THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE AND RADICAL MODERNISM

An Introductory Reader

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3. The Birth of Socialist Realism from the Spirit of the Russian Avant-Garde[1]

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I

Students of Soviet culture have recently devoted increasing attention to the period of transition from the avant-garde of the 1920s to Socialist Realism of the 1930s and 1940s.[2] Earlier, this transition did not seem problematic. It was usually regarded as the result of the crushing of "true, contemporary revolutionary art of the Russian avant-garde" by Stalin's conservative and despotic regime and the propagation of a "backward art" in the spirit of nineteenth century realism. According to prevailing opinion, the shift also reflected the low cultural levels of the broad Soviet masses and Party leadership. But as this period is studied more closely, such a purely sociological explanation of the transition is no longer satisfactory.

There is an essential difference in the approach to the represented subject, rightly stressed by Soviet criticism, between nineteenth-century realism, customarily called "critical realism" in Soviet art history, and the art of Socialist Realism. Unlike the former, Socialist Realism has a positive relation to its subject. Its aim is to "celebrate Socialist reality," instead of keeping it at arm's length and treating it objectively and "realistically." This difference has also been noted by Paul Sjeklocha and Igor Mead:

> To us "Westerners" this realism implies a dispassionate analytical stance which is assumed by the artist without sentiment. If emotion enters into realism, it is generally of a critical nature intended to instruct by way of bad example rather than a good. . . . In short, although such realism is essentially didactic, it is also essentially negative. Visionary artists have not been found among the realists. However, the Soviet State requires that its artists combine realism and visionary art.[3]

Socialist Realism shows the exemplary and the normative, which are worthy of emulation. Yet it cannot be considered a new version of classicism, although we may indeed find classical elements in Socialist Realist artistic compositions. Antiquity and the Renaissance were highly praised by Soviet critics, but the art of Socialistic Realism is without the direct antique stylization so characteristic, for example, of the art of Nazi Germany, which is in many other respects quite similar to Socialist Realism. Unlike typical West European neoclassicist art, Socialist Realism judges the reality created in the Soviet Union to be the highest achievement of the entire course of human history and does not, therefore, oppose the antique ideal to the present as a "positive alternative" or a "utopia already once realized."[4] Socialist Realism is just one of the ways in which world art in the 1930s and 1940s reverted to the figurative style after the period of relative dominance of avant-garde trends—this process embraces such countries as France (neoclassicism), the Netherlands and Belgium (different forms of magical realism), and the United States (regional painting) as well as those countries where various forms of totalitarianism became established. At the same time, the stylistic differences between Socialist Realism and other, parallel artistic movements are obvious on even the most superficial examination.

All this indicates that the Socialist Realism of the Stalin period represents an original artistic trend with its own specific stylistic features, which cannot simply be identified with other artistic principles and forms familiar from the history of art. Therefore it also becomes impossible to speak of the simple "propagation" of Socialist Realism: before something can be propagated, it must already exist. Although, like any other artistic trend, Socialist Realism belongs to its time and place, it cannot be regarded in a purely sociological and reductionist light, but should, first and foremost, be subjected to normal aesthetic analysis with the object of describing its distinctive features.

This task is not, of course, possible within the framework of the present essay. My aim, rather, is to distinguish in the most general terms between Socialist Realism and a number of other artistic phenomena with which it may be confused. By artistic means that are similar to those in conventional nineteenth-century realistic painting—above all the work of the Russian Wanderers (Peredvizhniki)—Socialist Realism seeks to express a completely different ideological content in radically

changed social and historical conditions. This naturally leads to a fundamental disruption of the form of traditional realistic painting itself. Thus, difference of form proves to be bound up with a definite purpose in regard to content; to ignore this change may result in an inadequate interpretation of formal difference, as has often happened in the past.

A similar situation occurs in relation to the art of the Russian avant-garde. It is often regarded in an aestheticized, purely formal, stylistic light,[5] although such a view is opposed to the objectives of the Russian avant-garde, which sought to overcome the traditional contemplative attitude toward art. While today, the works of the Russian avant-garde hang in museums and are sold in galleries like any other works of art, one should not forget that Russian avant-garde artists strove to destroy the museum, to wipe it out as a social institution, ensuring the idea of art as the "individual" or "hand-made" production by an artist of objects of aesthetic contemplation which are then consumed by the spectator. As they understood it, the artists of the Russian avant-garde were producing not objects of aesthetic consumption but projects or models for a total restructuring of the world on new principles, to be implemented by collective actions and social practice in which the difference between consumer and producer, artist and spectator, work of art and object of utility, and so on, disappeared. The fact that these avant-garde projects are hung in present-day museums as traditional works of art, where they are viewed in the traditional light, signals the ultimate defeat of the avant-garde, not its success. The Russian avant-garde lost its historical position: in fact, the true spirit of the Russian avant-garde was more aptly reflected by its place in the locked storerooms of Soviet museums, to which it was consigned as a consequence of its historical defeat, but from which it continued to exercise an influence on the victorious rulers as a hidden menace.

As the modern museum experiences a period of general expansion, it increasingly includes the utilitarian: museums of technology, aeronautics, contemporary utensils, and the like are constantly opening. In the past, icons, which to a great extent constituted a reference point for adherents of the Russian avant-garde, became part of museum collections; they, too, were not regarded as "works of art" by their creators or by their "consumers." Today, however, neither in Russia nor in the West is Socialist Realist art represented faithfully in museums. In Russia it vanished from the eyes of the public during the period of the "thaw,"

while in the West it was never seriously regarded as art. The position of Socialist Realism "outside art" is, in itself, sufficiently convincing testimony to its inner identification with the avant-garde era, when the desire to go beyond the bounds of the museum became the motivating force of artistic experiment. Like the art of the avant-garde, the art of Socialist Realism wanted to transcend the traditional "artist-spectator-aesthetic object" relationship and become the direct motivating force of social development. The collectivist project of Socialist Realism was expressed in the rejection of the artist's individual manner, of the direct perception of nature, of the quest for "expressiveness" and "picturesqueness"—rejection, in general, of all that is characteristic of traditional realistic art and, in particular, of the art of the Wanderers. As a result, Socialist Realism is often judged to be traditional realism of "low quality," and it is forgotten that Socialist Realism, far from seeking such artistic quality, strove, on the contrary, to overcome it wherever it reared its head. Socialist Realist pictures were regarded as at once works of art and utilitarian objects—instruments of Socialist education of the working people—and as a result could not but be standardized in accordance with their utilitarian function.

In this elimination of boundaries between "high" and "utilitarian" art Socialist Realism is the heir not so much of traditional art as of the Russian avant-garde: Socialist Realism may be said to be the continuation of the avant-garde's strategy by different means. This change of means is not, of course, fortuitous and will be singled out for special examination later. But it cannot be regarded merely as something imposed from outside, artificially halting the development of the avant-garde, which otherwise would have continued in the spirit of Kazimir Malevich or Alexander Rodchenko. It has already been noted that by the end of the 1920s the artists of the Russian avant-garde had begun to return to representation. While Malevich had adopted a new interpretation of traditional painting, Rodchenko, El Lissitzky, Gustaf Klutsis, and others increasingly devoted themselves to photomontage. In the framework of the avant-garde aesthetic, their activity signified a turn toward figurativeness while preserving the original avant-garde project.

This project, which consisted in moving from portraying life toward artistic shaping of life, is also the motivating force of Socialist Realism. The Russian avant-garde adopted from the West a new relationship, developed within the framework of cubism, to the work of art as a con-

struct and made it the basis of a project for the complete reconstruction of reality on new principles. In this the work of art itself underwent fundamental changes—the Russian avant-garde displayed its constructive nature with unprecedented radicalism—which subsequently enabled the secondary aestheticization of its achievements and their interpretation exclusively in terms of the search for a new artistic form. In the 1970s a number of Soviet artists engaged in aestheticizing the achievements of Socialist Realism within the framework of the Sots Art[6] movement, making possible a new approach to Socialist Realism as a purely aesthetic phenomenon, just as the approach of pop art to commercial art stimulated its study as art.

These mechanisms of secondary aestheticization cannot be examined in this essay, but they point indirectly to the mechanisms of primary utilitarianization implemented by the Russian avant-garde and Socialist Realism and, in part, the commercial art of advertising. Behind the external, purely formal distinction between Socialist Realism and the Russian avant-garde (a distinction made relative by the photomontage period and by the art of such groupings in the 1920s as the Society of Easel Painters [OST]), the unity of their fundamental artistic aim—to build a new world by the organizational and technical methods of "socialist construction," in which the artistic, "creative," and utilitarian coincide, in place of "God's world," which the artist was able only to portray—should, therefore, be revealed. While seeming initially to be realistic, the art of "Socialist Realism" is, in fact, not realistic, since it is not mimetic. Its object is to project the new, the future, that which should be, and it is for this reason that socialist art is not simply a regression to the mimesis of the nineteenth century but belongs wholly to the twentieth century. The central issue of Socialist Realism remains, incidentally, why and how the transition from planning in the spirit of the avant-garde to planning in the spirit of realism took place. This transition was connected both with the immanent problems of avant-garde art and with the overall process of Soviet ideological evolution in the 1920s and 1930s.

II

Art as "life-building" (*zhiznestroitel'stvo*) is a tradition that, in Russia, can be traced back at least to the philosopher Vladimir Solov'ev, who

conceived of the practice of art as theurgy,[7] a conception later borrowed by the Russian Symbolists. However, the decisive step toward interpreting art as transformation rather than representation was taken by Malevich in his works and writings. For Solov'ev and the Symbolists, the precondition of theurgy was the revelation by the artist of the concealed ideal order of the cosmos (*sofiinost'*) and of society (*sobornost'*); however, Malevich's *Black Square* marked the recognition of nothingness or absolute chaos lying at the basis of all things. For Malevich the black square meant the beginning of a new age in the history of man and the cosmos, in which all given forms of cosmic, social, psychological or other reality had revealed their illusoriness.

Malevich possessed a contemplative and mystical nature and on more than one occasion rejected technical progress and social organization as artificial attempts to impose definite goals on life after the traditional aims of Christianity had been discredited. At the same time Malevich concluded from his discovery that a new restructuring of the world with the object of restoring lost harmony and a kind of "aesthetic justification of the world" was necessary.[8] Malevich conceived his "arkhitektony" or "planity" as projects for such restructuring; his suprematist compositions were at one and the same time direct contemplations of cosmic internal energies and projects for a new organization of the cosmos. It was no coincidence that, during the controversy with AKhRR (Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia), Malevich took as his standpoint the position of "life creation,"[9] demonstrating the fundamental unity of the avant-garde's intentions despite the wide variety of its views and its internal quarrels and conflicts, from which one must detach oneself when giving an overall exposition of avant-garde attitudes. Despite the fact that such detachment leads inevitably to simplification, it does not result in fundamental distortion of the aims of the avant-garde: in their polemics with opponents in other camps, artists and theoreticians themselves reveal the high degree of similarity of their attitudes.

The logical conclusion from Malevich's concept of suprematism as the "last art" was drawn by, among others, the constructivists Vladimir Tatlin and Rodchenko, who called for the total rejection of easel painting in favor of designing the new reality directly. This rejection undoubtedly arose from the inherent logic of avant-garde artistic development and may be observed to a greater or lesser extent in the West: for example, in the activities of the Bauhaus, which, it may be noted, did not come into

being without Russian influence; in the Dutch group De Stijl; and others. However, the radicalism of the constructivist position can be explained only by the specific hopes aroused in artists by the October Revolution and its call for the total reconstruction of the country according to a single plan. If, for Marx, philosophy had to move from explaining the world to changing it, this Marxist slogan only confirmed for the artists of the Russian avant-garde their goal of relinquishing portrayal of the world in favor of its creative transformation.

These parallels between Marxist and avant-garde attitudes show that the artist with his "life building" project was competing with a power that also had as its goal the total reconstruction of reality, though on economic and political, rather than aesthetic, principles. The project to transform the entire country—and ultimately the entire world—into a single work of art according to a single artistic design through the efforts of a collective united by common artistic conceptions, which inspired the Russian avant-garde during the first postrevolutionary years, meant the subordination of art, politics, the economy, and technology to the single will of the artist: that is, in the final analysis to the will of one Artist, since a total project of this kind cannot result from the sum of many individual efforts. Marx himself, in an observation constantly quoted in Soviet philosophy and art history, wrote that the worst architect was better than the best busy bee, since the former had in his head a unified plan of construction.

In a certain sense the avant-garde position marks a return to the ancient unity of art and technique (*tekhne*), in which Socrates also included the activity of the legislator. The rejection by the avant-garde of the tradition of artistic autonomy in the modern age and the "bourgeois" relationship between "artist and spectator," understood as "producer and consumer," led in effect to the artist's demand for total political power in order to realize his project. The concept of this new political authority as an ideal instrument for implementing his artistic aims was especially characteristic of the early pronouncements of Russian avant-garde artists and theoreticians.

Thus, Alexei Gan, one of the theorists of Russian Constructivism, wrote:

> We should not reflect, depict and interpret reality but should build practically and express the planned objec-

> tives of the newly active working class, the proletariat, . . . the master of color and line, the combiner of spatial and volumetric solids and the organizer of mass action—must all become Constructivists in the general business of the building and movement of the many millioned human mass.[10]

Statements of this kind, which occur constantly in the polemical writings of the Russian constructivists, could be multiplied. At the same time, the constructivists themselves were by no means blind to the contradictions and illusions of their own program. Ivan Puni, for example, noted that, in essence, the artist has nothing to do with manufacture, since engineers and workers have their own criteria for this.[11] However, the logic of the avant-garde's development began to overstep these sober reflections. While Rodchenko, Tatlin, and others were at first in the forefront of those struggling for the new reality, they themselves gradually came to be accused of giving priority to purely artistic design over the demands of production and the direct formation of reality. The evolution of the avant-garde from Malevich to constructivism and, later, to LEF proceeds by way of increasingly radical demands for the rejection of traditional artistic individualism and the adoption of new social tasks.[12] In itself this evolution refutes the idea that artists were only at first victims of an illusion of omnipotence which they were obliged gradually to abandon. Quite the contrary: if it is supposed that the artist's move toward forming reality is the result of illusion, it must be acknowledged that this illusion by no means weakened but burgeoned with time.

Thus, it may be observed, both in the internal polemics of members of the avant-garde and in their confrontations with other artistic groupings, that the number of direct political accusations grew constantly. As artistic decisions were recognized more and more to be political decisions—for increasingly, they were perceived as defining the country's future—the fierceness of the controversy and the realization that positions which had formerly seemed similar were now incompatible also grew. The quest for collective creation inevitably led to a struggle for absolute leadership. The productionist position of LEF and its subsequent aspiration to equate art, technology, and politics, uniting these three contemporary modes of forming reality in a single total project, represent the extreme point of development of the avant-garde and its

internal intentions. In the course of this development the avant-garde itself rejected its earlier manifestations as individualistic, aestheticist, and bourgeois. Thus, later criticism in this spirit by the theoreticians of Socialist Realism did not represent anything fundamentally new: in essence, such criticism only repeated the accusations formulated in the process of the development of the avant-garde itself. These accusations had become an integral part of the rhetoric of the avant-garde by the time of its liquidation at the end of the 1920s—coincidentally, the time when the avant-garde had achieved the peak of its theoretical, if not its purely artistic, development.

The artists of the avant-garde are commonly accused of neglecting the human factor in their plans for reconstructing the world: indeed the majority of the Russian population then held utterly different aesthetic ideas. In essence, the avant-garde intended to make use of the political and the administrative power offered it by the Revolution to impose on the overwhelming majority of the population aesthetic and organizational norms developed by an insignificant minority of artists. This objective certainly cannot be termed democratic. However, it should not be ignored that the members of the avant-garde themselves were hardly aware of the totalitarian character of their endeavor.

The artists of the avant-garde shared the Marxist belief that public taste is formed by the environment. They were "historical materialists" in the sense that they thought it possible, by reconstructing the world in which man lives, wholly to rebuild his inner mechanisms of perception and judgment. Malevich considered that, at the sight of his black square, "the sword will fall from the hero's hands and the prayer die on the lips of the saint."[13] It was not fortuitous, therefore, that an alliance formed within the framework of LEF between the avant-garde and "vulgar sociologists" of the Boris Arvatov type: both were inspired by a belief in the direct magical effect on human consciousness of changes in the conditions of man's "material existence." The artistic engineers of the avant-garde disregarded man because they considered him to be a part or element of social or technical systems or, at best, of a universal cosmic life: for a member of the avant-garde to be an "engineer of the world" also automatically meant being an "engineer of human souls."

The avant-garde artist was above all a materialist. He strove to work directly with the material "basis" in the belief that the "superstructure" would react automatically. This avant-garde "historical materialism"

was also connected with its purely "aesthetic materialism." The latter consisted in the maximum revelation of "the materiality of material," "the materiality of the art work itself," concealed from the spectator in traditional painting, which used material in a purely utilitarian way to convey a definite content.[14] Such "aesthetic materialism," which gave an important fillip to the future formal development of art and is an important achievement of the Russian avant-garde, presupposes, however, a contemplative, anti-utilitarian understanding of materialism which was repudiated by the avant-garde in the context of LEF's productivism. Moreover, as already noted, a shift took place within the avant-garde toward the complete, extra-aesthetic "utilitarianism" of the project; that is, the purely aesthetic, nonutilitarian contemplative dimension of the avant-garde, which enabled its secondary aestheticization, was recognized by the avant-garde as a relic of traditional artistic attitudes that were ripe for rebuttal. In practice, the art of the avant-garde during its LEF period assumed an increasingly propagandist character that was not creative in the sense of productivism. Avant-garde artists, lacking direct access to the "basis," turned increasingly to propagandizing "Socialist construction" implemented by the political leadership on a "scientific foundation." The principal occupation of the avant-garde became the creation of posters, stage and exhibition design, and so on—in other words, work exclusively in the sphere of the "superstructure." In this respect the observation by the theorists of AKhRR, that the activities of LEF, for all its revolutionary phraseology and emphasis on its proletarian attitude toward art, differed little in essence from capitalist commercial advertising and borrowed many of its devices,[15] is justified. For AKhRR the utilitarian orientation of LEF had no specific Socialist content. It amounted to a shift on the part of the artist from cottage to mass production dictated by the general change in the technical level of manufacture in both West and East, not by the goals of "Communist upbringing of the workers."

III

There is a widespread opinion among scholars that the transition to Socialist Realism marked the victory of AKhRR in the struggle against avant-garde trends. It is common to see the genealogy of Socialist Realism exclusively in the turn toward representationalism taken by

AKhRR as early as the 1920s (just as, in literature, it is usual to interpret the establishment of Socialist Realism as the victory of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers [RAPP]). This point of view is based first on the external similarity between the realistic style of AKhRR and Socialist Realist style and on the fact that many artists moved from AKhRR to key positions in the new unified artistic associations of the era of Socialist Realism. The official criticism of both AKhRR and RAPP during the period preceding the proclamation of Socialist Realism is usually overlooked. As a rule it is judged to be merely a tactical move by the authorities with the object of pacifying artists from other groupings and integrating them in unified "creative unions."

However, criticism of this kind has been persistently repeated in Soviet historical writing over several decades, which alone renders untenable the view that it represented no more than a temporary tactical move. Comparison with avant-garde criticism, that is, criticism by LEF of AKhRK, reveals both a similarity and a difference, prompting a revision of some established ideas.

The turn toward realism in Russian postrevolutionary art is placed at different times. It is dated by some as early as the formation of AKhRR in 1922, while others place it in 1924-25. At the same time, critics belonging to the avant-garde camp and those who were already laying the foundations of the theory of Socialist Realism displayed a noticeable coincidence in assessing the reasons for this turn and the reasons for its significance. Their common view was that rebirth of representational easel painting was connected with the New Economic Policy (NEP) and the emergence of a new stratum of art consumers with definite artistic tastes. Critics holding avant-garde views cited artistic reaction as corresponding to economic and political reaction. The landscapes, portraits, and genre scenes with which AKhRR and so many other groups of the time, such as the Society of Easel Painters (OST) and "Bytie" ("Being"), supplied the market aroused a similar response. These paintings were regarded as symptoms of the same process, although AKhRR was welcomed for its mass approach and its "progressive" character, while OST was praised for a higher level of professionalism. A. Fedorov-Davydov, for example, who became a leading critic and art historian during the Stalin period, noted as early as 1925 the general turn by both Soviet and West European art towards realism, singling out neoclassicism in France and Italy and expressionism in Germany. He observed that neo-

classicism, although "close to the proletariat in its striving for organization, order and discipline," could not serve as a basis for proletarian art because of its quality of stylization while expressionism saw things in too gloomy a light, and concluded that the attention to detail of neoclassicism should be combined with the passion of expressionism—advice which, in a slightly amended form, would be heeded in the Stalin period. Turning to Soviet experience, Fedorov-Daydov wrote:

> In order to understand and evaluate AKhRR, we must understand what kind of realists they are. We shall scarcely be mistaken if we say that they understand realism in the sense of naturalistic, figurative—in essence, genre—realism. It is in this, disregarding the question of talent, that, perhaps, the reason lies for their inability genuinely to reflect the revolution. Enthusiasm and the heroic cannot be conveyed by the passive methods of naturalism.[16]

The same judgment was passed by Ia. A. Tugendkhol'd, who sympathized with AKhRR's turn toward realism. Writing of the current AKhRR's exhibition, he referred to the "naturalism of AKhRR painting" and concluded: "They were large illustrations in color, but not what AKhRR expected, not the painting genuinely needed by us in the sense of 'heroic realism'—which was found in Vasilii Surikov and, in part, in I'lia Repin and Sergei Ivanov."[17] The arguments heard later during the era of Socialist Realism may easily be recognized here. One further quotation, from Alfred Kurella, who also played an important role in preparing the ground for Socialist Realism, underlines this point. In an article characteristically entitled "Artistic Reaction Behind the Mask of Heroic Realism" ("Khudozhestvennaia reaktsiia pod maskoi geroicheskogo realizma"), Kurella wrote of the necessity for "organizing the ideology of the masses by the specific means of representational art,"[18] failing to find what he wanted in AKhRR, he accused it of naturalism.

These accusations of naturalism, which constituted the initial reaction not only of avant-garde critics but also of the future theoreticians of Socialist Realism and opponents of avant-garde art, were later repeated officially during the campaign against AKhRR in the late 1920s and early 1930s, which preceded the formation of Socialist Realism. It

was at this time that AKhRR was accused of fellow-traveling ideology, lack of involvement in the achievements of the Revolution and Socialist construction, and refusal to participate directly in Socialist construction as its "vanguard," as well as of "disparaging criticism" and "Communist arrogance." These accusations are also rehearsed in contemporary Soviet historical writings. E. I. Sevost'ianov, longtime head of Iskusstvo publishing house, provides a characteristic view of the 1930s artistic situation in a special article devoted to this problem. The author quotes sympathetically the observations of critics of the 1930s concerning the "imitative Wanderer approach of AKhRR" and the necessity for criticism to struggle simultaneously against "formalist tricks" and "passive naturalism."[19] Similar quotations exist in many other Soviet publications, reminding us that a struggle against groupings of the likes of RAPP and RAPKh (Russian Association of Proletarian Artists, which had emerged from AKhRR)—by that time the avant-garde had been effectively eliminated—preceded the appearance of Socialist Realism.

In recalling the actual context of the period, we should note that it coincided with the liquidation of NEP—that is, of the milieu in which, according to the general view, the art of groupings like AKhRR had developed. The transition to the 1930s and the Five-Year Plans meant the implementation of measures that had been proposed in their time by the left ("plundering the peasantry," accelerated industrialization, and so forth), although by other methods and in a different historical context. Amid conditions of intensifying centralization, the program of "building Socialism in one country" and the "growing enthusiasm of the masses," Vladimir Mavakovsky was proclaimed the greatest poet of the age and the Leninist slogan "it is necessary to dream" was quoted with increasing frequency in the press. In these new circumstances Socialist Realism put into effect practically all the fundamental watchwords of the avant-garde: it united the artists and gave them a single purpose, erased the dividing line between high and utilitarian art and between political content and purely artistic decisions, created a single and easily recognizable style, liberated the artist from the service of the consumer and his individual tastes and from the requirement to be original, became part of the common cause of the people, and set itself not to reflect reality but to project a new and better reality.

In this respect Socialist Realism was undoubtedly a revival of the ideals of the avant-garde after a definite period in which individualized ar-

tistic production with its purely reflective, mimetic character had dominated. Most importantly, a break with tradition was made in the very role and function of the artist in society. Socialist Realist painting, like the work of the avant-garde, is above all a political decision concerning how the future should look, and is judged by purely political criteria. The Socialist Realist artist renounces his role as an observer detached from real life and becomes a part of the working collective on equal terms with all its other parts. However, all the obvious similarity in the way the avant-garde and Socialist Realism conceptualize the role of art does not provide an answer to a key question: why is there so little external, purely visual similarity between the avant-garde and Socialist Realism?

IV

Apart from the inherent laws of artistic development whereby, after a period of time, art changes its course and begins to move in a new direction, the reason for the changed character of the visual material with which the avant-garde had worked lay primarily in the changed position of the artist in Soviet society as it evolved. Avant-garde art was a reductionist art that adhered to the principle of newness—it was advancing from Malevich's black square as the sign of absolute zero and absolute rejection of the world as it is. The art of the 1930s was confronted by a "new reality," whose authors were political leaders, not the artistic avant-garde. If avant-garde artists had striven to work directly with the "basis," utilizing political power in a purely instrumental way, clearly by the 1930s work with the basis could be implemented only by the political authorities, which did not brook competition.

A similar situation developed in philosophy. While Marxist philosophy had proclaimed the primacy of practice over theoretical cognition, this primacy was understood initially to denote the gaining by the philosopher of political power with the aim of changing the world instead of knowing it. But as early as the late 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s the primacy of social practice could only be understood as the primacy of decisions by the political leadership over their theoretical interpretation, leading to the ultimate liquidation of the philosophical schools that had earlier emerged.[20] Similarly, artists, nurtured on the principle of the primacy of transformation over representation, could not but recognize, following their own logic, the dominance of the

political leadership in the strictly aesthetic sphere as well. The artists left this sphere in order to subordinate political reality to themselves, but in so doing they destroyed the autonomy of the artist and the work of art, thus subordinating the artist himself to political reality "at the second move." Having made social practice the sole criterion of truth and beauty, Soviet philosophers and artists inevitably found themselves obliged to recognize political leaders as better philosophers and artists than themselves, thus renouncing the traditional right of primacy.

In these circumstances the question of the artist's role in society and the objective significance of his activity at a point where both the representation and transformation of reality had escaped his control naturally arose again. LEF had already marked out this new role, which consisted in agitation and propaganda for the decisions of the political leadership. The emergence of this role signaled too a significant shift in the consciousness of artists and of Soviet ideologists as a whole.

The theoreticians of the avant-garde proceeded from the conviction that modification of the "basis" would lead almost automatically to change in the "superstructure" and that, in consequence, purely "material" work with the basis was sufficient to achieve a changed view of the world, a changed aesthetic perception. In the late 1920s and early 1930s this widespread opinion was judged to be "vulgar sociologism" and sharply criticized. The sum of ideological, aesthetic, and other conceptions, the superstructure was proclaimed to be relatively independent and situated in a "dialectical," rather than a one sided causal, relationship with the basis: defining the superstructure, the basis is "strengthened" as well as "weakened" by it. This new emphasis on the superstructure, brought about in the first instance by the disillusionment with the prospects for world revolution in the developed Western countries (as a result of the "unreadiness" of the proletariat), made art a definite, partially autonomous area of activity. Art, together with philosophy, literature, history, and other "superstructural" forms of activity, was given the task, if not of defining the overall face of the new reality, then, at any rate, of promoting its formation in a particular sphere: specifically, by forming the consciousness of Soviet citizens, who in their turn stood in a dual, dialectical relationship to this reality as both its creators and its "products."

Of the many examples that illustrate this development, we may cite a few of the later pronouncements by Soviet art theorists. They do not

differ in essence from the principles worked out in the 1930s, though they are more elaborate. In a 1952 article by N. Dmitrieva entitled "The Aesthetic Category of the Beautiful" ("Esteticheskaia kategoriia prekrasnogo"), the author describes such Stalinist projects as canals, hydroelectric stations, irrigation programs, and industrial installations: "This is the formation of being according to the laws of beauty," writes Dmitrieva.[21] According to her, the beautiful is the "harmoniously organized structure of life, where everything is mutually coordinated and every element forms a necessary link in the system of the whole."[22] In essence, therefore, the beautiful coincides for the author with "systematic practical activity" and does not reside in art alone as a specific form of activity. The beautiful is, in the first instance, reality itself, life itself, if it is beautifully organized, but "the beautiful in art nevertheless does not fully coincide with the beautiful in life,"[23] since art fixes the attention on "the typical features of beauty" of each given period; "typical" here means not the "statistical mean" but the common aesthetic ideal of the age, that is, the artistic norm for the formation of reality itself. The beautiful in art, reflecting the "typically beautiful in life," thus may play a formative role in relation to reality.

G. Nedoshivin takes a similar position in his article "On the Relationship of Art to Reality" ("Ob otnoshenii iskusstva k deistvitel'nosti"), emphasizing the educative role of art as being "inseparable from its cognitive role."[24] Art, like science, simultaneously cognizes and forms life, doing this, however, not theoretically but in typical images. The typical is again oriented toward practical social goals, toward the future and the "dream." Many similar observations could be cited. All, in essence, are interpretations of Stalin's renowned directive to writers to "write the truth."

To write or "depict" the truth meant for Soviet criticism of that time to show the objectives toward which social practice in reality strove, not to impose objectives upon society from outside, as formalism tried to do, or to observe the movement of society toward these objectives as this really happened, which "uninspired naturalism" did. However, such a purpose presupposes that social practice develops not spontaneously but with the object of realizing certain definite ideals in the mind of the "architect" of this process, who is distinguished from "the very best bee." Naturally, the political leadership, namely Stalin, was seen in the role of architect.

It was, indeed, to Stalin that the avant-garde role of creator of "the beautiful in life itself," that is, the task of "transforming" rather than "representing" life, passed during the 1930s. The political leadership responded to the demand by philosophy and art for political power in order to realize in practice their plans for reconstructing the world by appropriating philosophical and aesthetic projects to itself. Stalin, as the artist of reality, could transform it in accordance with a unified plan, and by the logic of the avant-garde itself, could demand that others standardize their style and direct their individual efforts toward harmony with the style of life Stalin envisioned. The demand to "paint life" has meaning only when that life becomes a work of art. The avant-garde had previously rejected this demand, since, according to the formula "God is dead," it no longer perceived the world as the work of God's art. The avant-garde artist laid claim to the vacant place of the total creator, but in fact this place had been filled by political authority. Stalin became the only artist, the Malevich, so to speak, of the Stalin period, liquidating the avant-garde as a competitor in accordance with the logic of the struggle—a logic which was not foreign to avant-garde artists either, who willingly resorted to administrative intrigues.

Socialist Realism, despite its collectivist ideals, strove for a single, unified style, as did suprematism, for example, or the analytical art of Filonov. It should not be forgotten that the stylistic variety of the avant-garde was associated with the constant rifts and struggles among leading artists, a situation reminiscent in this respect of the struggle during the early stages of evolution of the Communist Party. Within each faction, however, discipline and the striving for standardization prevailed, making, for example, the faithful disciples of Malevich almost indistinguishable. Such standardization inevitably resulted from the ideology of the avant-garde, which apparently scorned the individualism of a "unique artistic manner" and stressed adherence to the "objective laws of composition." The new world could not be built on a polystylistic basis, and the cult of the personality of the single, unique artist creator was, therefore, deeply rooted in avant-garde theory and practice. Of course, individual variations were always possible within the framework of a school, but these were as a rule explained by the necessity for broadening the sphere of reality that was embraced, that is, in terms of the individual nature of the specific task and not that of the artist.

A similar situation confronts the student of the art of the Stalin period. Contemporary artists were in essence "followers of Stalin" (by analogy with "followers of Malevich"), who all worked in the "Stalinist style," but with variations depending on whether their task was to portray the great future, celebrate the workers in the factory or in the field, struggle against the imperialist inciters of war, or depict the building of socialism in a particular national republic. In all these situations style underwent definite changes, while at the same time the general trend was toward the elimination of these subject-related differences. Thus, artists, particularly during Stalin's last period, described in detail and with pride how they had succeeded in freeing themselves from all tokens of individual style and even of the "nontypical" characteristic of the represented subject.[25]

The criticism of the Stalin period constantly demanded that artists bring their vision closer to the "normal" vision of "normal" Soviet people, the creators of the new life. In the last years of Stalin's rule the "team method" of manufacturing pictures, directed at overcoming completely the individuality of a particular painter, was widely practiced. Thus, the Soviet artist of the Stalin period did not occupy the position of a realistic reflector of the new reality—this was precisely the position that had been condemned in the case of AKhRR. The artist of Socialist Realism reflected not reality itself but the ultimate goal of its reconstruction: he was at once passive and active in that he varied and developed Stalin's thinking about it.

The difference between Socialist Realism and the avant-garde consists not in their relationship to art and its goals but in the area of application of this new relationship: while the avant-garde—at any rate in its pre-LEF period—directed itself toward forming actual material reality. Socialist Realism set itself above all the goal of forming the psychology of the new Soviet person. The writer, following Stalin's well-known definition, is "an engineer of human souls." This formulation points both to continuity with the avant-garde (the writer as engineer) and to a departure from it, since a new area of application is provided for the avant-garde principle of engineering design after responsibility for projecting reality itself has been assumed by others. At the same time this role proved to be more an honorary one, since the initial slogan of the Five-Year Plan, "technology decides everything," was soon replaced by another—"the cadres decide everything."

However, the problem of projecting the New Man presents the artist with tasks other than those of projecting material reality. In the absence of what might now be called "genetic engineering," the artist is inevitably tied to unchanged human appearance—from which also emerges the necessity of turning again to traditional painting. This represents not only the statement of achieved successes but also an acknowledgment of certain limits. It is in this sense that Socialist Realism is "realistic": realism here is equated with *realpolitik*, which is opposed to the utopianism of the avant-garde. The task of educating the New Man proved much more difficult than had been initially supposed.

The transition from the avant-garde to Socialist Realism was thus dictated by the logic of development of the avant-garde idea of projecting a new reality, not by concessions to the tastes of the mass consumer, as has often been claimed. There is no doubt that the avant-garde was foreign to the ordinary spectator. It is equally beyond doubt that the return to easel painting during the NEP was influenced by the new mass demand for art. However, the centralization of Soviet art from the beginning of the 1930s made it totally independent of consumer tastes, an independence on which, we may note, the theoreticians of LEF had insisted from the very outset. The art of Socialist Realism does not give ordinary spectators the opportunity to identify with it, since it is opposed to them as an educative institution. With the passing of time the Union of Soviet Artists gained great economic power and relative economic independence, even from official institutions and their tastes, since the union itself determined purchasing policy. No link existed at any level between the ordinary consumer and the union, and the art of Socialist Realism interested the ordinary Soviet person as little as did the art of the avant-garde. In the absence of economic criteria or sociological surveys, the unprecedented success during the post-Stalin era of an artist like Ilia Glazunov provides an indirect indication of the spectator's real tastes. Other examples may also be cited, which indicate that the mass spectator in the Soviet Union, while inclined toward realistic painting, was by no means oriented toward Socialist Realist painting.

At all events, in fulfilling its basic mission of projecting the New Man, Socialist Realism was limited from the outset, as has been stated, by the unchanging quality of the human countenance and the necessity to take this into account. LEF, too, was obliged to reckon with this constant fac-

tor when, at the end of the 1920s, the artists of the Russian avant-garde began to use the human face and figure in their propaganda montages. However, for the art of Socialist Realism representation of the human being occupied a central place; indeed, all other purposes were subsumed by it. As the theoreticians of Socialist Realism recognized from the beginning, this circumstance restricted compositional opportunities and expressive means of painting. The subject of representation became the expression of the human face and the pose of the human body, testifying to the person's inner spiritual state.

Practically all art criticism of the Stalin period devoted itself to endless analyses of the poses and facial expressions portrayed in Soviet pictures in relation to the psychological content they were supposed to convey. The methods and criteria of such analyses, as well as relevant examples, cannot be examined here in greater detail. It is sufficient to state that with time artists and critics jointly elaborated a distinctive and complex code for external appearance, behavior, and emotional reaction characteristic of the "true Soviet man." This code embraced the most varied spheres of life. Highly ritualized and semanticized, it enables any person brought up in Stalinist culture to judge from a single glance at a picture the hierarchical relationships between the figures, the ideological intentions of the artist, the moral character of the figures, and so on. This canon was elaborated over many years prior to Stalin's death, when it began to disintegrate gradually. Painters and critics painfully worked out a new canon under the presupposition that reliance on classical models of the past was impossible. Their main goal was to define which poses and facial expressions should be considered "flabby," "decadent," and bourgeois or, conversely, energetic, but energetic in the Soviet, not the Western, especially the American, style, that is, with a genuine understanding of the prospects for historical progress. They determined which pose could be considered inspired but not exalted, calmly brave but not static, and so on. Today, Socialist Realism is perceived as somewhat colorless by comparison with the classics. But in making such a comparison it should not be forgotten that Socialist Realism lacked the opportunity for prolonged, consistent, and unbroken development that was enjoyed by the classics. If we recall that its entire evolution occupied no more than a quarter of a century, we must acknowledge that, by the end of Stalin's rule, Socialist Realism had achieved a very high degree of internal unity and codification.

Tugendkhol'd set out quite clearly at the very inception of this process the reasons for the turn by Soviet art from the basis to the superstructure. In his essay "The Painting of a Revolutionary Decade" ("Zhivopis' revoliutsionnogo desiatiletiia"), which is still insufficiently "dialectical" from the standpoint of later Soviet art history but is as a result quite clearly written, he argues against the notion of the left that its practice was based on a materialist view of the world. Tugendkhol'd quotes Punin in this connection, who wrote: "Being defines consciousness, consciousness does not define being. Form = being. Form-being defines consciousness, that is, content. . . . Our art is the art of form, because we are proletarian artists, artists of a Communist culture."[26] Tugendkhol'd expresses the following objection:

> For Punin [form] is the command given by the age, at once Russian and Western, proletarian and bourgeois. In other words, this form is set by the objective conditions of the age, which are identical for all. Punin did not understand that, since the form of the age is obligatory to all, the difference between proletarian and nonproletarian art consists not in form but in the idea of utilizing it . . . it is in the fact, too, that [in our country] the master of the locomotives and machines is the proletariat itself that the difference between our industrialism and Western industrialism lies; this is our content.[27]

Thus, Tugendkhol'd directly links the appearance of man in art to the discovery of the relative independence of the superstructure from the level of production. Man and his organizing attitude toward technology are at the very heart of the definition of the new social system, which is thereby given a psychological foundation. In art the concentration on the figure of Stalin as the creator of the new life par excellence represents the extreme expression of this new "cult of personality."

Tugendkhol'd also notes that the decisive move toward the portrayal of man was connected with the death of Lenin, when "everyone felt that something had been allowed to pass away."[28] In the future the image of Lenin and, later, Stalin would stand at the center of Soviet art as the image of the ideal, the exemplar. The numerous portraits of Lenin and Stalin, which may seem monotonous to the contemporary observer,

were not monotonous to the artists and critics of that period: each was intended to "reveal a side of their multi-faceted personality" (recalling Christ's iconography, which defines different, dogmatically inculcated means of presenting the personality of Christ in its various aspects). These portraits posed a definite risk to the artist, since they represented not only an attempt at an external likeness but also a specific interpretation of the personality of the leaders that had no less ideological and political significance than a verbal or literary interpretation. Characteristically, when the critics failed to find this type of clear-cut interpretation in the portrait and when the interpretation was seen as "unoriginal," it was invariably condemned as a failure.

By the end of Stalin's rule Socialist Realist art had begun to move increasingly toward the creation of an integral, monumental appearance of Soviet cities and, ultimately, a unified appearance of the entire country. Plans were drawn up for the complete reconstruction of Moscow in accordance with a single artistic concept, and painting was being increasingly integrated with architecture while, conversely, buildings of a functional character—factories, underground stations, hydroelectric stations, and so forth—began to take on the character of works of art. Portraits of Lenin and Stalin as well as other leaders, not to mention the "typical workers and peasants," over time became increasingly depersonalized and depsychologized. The basic canon was already so formalized and ritualized that it was now possible to construct a unified reality from elements created in preceding years.

This new monumental style bore little external resemblance to the avant-garde, yet in many respects it realized the latter's aims: total aestheticization of reality and the rejection of individualized easel painting and sculpture that lacked a monumental purpose. The importance of museums began, correspondingly, to decline: an exhibition of gifts to Stalin was mounted in the Pushkin Museum of West European Art in Moscow.

Neither may this style be considered a simple restoration of the classical. It is true, of course, that the Academy of Arts was reorganized at this time and the struggle against the "undervaluation of the old Russian Academy of Arts" began at its very first sessions. At the same time the "Chistiakov system," named after the teacher of many of the Wanderers,[29] began to be propagated. The campaign sought to demonstrate that the Wanderer artists descended directly from the Russian

classical school, whereas earlier interpretations had focused on their break with the academic tradition. A new approach to justifying the necessity of "a solicitous attitude toward the cultural heritage" also dates from this time. While, previously, this necessity had been based on the theory that each class creates progressive art during the period of its rise and reactionary art during the period of its decline and that Soviet art should, therefore, imitate the art of periods of progressive development, such as, for example, the art of antiquity, of the Renaissance, and of nineteenth-century Russian realism (the avant-garde was regarded here as the art of decline and decadence), now this theory, too, deriving from the very first declarations of the Party leadership in the area of cultural policy,[30] was accused of representing "vulgar sociologism." The new, far more radical justification advanced was that, in essence, all "the genuinely good art of the past" expressed the interests not of a definite class—even if progressive—but of an entire people and thus, given the total victory and the "flourishing"[31] of the people, could be fearlessly imitated.

Despite all these obvious references to the past, the art of the Stalin period is not classical in the same sense as, for example, the art of the Renaissance or the art of the French Revolution. Antiquity was still ultimately rated an age of slave owning, and the hero of Soviet books on the period was, above all, Spartacus. The same is true of all other historical epochs: all were regarded as no more than preparatory stages on the road toward the contemporary Soviet age and never as independent models or exemplars. In the profoundest sense Socialist Realism remained the heir of the avant-garde to the end. Like the avant-garde, it regarded the present age as the highest point of history and the future as the embodiment of the aspirations of the present. Any stylization was, therefore, foreign to it, and, for all the monumentality of their poses, Lenin was represented without any feeling of clumsiness in jacket and cap and Stalin in semi-military jacket and boots.

This teleological perception of history led inevitably to an instrumentalization of the artistic devices of the past and to what, seen from the outside, was taken as eclecticism but was in fact not eclecticism. The art of previous ages was not regarded by Soviet ideology as a totality that should not be arbitrarily dismembered. In accordance with the Leninist theory of two cultures in one, each historical period was regarded as a battleground between progressive and reactionary forces, in which

the progressive forces ultimately aimed at the victory of Socialism in the USSR (even if the clash took place in the remote past), while the reactionary forces strove to block this. Such an understanding of history naturally led to quotation from the past of everything progressive and rejection of everything reactionary. Viewed externally, this approach seems to result in extreme eclecticism, since it violates the unity of style of each era, but in the consciousness of Soviet ideology, it possessed the true unity of everything progressive, popular and eternal, and rejected everything ephemeral and transitory associated with the class structure of society. Ideas of the progressive or reactionary quality of a given phenomenon have naturally changed with time, and what is or is not subject to quotation has changed correspondingly. Thus, in the art of Socialist Realism quotation and "eclecticism" have a semantic and ideological, rather than an aesthetic, character. The experienced Soviet spectator can always readily decipher such an "eclectic composition" which, in fact, possesses a unified ideological significance. However, this also means that Socialist Realism should not be conceived of as a purely aesthetic return to the past, contrasting with the "contemporary style" of the avant-garde.

The real difference between the avant-garde and Socialist Realism consists, as has already been stated, in moving the center of gravity from work on the basis (the technical and material organization of society) to work on the superstructure (engineering the New Man). The shift from basis to superstructure was necessary because work on the former became the exclusive prerogative of Stalin and the Party. If, thereby, Socialist Realism finally crushed the avant-garde—to regard the avant-garde as a purely aesthetic phenomenon, which contradicts the spirit of the avant-garde itself—at the same time it continued, developed, and, in a certain sense, even implemented its program. Socialist Realism overcame the reductionism of the avant-garde and the traditional contemplative standpoint associated with this reductionism (which led to the success of the Russian avant-garde in the "bourgeois" West) and instrumentalized the entire mass of culture of the past with the object of building a new reality as *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The practice of Socialist Realism is based not on a kind of primordial artistic contemplation, like Malevich's *Black Square*, but on the sum total of ideological demands, which in principle make it possible freely to manipulate any visual material (this ability, it may be noted, enabled the preservation

of the principles of Socialist Realism even after Stalin's death, although, visually, Soviet art also underwent definite changes).[32]

By the same token Socialist Realism took the principle, proclaimed by the avant-garde, of rejecting aesthetics to its extreme. Socialist Realism, free of any concrete aesthetic program—despite the apparent strictness of the Socialist Realist canon, it could be changed instantly in response to political or ideological necessity—is indeed that "non-art" the avant-garde wanted to become. Socialist Realism is usually defined as art "Socialist in content and national in form," but this also signifies "avant-garde in content and eclectic in form," since "national" denotes everything "popular" and "progressive" throughout the entire history of the nation. Avant-garde purity of style is, in fact, the result of the still unconquered attitude of the artist toward what he produces as an "original work", corresponding to the "unique individuality" of the artist. In this sense the eclectic may be regarded as the faithful expression in art of a truly collectivist principle.

The collectivism of Socialist Realism does not, of course, mean anything like democracy. At the center of Socialist Realism is the figure of the leader, who is simultaneously its principal creator (since he is the creator of Socialist reality itself, which serves as the model for art) and its main subject. It is in this sense that Stalin is also a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. As leader, Stalin has no definite style—he appears in different ways in his various personas as general, philosopher and theoretician, seer, loving father, and so on. The different aspects of Stalin's "multifaceted personality," usually incompatible in an ordinary person, seem eclectic in turn, violating standard notions of the original, self-contained human personality: thus, Stalin—as a figure in the Stalin myth—unites in himself the individual and the collective, taking on superhuman features which the artist of the avant-garde, although he too strives to replace the divine project with his own, nevertheless lacks.

If, at first glance, the transition from the original style of the avant-garde to the eclecticism of Socialist Realism appears to be a step backwards, this is only because the judgment is made from a purely aesthetic standpoint based on the unity of what may be called the "world museum." But Socialist Realism sought to become the world museum itself, absorbing everything progressive and worthy of preservation and rejecting everything reactionary. The eclecticism and historicism of Socialist Realism should, therefore, be seen not as a rejection of the spirit of the

avant-garde but as its radicalization: that is, as an attempt ultimately to identify pure and utilitarian art, the individual and the collective, the portrayal of life and its transformation, and so on, at the center of which stands the artist-demiurge as the ideal of the New Man in the new reality. To repeat: overcoming the concrete, historically determined aesthetic of the avant-garde meant not the defeat of the avant-garde project but its continuation and completion insofar as this project itself consisted in rejecting an aestheticized, contemplative attitude toward art and the quest for an individual style.

Endnotes

1 A version of this essay was published in Bowlt and Matich, *Laboratory of Dreams*, 198-217.
2 Günther, "Verordneter oder gewachsener Kanon?"
3 Sjeklocha and Mead, *Unofficial Art in the Soviet Union*, 35.
4 Gethmann-Siefert, "Das klassiche als das Utopische."
5 Lodder links this aestheticization of the Russian avant-garde in the West with the Berlin exhibition of 1922. Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 227-30.
6 Tupitsyn, *Sots-art*. This source is the catalogue of an exhibition of works by an unofficial Russian art movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which played with the icons of the Stalinist era. See also Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*, 75ff.
7 Solov'ev, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 6: 90.
8 Malevich, "God Is Not Cast Down."
9 Gassner and Gillen, "K. Malevich on AKhRR."
10 Gan, as quoted in Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 98-99.
11 Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 77.
12 Arvatov, "Über die Reorganisation der Kunstfakultaten an den VChUTEMAS."
13 Malevich, *Suprematismus*, 57.
14 Gassner, *Alexander Rodschenko*, 50-51.
15 Gassner and Gillen, *Zwischen Revolutionskunst*, 286-87.
16 Fedorov-Davydov, "Vopros o novom realizme v sviazi s zapadno-evropeiskimi techeniiami v iskusstve."
17 Tugendkhol'd, "Zhivopis' revoliutsionnogo desiatiletiia," 34.
18 Gassner and Gillen, *Zwischen Revolutionskunst*, 288.
19 Sevost'ianov, *Esteticheskaia priroda sovetskogo izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva*, 206.
20 Iakhot, *Podavlenie filosofii v SSSR (20-30gody)*.
21 Dmitrieva, "Esteticheskaia kategoriia prekrasnogo," 78.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 79.
24 Nedoshivin, "Otnoshenie iskusstva k deistviternosti," 80-90.
25 Neprintsev, "Kak ia rabotal nad kartinoi Otdykh posle boia," 17-20.

26 Punin, as quoted in Tugendkhol'd, "Zhivopis' revoliutsionnogo desiatiletiia," 24.
27 Ibid., 24-25.
28 Ibid., 31.
29 Gerasimov, "Zadachi khudozhestvennogo obrazovaniia," 62.
30 Bogdanov, "The Proletarian and the Art," 177.
31 Stambok, "O nekotorykh metodologicheskikh voprosakh iskusstvoznaniia."
32 This was evident in, for example, the "Aspekte sowjetischer Kunst der Gegenwart," exhibition at the Museum Ludwig (Cologne, 1981).