become famous and find yourself in life. Andy Warhol's identity and talent is extremely attractive. However, many domestic "elder" researchers view Warhol's multi-faceted works with scorn. Here the question is not one of taste, but the presence of an undisputed fact that Warhol became an icon for several generations. Worldwide recognition of the artist continues today almost 30 years after his death.

Postmodernism has never produced a movement more powerful, one which is always intriguing, gifted with an extraordinary instinct of creativity, natural behavior, irony, and humorous attitude towards society — than pop art. In the very beginning of their career the outsiders, having neglected any mythology, created a myth about themselves without being aware of it. Pop art emerged — first in New York, later all over the world — from a situation where there was no struggle for supremacy, but there was a desire to bring life and art together as a whole. Initially they were not recognized. Andy Warhol, the leader of the movement, was in fact a player who put his life, career, and vocation at stake. This Slav wanted to speak English like a native American, he vowed that he would become famous in New York and to gallop on a white horse along Fifth Avenue. Warhol was true

to himself as he became rich and famous all over the world. He remained one of the most dramatic and lonely figures in the bright company of actors and musicians. He was the most generous and good-natured man, surrounded by visitors of the bar he owned, and simply handed money to those in need. Warhol had a clear goal- to become one hundred percent American. He continued to pursue his goal and when none of his paintings were bought, he turned in desperation to creating «silent» films and subsequently ran show business in his silver «The Factory».

Modernity has almost never given birth to such a large-scale figure as with Warhol. All the terms have fallen away just the way some superfluous husk does, and the term “mass culture” started to appeal to the creation of a genuine image of America, to the national style that includes the culture of hamburgers, comics, advertising, the American flag and images of Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, and Liza Minnelli. Young people have created a new art, rejecting the academism of «abstract expressionism» as well as the influence of some of the greatest artists in the name of their own unlimited freedom for the sake of art. It can be stated that they created the «road signs of American life». Everyday life was for the first time included on such a scale in the context of contemporary art together with a TV screen on.

“Painting is connected with art and with life. Neither one nor the other can be created. I try to work between them,” — this is one of my favorite aphorisms of Robert Rauschenberg. A question that I often ask myself is the following: has the younger generation lost the painting itself in the first decades of the 21st century and to what degree do new ideas proposed by the younger generation allow them to work...between what borders?

These questions are extremely relevant today and searching for their answers may be productive only in a comparative analysis of trends that are attractive to society.

Graffiti: borrowing the American experience and development in Russia

With the appearance of graffiti on the walls of American cities in the middle of the 20th century, a large portion of the contemporary artistic process has moved out onto the streets. The major hero of street art has become a young artist, a rebel brought up in a time of severe social inequality in American society.

American history of the 60s — 70s of the 20th century was marked by racial riots across the country which was the result of a policy aimed at segregation and discrimination of people from Africa and Latin America. This was a time when the equal rights movement for African Americans used nonviolent methods in their struggle. One way to express their «right for the city»³ was street writing- graffiti done by teenagers living in racial ghettos.

Graffiti become a kind of protest by the younger generation, formed at the border between the industrial era and the era of innovation and creative thinking. Those belonged to the generation expressed their views through informal artistic practices, avoiding political issues and thereby making their preference in favor of subcultural orientation.

As an art, graffiti first appeared on the streets of Philadelphia and later became more widespread in New York in the 1960s. It is possible to associate this process with the beginning of a critical attitude towards the transformation of the urban environment made by major urban planner Robert Moses. Large-scale developments were not done in interest

³ The term was introduced by French sociologist Henri Lefebvre.

of improving the city environment; it was simply financially beneficial. Skyscrapers and highways helped to develop what were once poor areas, making them appealing to the most affluent segments of the population. However, the consequence of this gentrification resulted in the resettlement of people to poorer areas such as Harlem and the Bronx. These neighborhoods were overtaken with crime while also serving as the birthplace of hip-hop with graffiti acting as a component of the musical movement.

The movement gained its massive scale due to an article published in 1971 in the «New York Times» [1]. The article was about a 17-year-old teenager who worked as a courier, thus constantly moving through the city streets, and wrote his name and number of the street on walls— e.g. «Taki 183». In the same year, a wave of similar inscriptions swept the New York subway. Young people wrote their names on walls and added the street number. In such a manner a new visual means of communication was created. This technique of quickly writing was called tagging⁴. Tags were applied to various surfaces with a pocket marker or with spray paint. Tags contained an essence of spontaneity, but at the same time, a formal font style was worked out in advance.

After some time, so many writers⁵ appeared that in order to distinguish them, new techniques were needed. It was at this time that a large number of styles for writing names were developed. Writers decorated their tags with all sorts of strokes and asterisks, inventing entirely new forms. For example, crown tags were used by writers who proclaimed themselves «kings».

The next step was to increase the scale of drawings. Writers began to reproduce their tags, increasing them in size. The letters became thicker, outlined and filled with another color. All of this served as a reason for the emergence of the so-called «pieces».

An interesting fact was provided by the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard, who took note of the graffiti during his trip to the United States: «in the spring of 1972 New York was swept by the wave of graffiti, which originally appeared on walls and the walls of the ghetto, and gradually flooded subways and buses trains, trucks and lifts, lanes and monuments, covering them entirely with primitive or complex writings, which are neither political nor pornographic in their content. These were simply somebody's name or nickname taken from underground comics <...> At night, teenagers managed to get into the railroad wagon depot and fulfilled their graphical imagination on the inside walls of the wagons. In the morning, these trains travelled around Manhattan. Inscriptions were washed away (which is not easy), graffiti writers were arrested, imprisoned, the sale of markers and spray cans was banned — but this was all in vain: 'writers' made them themselves and each night took to the streets»[2, c. 57].

Grffiti in the subway created competition among street artists, which led to the development of new styles. Now, if a writer wanted to distinguish himself, he had to create unique works reflected individual style. During this time, almost all well-known graffiti styles appeared which can be distinguished from each other primarily by the form of letters and how they are connected.

In the 1980s, the graffiti movement in the United States began to fade. This was primarily due to the tightening of laws against unauthorized drawings and increased control by the authorities. But by this time, graffiti had already made its way across the ocean — to Europe and the USSR.

⁴ From English- to tag.

⁵ Writer — a street artist specializing in painting graffiti fonts.

Graffiti penetrated the territory of the post-Soviet Union and was extremely popular, as was everything American during Perestroika. The appearance of graffiti is closely related to popularity of breakdance⁶. In the mid-80s, break-festivals were held throughout the country. It was a period of so-called «data starvation» when information about this culture (e.g. magazines, movies) could be obtained only through a friend who travelled abroad, so any material was thoroughly studied, carefully stored and passed from person to person.

There were several American films («Wild style», «Beat Street» and «Style Wars») that appeared in the Soviet Union and introduced graffiti, break-dance, and rap to young people. It is important to note that the first Russian writers were break-dancers who used graffiti as scenery for break-festivals.

Writers were faced with the fact that only one company in Latvia produced paint in spray cans on the territory of the former Soviet Union. This paint was of poor quality and very expensive. Spray cans were of great value and artists had to invent ways to refill them. The quality of ink was also very poor and as a result, writers' work faded quite quickly. Writers worked mainly in the style of bombing⁷, making figures not only on walls, garages, and fences, but also on underground trains. This trend was dominant in Russian graffiti for many years.

In the 1990s, the popularization of graffiti in Russia was led by Da Boogie Crew, whose members had a column in the magazine «Ptyuch» as well as youth programs on television. In 1998 the first Russian graffiti-specialized magazine «Hip-hop info» appeared.

The first hip-hop organization «Stage 21» was founded in Moscow in 1999 and after two years the first professional school of graffiti art in Russia opened. The establishment of «Stage 21» greatly led to the development and popularization of graffiti.

Several conclusions can be made about the influence of American graffiti on the development of subculture in Russia. Russian writers not only made copies of font styles that had already been developed, but also fully adopted the slang of their American colleagues. At present, the graffiti movement in Russia remains quite isolated. Some in the movement are becoming acquainted with traditional tools such as canvas, oil, and acrylic while remaining faithful to the aesthetics of the street. Their activity encroaches on the territory of contemporary art.

Russian Anarchism in the American Literary Tradition (the case of Henry Miller)

The cultural relationship between Russia and the United States during the 21st and 20th centuries has always been the subject of intense study by historians, art critics, and philologists. American and Russian literature has always been in close contact. Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov left their traces on American literature while American writers such as W. Irving, E. A. Poe, and E. Hemingway influenced Russian writers. J. Steinbeck, J.D. Salinger, and K. Vonnegut gained popularity among Soviet readers. However, there exists a number of interesting lines of interaction between Russian and American cultures, which are either not investigated or studied very poorly. One of these lines is the influence of Russian theoretical anarchism on American culture.

⁶ Breakdance is a street dance, which is a component of the hip-hop culture.

⁷ Bombing is the quickest way of making graffiti.

The origins of American anarchism and its history have been studied very thoroughly. In this history, which has long been written, there is a place for Russian thought, because many American anarchists, for example, A. Berkman and E. Goldman, called themselves direct disciples of M. Bakunin and P. A. Kropotkin. However, the influence of these thinkers on American culture is not limited to the sphere of political thought. Many American writers who enjoyed leftist ideas read and reread their books. One of them was Henry Miller.

The figure of Henry Miller (1891–1980), author of the scandalous «Tropic of Cancer» and «Tropic of Capricorn» stands apart in American culture. Miller gained his fame in the mid-1930s, while in exile in Paris, and then experienced incredible popularity in the 1960s in the United States when authorities removed a ban on the publication of his books. In the 1970s interest in Miller faded due in part to the leaders of “the second wave” of feminism [3, p. 118–125] accusing him of being a «sexist» and a «sexual neurotic» [4, p. 295]. This consequently led to his oblivion.

Academic scholars were indifferent to Miller up until the beginning of the 2000s: he is viewed as an immigrant and as a writer associated largely with the context of European modernism, rather than with the tradition of American literature [5, p. 148].

American scholars, however, rejected this assessment as well as the idea to accuse Miller of sexism or a pornographic author [6, p. 105–123]. Miller, as some scholars note [5, p. 172; 7, p. 37; 8, p. 231–241], is inextricably linked with the American literary tradition, especially with that of its intellectual and aesthetic line, which was represented by such figures as R. W. Emerson, H. D. Thoreau and W. Whitman. Miller shared their doctrine of self-reliance, treating the «self» as an inner essence which is at the same time individual and universal. Miller sharing their philosophy perceives reality mystically, trying to identify with it himself, and also understands art as a phase of one's life project, as a means to understand the world. Miller is very similar to the tradition of American social prose (Th. Dreiser). His novels of the 1930s and the earliest texts (unpublished novel «Clipped Wings») contained a harsh criticism of the American social system and its ideological basis, liberalism. In this context, it is important to state that the social evaluation of Miller, as a rule, was based on the ideas of anarchism.

Finally, it is important to understand Miller's place in the context of Western European modernism. Miller began to get involved in the aesthetics of the modernists still in the United States, but only in Paris, among American artistic immigrants he began to understand and accept the poetics of «high modernism». However, his understanding of the function of art as some scholars note [9, p. 122; 10, p. 106] is quite different.

The majority of modernists mostly sought how to improve the form, the style, while Miller presents himself as an amateur who does not care much about the quality of his writings. Modernists mostly supported the idea of the «impersonal» art advocated by T. S. Eliot [11, p. 13–22]. Their goal was to create a perfect product. Miller, following R. W. Emerson, H. D. Thoreau and W. Whitman, considered art as a vehicle for understanding life. However, it is essential that defining his place and path in the culture, Miller relied not only on national tradition. The ideas of Russian anarchism, especially those of P. A. Kropotkin, played an important role in the formation of his perception.

Anarchist ideas were popular in the USA especially among the workers and the petty bourgeoisie in the big industrial cities. After the execution of the anarchist leaders in 1886 (the events at Haymarket Square), these ideas became even more popular, and anarchist fashion for many years was of great interest in the artistic circles of America. Miller and

his wife June belonged to the artistic bohemian circles of New York in the 1920s and therefore were fond of anarchist ideas of social reconstruction. However, this enthusiasm ended quickly. Already in the mid-1920s, he chose a path not of a social reformer that seeks to change the world, but of an artist who accepts life in all of its manifestations. It is essential that Miller had learned, on the one hand, the instinct of anarchism, the principle of rebellion against all transcendent power, the desire for spontaneity in everything in life and in art and, on the other, a political theory of anarchism that helped him to attack the foundations of the society built on the principles of Social Darwinism.

In the novel «Tropic of Capricorn» Miller in an ironic and radical manner rejects authority, laws, the state, and announces a social project that carries anarchist ideas: “If I were running the boat things wouldn’t be so orderly perhaps, but it would be gayer, by Jesus! <...> Maybe there would not be macadamized roads and streamlined cars and loudspeakers and gadgets of a million billion varieties <...> maybe people would kill each other when their patience was exhausted and may be nobody would stop them because there wouldn’t be any jails or any cops or judges, and there certainly wouldn’t be any cabinet ministers or legislatures because there wouldn’t be any goddamned laws to obey or disobey” [12, p. 364].

The main figure among the theorists of anarchism, who Henry Miller was interested in was one of the theoreticians and practitioners of the anarcho-communist Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921). The fact that Miller included his book «Mutual Aid as a Factor of Evolution» (1902) in the list of books that influenced him, reveals the importance of this text for his development. Kropotkin, being a positivist scientist, whose main specialty was natural science, uses «biological approach» and treats anarchy as a scientific method [13, p. 302]. In his work «Mutual Aid» Kropotkin argues against Darwinists [14, p. 58] who considered the driving force behind the evolution to be the struggle for existence, and transferred this logic to the laws of development of society and human life. Speaking against the intellectual tradition of Hobbes, according to which a person struggles for the existence against those who surround him, Kropotkin rightly believes that it justifies exploitation, competition, war, and the institution of the state as a factor that allegedly stops the animal-human desire for power.

Kropotkin challenges this idea with his analysis of the evolution of the animal world and shows that it cannot develop on the basis of competition and war. In the fight against severe natural conditions, those who survive are not strong, but rather united [15, p. 57]. The main factor of evolution, therefore, is not a competition, but mutual aid [14, p. 59; 16, p. 135–136]. Kropotkin rejects the thesis of the original imperfection of human nature and its sinfulness [17, p. 58]. From his point of view, this idea serves as a justification for abuse of power against human freedom. Kropotkin successively examines how the principle of mutual aid carried out in nature [15, p. 1–31], in the history of mankind [15, p. 153–222], in modern life [15, p. 223–261] and criticizes the economic individualism advocated by liberal thought.

Miller, no doubt, was close to anarchist enthusiasm in recognizing the limitless possibilities of man, his denial of sin and aggression. In everyday life, Miller was known to be guided by the principles of mutual aid and was always ready to help people who he did not know. Miller’s attack on the struggle for existence in the texts of the «Parisian trilogy» comes from the ideas of Kropotkin. However, it is easy to see, he focused on the negative side of the anarchist program. He was not interested in positive anarchist society projects.

Miller remains an individualist. In the novel «Tropic of Capricorn» Miller actually exposes the concept of mutual aid by Kropotkin as a speculative and unrealizable within the real-life circumstances and as part of culture, which is entirely built on competition. Miller talks about how, sitting in a high administrative position, he is trying to help people, but all of his attempts are unsuccessful and in the end, he rejects the idea of a selfless help.

In a later book, «Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch» Miller neglects individualism and calls mutual aid of human beings an ultimate condition for the survival of the world and self-realization for each individual. “Reading my quaint biographical romances, people often ask how on earth I managed to keep my head above water during the black years of famine and drought. I have explained, of course, and in these very books that at the last ditch everyone always came to my rescue. Anyone who has a steady purpose is bound to attract friends and supporters. What man ever accomplished anything alone» [18, p. 48.].

Miller shares Kropotkin's understanding of state, seeing it as an institution of repression that prevents creativity and self-realization of man. In the novel «Tropic of Capricorn» Miller creates a horrible pattern of state, describing «Cosmodemonic Telegraph Company». In his work «The Books in My Life» developing the ideas of Kropotkin, he mentions ancient Sparta in which, according to Plutarch, the government established a strict social order and people, entirely devoted to the service of the homeland, were unable to maintain privacy [20, p. 186.]. Sparta for Miller is an example of a specific disease typical for to the European consciousness, in which the idea of power is rooted.

Miller in his understanding of the nature of art is also close to Kropotkin. He considers art to be anarchic, spontaneous, not submissive to rules and traditions, trying to explode any kind of form. Miller is close to Kropotkin and in understanding the nature of art. He considers art to be anarchic, spontaneous, not submitted to the rules and traditions, not looking for form, but explosiveness. The important thing is that for Kropotkin and as well as for Miller, art has a collective nature. In «Mutual aid» Kropotkin explains the greatness of medieval architecture which grew out of the idea of brotherhood and unity, nurtured by the city [15, p. 211]. Thus, the creative impulse, according to Kropotkin, has a collective origin, although it works through the individual. Miller also spoke about the collective spirit of creativity. For all his tendencies toward the individualistic project, he believed that a genuine, true «self» of man, the basis of every person is a product of the collective energy that permeates all life forms. This cosmic energy, the universal creative rhythm is the foundation of individual creative abilities. Consequently, this artistic instinct, according to Miller, has a collective nature. This very idea was introduced by R. W. Emerson in his book «Representative Men».

Miller's devotion to the ideas of Russian anarchist Kropotkin helped him to overcome the literary centered impulse of his teachers-modernists, such as J. Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and M. Proust and return to a purely American literary tradition represented by R. W. Emerson, H. D. Thoreau and W. Whitman. The next generation of writers focused greatly on Miller, the generation of Kerouac, Burroughs, Mailer inherited Miller's experience, and through it, though indirectly, inherited the influence of Russian anarchism which proved to be extremely crucial for American literary history.

Miller's influence on Russian literature is not as significant. One of the main reasons is Soviet censorship: his books were considered to be full of primitive eroticism and therefore harmful to the Soviet reader. In the USSR, Miller's texts in Russian were published

only in the period of Perestroika. And yet Miller is present in the Russian context. Eduard Limonov, a prominent Russian writer learns Miller's intonations and transfers them to Russian prose. Limonov preserves such properties as the autobiographical and modernist strategy that ruins classical narrative structure. The hero of his early texts, as well as the hero of Miller is an emigrant, a cultural outcast, an outsider, and an anarchist who seeks to throw off the shackles of the spirit, traditions, and tries to become closer to the rhythm of life. Limonov, who works in the tradition of Miller, became one of the iconic figures that greatly influenced the generation of Russian writers, who presented themselves in 2000s. Zahar Prilepin, Roman Senchin, Sergei Shargunov, Marat Basyrov are the representatives of this generation. These authors oppose themselves to the postmodern tradition, seeking a way towards life and the human self through art. They are formed at the junction of the traditions of Russian classical literature and the tradition that is brought by Limonov, i.e. the tradition dating back to Henry Miller. Such a tendency can be found in the texts of younger writers such as Eugene Alekhin (b. 1985), author of «The Third Leg», «Chamber Music», «neither oceans nor seas», and one of the founders of the group «Waste Paper» famous for its tragic philosophical rap lyrics. Alekhin's prose like that of Miller follows the trend of lacking structure. It transmits a continuous stream of life as a group of single, random, non-binding events. Like Miller, Alekhin actively uses the genre of anecdotes, small stories, usually absurd and comical. His character, like Miller's character — a cultural outsider, spiritual nomad, an anarchist who does not have permanent residence, does not want to have anything to do with the establishment. However, Alekhin's books quite clearly highlight the difference between Henry Miller and every modern Russian young author, continuing his tradition. Miller finds hedonistic pleasure in life. Every moment is precious to him. Russian authors, unlike Miller, are far from that acceptance of life. They show the hardships of life, they reveal in every moment of life its tragic depth. And if Miller makes fun of the psychological character, modern Russian authors, on the contrary, make effort to give this kind of character a new life and treat the human experience with a seriousness that has always been in the tradition of Russian classical prose.

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