

LEGISLATIONS OF ART-HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

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Distinct criteria to define such essential chronological measurements of artistic-historical evolution as *stage*, *period*, *epoch* and *era* are given. Evolutional process is investigated in detail within an epoch in regard to some characteristic features of constituent periods, their inevitable changes being proved both by the natural movement from origin to disappearance and by the interaction of the two determinative ways of artistic thinking (*romanticism* and *realism*, that respond to the notions of *classicism* and *positivism*). On the basis of the revealed development stages, the conclusions about gradual acceleration of the artistic-historical process and rhythmical interchange of its phases, that can be metaphorically called *light* and *shade*, are made. Hence, possibilities to make predictions are stated; these can be applied to general historical evolution as a whole.

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While studying artistic creativity, we commonly use a conception of *epoch*, thus limiting one or another time period with it. Within these time periods phenomena of a single kind of art or even all its types are united by some commonness, a complex of characteristics that allow us to speak of a unity in ethical-esthetic settings, closeness of artistic manners and techniques.

So far let us not involve such historical dimensions as Ancient world, Antique, and Medieval, as they exceed time limits of a single epoch and consist of a whole number of epochs. The epoch of Medieval was replaced by Renaissance and, perhaps, it gives us the most common and proverbial concept on an art-historical epoch as it is. It is followed by the era of Baroque, but we should keep in mind that this idea as an epoch, not one of styles of that period (with a corresponding indication with a small letter – *baroque*), has established relatively recently and not without discursive difficulties.

After it we seem to find more usual definitions: Enlightenment, Romanticism... But here quite serious remarks are required. However, first of all, it is necessary to draw our attention to a disappointing overlapping in definitions. Only in spelling of these two epochs we unquestionably use capital letter: Renaissance and Enlightenment, obviously in order to differ them from usual words, that mean *renaissance* of something and *enlightenment* of someone. Sometimes we can see Antique or Medieval, written with a small letter. It is probably time for the scientific society to come to agreement that even from the position of Russian language norms they are proper names and their status requires writing. Along with that it could to manage a diversification in spelling of an epoch and style that gave it its name because of its defining meaning. For example, as we have just said, we would separate Baroque (the epoch, with capital) and baroque (the style, with small), meaning that along with the style baroque in that epoch also existed classicism, realism, so called «large style», mannerism, rococo.

But let us refer to more significant moments. So, Enlightenment and Romanticism. As usual, we refer them to independent epochs, though even in chronological-quantitative aspect one can be embarrassed their incommensurability with previous epochs: Enlightenment is mainly the second half of the XVIII century, Romanticism is from the XIX century, while Baroque occupies two and a half centuries, and Renaissance includes more than three centuries.

A solution of this antagonism (and not only formal) is in denying of general opposition between Enlightenment and Romanticism. In fact, they were contrast links of the same big chain, and their replacement carries the character of progress, not confrontation or recess (first of all we mean an excessively accented opposition of romantics of the beginning of the XIX century against the ideas of enlightenment). One of specific evidences is the evolution of creativity of such titans as Goethe and Beethoven. Being outstanding representatives of Enlightenment art, they opened the horizons of Romanticism at the outcome of the XIX century.

Besides, an attentive analysis shows that Enlightenment and Romanticism in their turn must be divided into component periods that differ in characteristics (their chronological duration will be discussed later). Within the limits of Enlightenment we can clearly outline two periods that can be called Early Enlightenment (the middle of the XVIII century) and High Enlightenment (second half of the XVIII century and the very beginning of the XIX century). Within the limits of what is usually defined as Romanticism one should distinguish three periods: Romanticism itself (first half of the XIX century), Postromanticism (second half of the XIX century), and the completing period (end of the XIX – begging of the XX century).

The described five segmentations in their historical function are periods, though in their artistic content they can be perceived as whole epochs. However these five periods can become an epoch in direct and exact meaning of this

word only taken together. Let us call this epoch **Classical** because of at least two reasons.

First of all, within the period between the middle of the XVIII century to the border of the XX century was created the creative massive of those artistic valuables that we call big artistic classics (it first of all refers to literature and music), crystallized the leading genres (from poem and novel to sonata and symphony), types, concept models and composition-technological principles.

And, secondly, what is especially important to us in this case, staging of artistic-historical process manifested itself in the development of this epoch with all its brightness and obviousness. Particularly, only then clearly affected meaning-forming role of such basic types of artistic thinking as romanticism and realism: the first obtained its name and was finally realized in the first half of the XIX century, the second – in the second half of the century. It was linked to a domination of one of them at the corresponding time limit.

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The said above induces us to start finding out legislations of artistic-historical process exactly with the Classic epoch. Within its evolution naturally emerged significant differences between stages – these differences allow us to divide it into a line of replacing stages. And as it was remarked above, consideration of the most significant differential factors allows us to single out five periods, duration of each of them equaled approximately four decades. To imagine the picture of their movement with a sufficient palpability and at the same time compactly, let us limit ourselves with enumeration of the most important names of composers.

The first period (the middle of the XVI-II century, approximately 1730-ies – 1760-ies) – the zone of interaction of the final Baroque stage (late creativity of Vivaldi, Bach, Gendel) and the opening stage of the Classical epoch; this stage can be called *Early Renaissance* (early creativity of Gluck, Gaidn, Mozart).

The second period (the second half of the XVIII century, 1770-ies – 1800-ies) – the flourishing of the classic Enlightenment times style; in this case suitable is the name High Enlightenment (the main phase of creativity of Gluck, Gaidn, Mozart, Beethoven).

The third period (the first half of the XIX century, 1810-s, 1840-ies) – the advancement of *Romanticism* (let us use such designation, differing here the epoch from romanticism in general); romanticism as the leading style of this period can be called classical as all attributes of this artistic method manifested in those decades with a crystal clearness and completeness (Schubert, Mendelson, Schu-

man, Berlioz, Chopin, Glinka; early creativity of List, Wagner, Verdi).

The fourth period (the second half of the XIX century, 1850-ies – 1880-ies) often figures as *Postromanticism*, as much in the art was defined by realistic trends (it less refers to music – the main phase in the creativity of List, Wagner, Verdi; Brahms, Bise, Grig, Musorgskiy, Borodin, Rimskiy-Korsakov, Chaikovskiy).

The fifth period (the border and beginning of the XX century, 1890-ies – 1920-ies) – the zone of interaction between the final stage of the Classic epoch that is often defined as late romantic or wider – as late classic (the last phase in creativity of Brahms, Grig, Rimskiy-Korsakov, Chaikovskiy; Mahler, R. Strauss, Debrussi, Puccini, Taneyev, Glazunov, Rakhmaninov, Skriabin), and the beginning stage of the current epoch (Ravel, Schenberg, Berg, Vebern, early phase in creativity of Onegger, Chindemit, Bartock, Stravinskij, Prokofiev, Miaskovskiy, Shoctaokvich).

Immediately we should add that the described periods relatively clear divide into sub-stages that last for about two decades. The first period: 1730-ies, 1740-ies, 1750-ies, 1760-ies. The second period: 1770-ies, 1780-ies, 1790-ies, 1800-ies. The third period: 1810-s, 1820-ies, 1830-ies, 1840-ies. The fourth period: 1850-ies, 1860-ies, 1870-ies, 1880-ies. The fifth period: 1890-ies, 1900-ies, and 1910-s, 1920-ies. Besides, in extreme periods we find the same dynamics of epoch development: as in 1730-ies -1740-ies *still* prevailed the late baroque style, so in 1890-ies – 1900-ies *already* the defining significance of early-classic style, and in 1910-s – 1920-ies *already* the most significant role played the early-modern style.

The majority of difficulties for the study of Classic epoch lay exactly in these extreme (begging and finalizing) periods – because of their transitive character, in other words because of complex bindings of gradually disappearing traditions of the previous epoch and new trends that in their totality form the image of the following epoch.

While studying the period of the middle of the XVIII century we have to consider the fact that in works on the history of literature and plastic arts the XVII century is still outlined as something independent, as a result, the artistic process of the first decades of the XVIII century is automatically «dragged» into Enlightenment, while its real development started in 1730-ies, though single breakthroughs of new can be observed in the previous decades.

Regarding the period of the border and beginning of the XX century one can observe another careen: frequently too much is farmed out to the XX century to the detriment of objective evaluation of productive processes of

the previous century. However, we should admit that much within this stage «worked» one way or another in favor of the prospects of that epoch, which it would be most proper to call *Modern* (here very demonstrative would be such phenomenon that discharges out of classic, as *style modern*).

The letter of the mentioned ideas regards to any period that finds itself at the joint of two art-historical epochs, when inevitably lay over each other phenomenons of the epoch that «passes from the picture» (its last, late, finalizing period) and emerging next epoch (its first, early, opening period). And, of course, these phenomenons does not only lay over one another, but they co-exist, interact, bind, and oppose. Besides, their combination can sometimes flow into so complete image and style synthesises and symbioses that to outline the previous from the following, the past from the future in them is possible only theoretically.

Let us immediately add that for any period in general and for a period at the joint of epochs in particular always arises a dilemma: where to start the countdown – from the initial grains-sprouts of the new, or from time when all this new begins to «flow»? Besides we should consider the circle of inevitable overtaking and falling behind phenomenons.

If, as an example, we take the period of the border and the end of the XX century with the chronology that has been described above – 1890-ies – 1920-ies, then it will seem that in the field of figurative arts some transitive traditions preserved on Russian territory even in the beginning of 1930-ies, and on the other hand – the horizons of the XX century mentality already started in the middle of the 1880-ies not only with Van Gough and Vrubel, but also with late Roden.

Or here is a comparison from the field of music: Stravinskiy in the opera-oratorio «Czar Edip» (1927) and Ravel in his «Bolero» (1928) made a breakthrough to the aesthetics of the period of 1930-ies – 1950-ies, while early Shostakovich in 1933 created his Preludes op. 34 and the First piano concert that completely refer to 1920-ies.

Therefore, borders of any time period are quite approximate, fuzzy, and relative and it is almost impossible to carry out a clear «watershed». Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out at least conditional landmarks even from the position of convenience of orientation in historical space. It is most natural to point them out at the basis of generalizing backbones that forms the main objective of the art-historical science.

Let us outline one of such backbones on the foundation of the previous reasonings. If we suppose that the five described above approximately equal I their duration periods of

the Classic epoch can also be found in chronological structure of any other epoch, then it would be logical to take an analogy with stages of any alive organism development and, first of all, human. Then, like a circle of a human life, an epoch trajectory can be imagined as follows: the first period – birth and childhood, the second – adolescence and youth, the third – youth and the first maturity, the fourth – the second maturity and declining years, – the fifth – old age and death. Definitions the first maturity and the second maturity are quite conditional, but within the hierarchy of a human life stages such periods, of course, exist.

We should also remark that in artistic creativity in an immeasurably stronger way than in organic life each evolution phase demonstrates not only its peculiarities, but also abilities and advantages that are characteristic only for it. It completely regards to the late period of an epoch, when it seems that comes its stage of oldness and death, and to this time of the art life it is impossible to refer common saying «If the youth could, if the oldness was able».

Another important parallel refers to the wave principle. Really, in linear «graphic» of an epoch it is impossible not to detect a historical rhythm that reminds us of a wave movement: splash – recoil, tide – ebb. Without effort we can register «splashes» of the first and the third period and «recoils» of the second and the fourth period. In the most general perspective, «splashes-tides» of the first and the third period are the stages of fermentation, active renewal that sometimes carries radical, innovative-explosive character. «Recoils-ebbs» of the second and the fourth period are marked by a decrease in ethical and aesthetical settings, trends to steadiness, stabilization, return to stable traditional values and artistic standards. Peculiarities of the fifth period will be studied separately.

The impact of the second principle is closely related to an interaction of the mentioned above two fundamental methods of artistic thinking – romanticism and realism, with alternating prevalence of one of another. A periodicity of their advancement directly forms the configuration of an epoch that raises a necessity to explain the essence in apprehension of each of these artistic creativity periods.

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Let us start with romanticism. «The past and the future of romanticism» – so Y. Kremlev titled one of his works, thus rightfully underlining an illegality of coupling this phenomenon only with a time areal of the XIX century (exactly – with its first half). One of the most sensible judgements on a constant presence of the corresponding mentality belongs to

A. Block who claimed that romanticism of the first half of the mentioned century is only «one of the stages of the movement that emerges in all epochs of a human existence. We can rightfully speak of the world romanticism as one of the main engines of life and art».

In context of such approach arises a strong necessity to initiate a search for a universal definition of romanticism. Universality means one that overcomes all particular and partial definitions of this phenomenon that discharge from its perception in localized chronological coordinates.

In the formation of such, integrating definition of romanticism a concept of *extremum* becomes the key. Romanticism as a type of mentality and as a method of artistic creativity is, first of all, ethics and aesthetics of extreme, maximum, inspired by a desire for absolute. Maximalism of criterions, radicalism of goals encourage romantics for a categorical revision of their value settings, for intensive creative search that particularly displays in special form of various innovations and experiments and often results into a «discharge» of absolutely new ideas and concepts that reflect qualitative broadening of life and art limits.

Such historical stages are characterized by an atmosphere of rumbling and unsteadiness, rough, explosive, impulsive-spasmodic type of development, sometimes even expansive-militaristic forms (including mutinous-rebellious frames that can transform into an emotion of total destruction). Romantic temper is often linked to such characteristics as outlined acuteness of expression, pompousness, affectation, exstatic nature. A thirst for an extreme displays itself also through a passion to special, unusual, exclusive, unique that can partially explain the inclination to hyperbole, paradox, fantastic, alogism, absurdity.

The derivative and consequence of extreme becomes the *principle of antithesis* that emerge as a result of joining polarized values of extremum: «left» and «right», «top» and «bottom», maximum and minimum, etc. (one of variants of such opposition A. Skriabin regarding his own music fixed with a formula «higher grandiosity and higher finesse»). So forms the specific romanticism system of binary oppositions.

One of them can be defined by a comparison *subjectivism – objectivism*: subjectivism as a common norm of romantic mentality can transform into underlined forms, leading to subjectivism in its extreme condition; the opposite aspiration (maximum possible removal from personal origin, total affirmation of sum and mass) leads to objectivism.

Another pair of romantic antinomies *emotionalism – rationalism* can be described as fol-

lows: an amplitude of romantic emotionalism broadens from trembling excitement of lyrical expression to confession and uncontrollable passions; romantic rationalism, quite opposite, veils manifestations of feelings, cultivates the prevalence of intellect, sober calculation, strict pragmatics, abstract logic.

Prerogative of a romantic are also the following antitheses: unlimited enthusiasm for reconstruction, «a desire to live a life ten times» (A. Block) – apathy and melancholy, acute psychological reaction to the smallest rippling of inner and outer life – intentional indifference to them; a feeling of glaring disorderliness and unreasonableness of the environment – its idealized perception; a cult of fiction, free imagination play – naturalistic mould of reality, its protocol registration, etc.

In historical aspect we can affirm that romanticism as a type of mentality and artistic thinking emerged together with a formation of *homo sapiens* and the origin of art. It is an initial category, existence of which in its «anthropological» version is generated right up to eschatological disaster, if such is predicted. But while it doesn't happen romantic mentality stays a necessary constant of being, the most important spring of its immanent development.

An alternative to romanticism is most frequently indicated by the term *realism*, though on character of its intentions it could also be called by the word *positivism*, and regarding separate periods appropriate would be a concept of *classicism*. Ethics and aesthetics of realism – positivism most clearly corresponds to the idea of *optimum*. Here we mean a bent for modepochtion, even temper of manifestations, stable forms of existence with their measured and gradual evolution type of development. It is both a desire to objectively reconstruct life «as it is», a wish to apprehend to explain the world, proceeding from it that defines the goal for unconditional reliability and careful motivation.

And if romanticism «runs» towards poles (centrifugal trends that lead to exclusive multiplicity of verges and resources), realism tends to prefer principles of «sense» and a «golden middle» (centripetal trends that provide for sufficient balance of unity). And, finally, realists experience primary interest to «terrestrial» everyday conditions and feelings, so paraphrasing F. Engels, we can speak of «usual characters in usual conditions».

Dualism of romanticism and realism is remarkable as it is, and even more important because in their alternating prevalence is formed a circle of epoch. As we could already understand, its second and fourth period is developed under the aegis of realism, and on its initial, central, and finalizing stage romanticism

comes into its own. Besides, on each stage it behaves in a quite variable way.

Romanticism of the first period that forms the «programme» of the epoch is marked with an excess of strength and ability, signs of rough enthusiasm and original freshness. Romanticism of the third period gives a new strong impulse for the ear movement, thus usually accentuating individual-personal motives.

Romanticism of the fifth period, as a rule, is linked to a considerable decrease in activity, spreading into two contrast channels: «the golden sunset» and «black twilight». Once again we should underline that in fact late romanticism and early romanticism (or romanticism of the fifth and first period) are combined in time, they co-exist and oppose, thus realizing the dialectical process of dying of the previous epoch (its final phase) and the birth of the following epoch (its initial phase).

Of course, it is only a general scheme, invariant paradigm that each time is filled with a specific historical content. Therefore, we only speak of a generalizing trend, a strict legislation of which can be affected by an impact of spontaneous historical conditions and emergence of various anomalies.

Besides, «sterile» romanticism and realism can be modeled only in terms of theoretical abstraction – in real practice these types of mentality and artistic thinking are present in various tinges and combinations; within the period of prevalence of one of them, another one does not disappear, it just moves into shade and is present as a supplement.

However, along with all that, the very interaction between romanticism and realism (positivism, classicism), their rhythmical pulsation and alternation is the «directing» factor, moving principle in the deployment of being and historical evolution that translates its discreet-stage character to the historical process.

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All the described above mainly regarded the structure stage model, and trajectory of a separate epoch and was illustrated with an example of Classical epoch. Now we can come out of its limits in order to describe another legislation of art-historical process – an inevitable acceleration, gradual compression of time frames.

This compression also takes place within an evolution of each epoch, but on the whole it is not as noticeable, so we can disregard it for simplicity and clearness of an image. The only thing we have to unquestionably consider is a time zone at a joint of epochs, where initial period of the following epoch equals in duration the finalizing period of the previous epoch. It kind of balances between the past and the fu-

ture and so, in the provided calculations turns out to be about a decade longer than periods that replace it.

So, it has been established that each of five periods of the Classical epoch lasted for about four decades that formed a chronological areal for the epoch of two centuries or a little more, if we start our calculation with 1720-ies, not with 1730-ies.

It was preceded by the epoch of Baroque with its periods of about half-century (except the first one, to which we add «another» ten years): 1510-s -1560-ies, 1570-ies – 1610-ies, 1620-ies – 1660-ies, 1670-ies – 1710-s, 1720-ies – 1760-ies. Let us remind that within the period

1510-ies – 1560-ies Late Renaissance is combined with Early Baroque, and within the phase 1720-ies – 1760-ies Late Baroque – with Early Enlightenment. In total we come up with the duration of two and a half centuries.

A periodization of Enlightenment epoch requires six decades as a «measure unit» (again excluding the first period): 1260-ies – 1320-ies, 1330-ies – 1380-ies, 1390-ies – 1440-es, 1450-ies – 1500-s, 1510-s – 1560-ies. An exclusion was made for the zone of joint between the finalizing phase of Late Medieval and that initial period of Enlightenment that is known as *Postrenaissance*. In total – more than three centuries.

Let us stop the movement into the depth of centuries and refer to the current time that replaced Classical epoch. The suggest name for it – *Modern* with all its conditionality registers the fact that processes that started on the border of the XX century, last nowadays, in the beginning of the XXI century. Their chronology is: 1890-ies – 1920-ies, 1930-ies – 1950-ies, 1960-ies – 1980-ies, and, if we look into the closest future, 1990-ies – 2010-s, 2020-ies – 2040-ies. In other words, three-decades sections, excluding four decades of joint between Classic and Modern) that give in total about one and a half century.

Let us compare numbers, moving from present into past: Modern – approximately 1,5 centuries, Classical epoch – 2 centuries, Baroque – 2,5 centuries, Renaissance – 3 centuries. Unlikely there are doubts that before Renaissance art-historical epochs were even more extensive, and after Modern they will become even shorter.

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After such statement it is reasonable to complete the construction of integral art-historical periodization. As we have already said, an epoch consists of five periods, and each of them can be divided into two stages, and further we can imagine even more detailed

differentiation. Thus we move towards subdivision that implies a possibility to move the opposite way – along the line of extension: from *micro* (stage) through period and epoch to *macro* that is era.

Historical science also knows so called *New time* and in its projection onto art-historical space it embraces three epochs – Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical epoch. Perhaps future search will prove that the same way more distant eras consist of three epochs: Medieval, Antique (obviously, it is more difficult to solve this problem regarding the Ancient world). But today we can already state the same compression of chronological dimensions at the level of eras.

Going out to such unlimited time space that is an era brings us closer to another legislation of art-historical evolution. We mean a kind of «relay race» that passes from the previous time to the following time. Of course, it happens on their joint and thus, an *outcome* of one becomes an *origin* of the other.

With most obviousness registered legislation reflects in a rhythmic variation of that what can metaphorically indicated through ideas of light and shade if the first one implies relative harmony and stability, and the second – shifts and breaks that sometimes transform into a catastrophe. And it turns out that lightening or darkening at the end of the corresponding time «programs» the dominant tinge of the upcoming time.

In fact, lightening of the late period of the Ancient world anticipated the light of the Antique, darkening of Late Antique – the shade of Medieval, lightening of Late Medieval – light of Renaissance, darkening of Late Enlightenment – shade of Baroque, lightening of Late Baroque – light of the Classical epoch, darkening of Late Classics – shade of Modern.

And further on, we can rightfully expect that Late Modern with its lightening must provide for the light of the following epoch. And if this next epoch that begins in the middle of the current century (the described period of 2020-ies – 2040-ies), will really turn out

more or less organic, then there is hope that regardless all the somber prophecies the humanity and its art will last at least till the middle of the XXII century. And the next «darkening» might lead to the last «shade», in other words, to a complete «end of the world»...

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As a resume we should underline the following. There is no reason to argue with quite an established postulate: the art is immanent only within certain limits, and its self-development can only be imagined in them. And eventually it becomes obvious that creators of art on a definite stage are people who directly belong to their time. It explains their adequate confederacy with all modern unlimited amplitude of world apprehension positions and mentalities. Here is the origin of consonance in aspirations, motivations, and reaction types.

Here also starts a sufficient uniformity of artistic protocols and various approaching that we technologically grouped into such concepts as *epoch style*, *artistic trend*, *school*, *unity*, *group*, etc. In other words, all the most significant in life of art is defined by the movement of general processes that characterize a man's and humanity's life at the corresponding historical phase.

We speak of it all now only in order to lead a reader to the idea: what has been fixed in the production of artistic creativity of one or another historical period with different degrees of approximation and adequacy reflects real events of the corresponding historical period. Therefore, the said above on legislations of art-historical evolution with a reasonable foundation can be turned into the plane of general historical process.

Thus, conclusions that are addressed to the world of art can be applied to the manifestations of being as a whole and summaries that have been done above regarding art-historical evolution can successfully be spread over any other areas of ontological order and used for prognosis of the closest and more distant prospects of earth civilization existence.