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Publicism of the Volga Region about the Problems of Culture and Art During the Times of the First Russian Revolution

Lyudmila Brodovskaya¹, Vera Buravleva²,
Liliya Galimzyanova³, Aivaz Fazliev⁴

Abstract

The relevance of the studied problem is defined by that role which the theater and the press of the Volga region province of the beginning of the XX century played in formation of a social and political position of the population of the region. The article reveals the place and a role of the creative intellectuals in society and its relation to revolutionary events in the country through newspaper journalism, on the example of M. Gorky's creativity. The research is purposed to show change of public consciousness in the province and the theater during revolution under the influence of various social and political forces this found the reflection in periodicals; and thus to promote formation of fuller picture of historical and cultural life of the country. Materials of article can be used in educational process, during creation of the generalizing works on history and cultural history of Russia, special courses, in educational work with children and youth, at adoption of administrative decisions in the welfare sphere.

Keywords: History, Cultural researches, First Russian revolution, Periodicals, Theater, Province, Creative Intellectuals.

¹ PhD in History, associate professor, Department of National History, Institute of International Relations, Kazan Federal University, Kremliovskaya St., 18, 420008, Kazan, Russian Federation. E-mail: Ludmila.Brodovskaya@kpfu.ru

² PhD in History, associate professor, Department of National History, Institute of International Relations, Kazan Federal University, Kremliovskaya St., 18, 420008, Kazan, Russian Federation. E-mail: Vera.Buravleva@ksu.ru

³ Senior lector, PhD, Department of world cultural heritage, Institute of International Relations, Kazan Federal University, Kremliovskaya St., 18, 420008, Kazan, Russian Federation. E-mail: Lilgalim@bk.ru

⁴ PhD in History, associate professor, Department of National History, Institute of International Relations, Kazan Federal University, Kremliovskaya St., 18, 420008, Kazan, Russian Federation. E-mail: Aivaz.Fazliev@kpfu.ru

1. INTRODUCTION

Theater in Russia - unique social institute by means of which achievements of spiritual heritage are transferred to the subsequent generations. The theater in Russia was of particular importance at the beginning of the XX century when it played an important role not only in cultural development, but also in social and political life of the country. The Russian press of the beginning of the XX century noted that for Russia "plays and theaters ... the same as, for example, for the western European parliamentary events and political speeches". It was specified also that in circles of those who are called by the intellectuals the few read magazines, buy books, but all visit theater - in the same way as all read newspapers; newspapers and theater - the most powerful factors of ideological influences as everything is discussed, leaving theater as concrete, vital as a case from the real life".

At the same time theater-goers not in smaller or maybe more influenced theater, giving preference to those statements which in their eyes represented certain equivalents of political positions. As situation correlates "theater - public" time, the moments of social development, feature of troupe acted. Revolution forced "theater and its figures... to raise level with a century, to become closer to the street. Where the people stepped on the stage, the play won the visitor".

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological base of a research is founded on the principles of historicism and objectivity; dialectic and cultural and civilization approaches. Systematization and generalization of the actual material, the comparative (comparative) analysis of activity of the creative intellectuals of the Volga region province of the beginning of the 20th century became the main methods. In work methods of a concrete historical research are combined with methods ideal and typological which will be mobilized in sociological and political sciences in the ratios necessary for the solution of research tasks. Authors used also general scientific methods of a research - analytical, statistical and textual.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The problems of culture and art which found reflection in journalism during the first Russian revolution are directly connected with a problem of relationship of the creative intellectuals and the power. This problem was, in turn, and was studied by a component of the subject "Intellectuals and Revolution", one may say, from the moment of emergence of the Soviet state. The first publications belonged to eminent persons of Bolshevik party [1]. In them the main attention was paid to display of a contradictory position of the intellectuals during revolutions. Basic change of a situation in a historiography happened in connection with a statement in the country of command system. Withdrawal from studying of documentary sources began. They were replaced by the "absolute" truth which found reflection in "Short course" [2] which changed a historical picture and allowed to unite a considerable part of the intellectuals with monarchists Black Hundreds. In the 30-50th of the XX century about the intellectuals it was not published any work.

The new stage in studying of the intellectuals is connected with emergence of work of L.K. Ehrman "The intellectuals in the first Russian revolution" which actually returned historiographies this perspective [3]. Of course, this research bears on itself characteristic differences of works of the 60-70th of the XX century: the author, in particular tries to draw an accurate distinction between various groups of the art intellectuals, unambiguously "attributing" these or those her representatives to "the democratic front of writers of all people of multinational Russia" or (for example, "writers of decadents") to the camp hostile to revolution or to connect growth of social and political activity of the intellectuals with the level of rise of revolutionary movement of the proletariat. In wider plan, for authors of this time it was peculiar to put

political orientation of the intellectuals into strict dependence on its social accessory and financial position. Meanwhile, social and political disagreements and in the environment of the intellectuals took place both between social groups, and in them (as S.A. Fedyukin still in the mid-sixties celebrated of the 20th century) [4].

During the same period works on history of the Russian theater appear. Classification and the characteristic of sources by history of the Russian drama theater are given in the monograph by I.F. Petrovskaya "A source study of history of pre-revolutionary drama theater" [5]. She in the works considers theater in the context of social and moral search of an era, at the same time paying special attention to theatrical criticism and psychology of spectator masses [6].

Already during "reorganization" O.N. Znamensky's work "The intellectuals on the eve of Great October" was published [7]. Directly it is devoted to consideration of social and political positions and moods of various groups of the intellectuals of the country during the period of February by October, however the author raises the general questions of degree of revolutionism of the Russian intellectuals.

Studying of problems of theater continues. There are collections of articles where the scene is considered against the background of public cataclysms, revolutionary fight in which "the intellectuals and the lower class of the population" were involved [8]. Analyzing the literature devoted to the intellectuals, revolution and theater it is necessary to allocate the special Gorky study direction [9]. To M. Gorky, a huge number of works as Gorky's dramatic art turned provincial theater of the period of the first Russian revolution into the arena of fight of representatives of different political trends was devoted to his revolutionary past, his creativity, helped growth of political consciousness of provincial actors and audience, made a big contribution to the general development of the Russian provincial theater.

In "Gorky study" two opposite points of view were gradually issued. On the one hand, the official Soviet criticism, represented Gorky "the friend and Stalin's adherent", "the first proletarian writer" [10]. On the other hand, the western criticism, which, behind the few exceptions (for example, Vittorio the Harvest season) [11], - reached complete negation of merits of Gorky and turned it into the insignificant and low-talented writer guilty of prosecutions of writers at the Soviet mode. Such relation is peculiar to many Russian intellectuals' emigrants among whom V. Nabokov, A. Solzhenitsyn, and A. Bem.

In 1965 in New York there was a book by D. Levin "the Petrel. Life and M. Gorky's creativity", at the heart of which one of the most widespread concepts of the western literature on Gorky: his creativity represents an example of an antinomy between a lie and the truth, between fiction and reality - in favor of a lie and fiction. The same point of view is shared also by R. Hare. The direct appeal of Gorky to a great lie characteristic and for his old age, was new option of his early views expressed in the play "At the Bottom": the person has to live a lie ...", R. Hare writes in the book "Maxim Gorky" [12]. Gorky "saw life in the light of the clear dogma and as the careful father of small children, told them a lie to support their morality", - the American literary critic E. Muchnik claims [13].

New reading of Gorky began during the perestroika years and meant a possibility of dialogue between researchers, freedom from ideological requirements which isolated the writer in due time and became the reason of underestimation of literary influences of an era on works of the writer and also those components of outlook of Gorky which were not closely connected with policy [14]. The understanding that Maxim Gorky, with his life rich with meetings, events and experiences, cannot be lowered to a role of the second-grade author of the Russian revolutionary drama in the history of literature of the 20th century came. His deep and difficult personality, without having lost still the original and great value, forces today criticism to take a certain position in relation to the writer. "Gorky - one of those Russian of writers about whom researchers in the light of events of the last years begin to write anew" [15].

Revolution of 1905-07 lifted various layers of the Russian society including the advanced art intellectuals to active political life. Influence of revolution was suffered by all figures of theater (from the provincial actor to figures of the Russian theatrical society), and in fact, before each of them there was a question raised by all process of political process: "With whom you, cultural figures?"

These moods of the creative intellectuals were expressed by K.S. Stanislavsky in the speech at opening of the Moscow Art Theatre in May, 1905: "Now awakenings of public forces in the country the theater cannot and has no right to serve only pure art, - it has to respond on public moods, find out them to public, to be a teacher of society" [16]. Such approach resisted the ideas of the nonpartisanship extended among the democratic intellectuals that was promoted in no small measure also by national, all-democratic character of the first Russian revolution.

The letter of M is devoted to questions of the place of the writer in revolution. Gorky to V.V. Rozanov in response to recognition of the last in the disappointment and doubt in revolution he emphasizes those writers "have to confess courageously and honestly to himself in a tragic mistake - far left from the people ... and there were one ... Great days of spiritual revival of the people took us unawares ...". Finishing the letter, Gorky writes that "it served necessary to serve the people ... we to society: spiritually dead company of sweet tooth ... Nowadays the lawful owner and the organizer, the people starts out it. What can we give it? We are far from life. Everywhere blood of the advanced people of the people, blood of workers, everywhere the power enraged by a death presentiment cynically flows beats the best people - young Russia - and you write about yourself" [17].

Such formulation of the question was of particular importance for the revolutionary era which is characterized by sharp delimitation and polarization of various ideological and political forces. Fight between the powers of liberalism and radicalism found reflection in the journalism presented on pages of local newspapers and devoted to questions of art creativity, first of all theatrics. Local newspapers represented a wide range of social and political positions.

The Volga region newspapers of the social democratic direction give the chance to estimate the relation of provincial theaters to the begun revolutionary events: on their pages those requirements which were imposed by revolutionary forces to a public position of the art intellectuals were formulated. With publicistic heat lines from articles of the Samara newspapers sound: "Theater not only place of rest and entertainment. It ... school of life. From a scene have to not only entertain the viewer, but also teach him, awake in him the best feelings and the best thoughts" [18]. The theater during revolution has to "revive or die". And this "revival" has to consist that "theater and its figures have to get up level with a century" [19], "to be closer to the street. Where the people enter on the stage, the play wins the visitor" [20] as revolution changed also the public visiting theater and its relation to what happens on the stage. "Quiet, balanced, coming to theater to have a rest of day of work, to be forgotten in a charm of red fictions, - she ordinary sat grandly during action and also grandly awarded actors with a traditional applause after descent of a curtain.

Now this public is nervous, worries, accurately reacts to the ideological waves rushing from a scene and quite often bursts in applause among action The strong internal tension which is looking for an exit outside is felt that something big crept in in hearts of these clapping people, the general, nervous, forcing to react immediately to impressions. Bursts of applause are responses of collective soul to those vigorous chords which sound on the stage. If long ago we began to react to life appeals that would prevent us to embody our cherished dreams so amicably?" [21]. Nonparty progressive publicists also made the contribution to development of a question of communication of art with the revolutionary atmosphere in society. The author-art critic of the Theatrical Russia newspaper in the article "Schiller's Memories",

commenting on success of scenic statements of plays of the European classic, notes that "Schiller spirit, the spirit of noble contempt for violence, rage, hostility - always revives during eras of public rise" [22].

Special role in the dramatic art revealing revolutionary-democratic moods of wide circles of the intellectuals put on the play M. Gorky. Gorky and theater in the first Russian revolution is special chapter of the first national revolution in Russia. During this period Gorky becomes one of the most popular playwrights who played a huge role in the course of ideological and creative development of provincial theater. Due to the prosecution by tsarism, during statements of plays of M. Gorky in days of the first Russian revolution political performances of the intellectuals of the Volga region took place. Execution of plays of Gorky and those feelings that they caused in democratically spirited audience, gave the chance for the device in theaters of boycotts, demonstrations, and organized mass demonstrations.

Theatrical audience of an era of the first Russian revolution of the play of Gorky perceived also in political concreteness of their contents and as plays by the author whose name was connected with revolutionary movement. It was plays by the revolutionary, the fighter for freedom.

Interest in plays by Gorky of deus in process of increase of revolution and even more often performances developed into political demonstrations. In 1904 Gorky wrote the third drama "Summer residents". In November, 1904 it was put in Komissarzhevskoy theater, and after the January events of 1905 is removed from the repertoire by the governor general Trepov. News of removal from the repertoire of the play drew with censorship attention of the whole country and therefore the premiere of the play "Summer residents" in the province which coincided with Gorky's arrest made not only tremendous success, but also often performances turned into protest meetings against arrest of the writer.

Revolutionary publicists, art critics and critics the publications sought to strengthen public influence of theatrical performances. Practically all provincial newspapers watching M. Gorky's fate gave detailed analyses of "Summer residents". But reviews of Gorky performances differed from reviews of other performances. Their authors were interested in such things as the nature of statement, director's receptions, successful or unsuccessful acting a little. Critics estimated not statement and contents, emphasized its public response and an impression what was made on the audience by the text of the Gorky play.

Statement of the play was estimated differently. Newspapers of the Volga region reflected the arisen fierce debate. The liberal criticism accused Gorky of distortion of images of representatives of the intellectuals, writers of democratic orientation, on the contrary, in every possible way supported the play as truly reflecting social contradictions of bourgeois society.

Enthusiastic responses on the first representations of "Summer residents" were published by the "Volga leaf". The play is estimated at them as "honest and courageous", got by a war-call, an alarm of a draft bell". The reviewer of "S.U." is solidary with Gorky in assessment by him of the place and roles of the intellectuals in society which part went to work of the bourgeoisie, having come off the people, and other part went to revolutionary movement. After Gorky the reviewer accuses bourgeois intellectuals that they not "spread around themselves light" that they "not the sons of the fatherland valuing its benefit, free development, spotless advantage" that they "only summer residents", the deaf and blind people who forgot "about the debt to the people" which lifted them on the shoulders. "All this, - the reviewer finishes, - makes an alarm in soul of the reader and imperiously captures him from the first act" [23]. In a response to a premiere the description of reaction of public to Gorky's charges is of great interest. The reviewer reports that the play went over with success, at the crowded auditorium and that during the fourth act, "abounding with inspired speeches, appeals to public work" action repeatedly was interrupted by noisy approvals. Further such reaction of public led to introduction of "internal censorship": the directorate of theater hung out the announcement in which asked "public during submission of the play "Summer

residents" not to applaud during the course of action and not to demand from actors of repetition of certain stages; otherwise the directorate will be forced to shoot the play from the repertoire and subjects to deprive of an opportunity the Kazan public further to see on the stage of the work of M. Gorky" [24].

Also other point of view on M. Gorky's dramatic art revealed itself. From pages of newspapers and magazines advised Gorky to cease to write plays, accused of longueurs, an excessive publicity, imitation Chekhov. The publication in "The Saratov leaf" signed by "K.S." is characteristic in this plan. Estimating the play, the author writes that "the thing left boring, rhetorical no more as phrase". "All new play by Gorky consists of phrase speeches and of talkative people. There are no action, any general concept, any internal communication in it", "draft sketches" the best scenic statement" will not be able "to recover these ... [25]. The reviewer very strictly estimated the play as the scenic phenomenon, but also and showed the rejection it as the phenomena social and political. And it is not surprising that in reply the Saratov newspapers publish articles of the Bolshevik A.A. Bogdanov and also the authors disappearing under the pseudonyms "Spark" and "K.D." in protection of the work of Gorky, though containing criticism of composition of the play.

Gorky's "defenders" emphasize the political importance of his play and the appeal expressed in it to association with the people. A.A. Bogdanov's article comes to the end with the confidence (which is taken out by the author from a performance) that "the truth and a victory on Vlas and Varvara Mikhaylovna's party if they manage to merge to one indestructible rock with those to whom go" [26]. The same thought sounds also from pages of "The Saratov diary" in article "K.D." which emphasizes that Gorky "does of a scene a tribune on which very passionate debate on the questions answering on modern topic of the day and therefore the contemporaries who are strongly mentioning ... is conducted". "Denying purely art advantages behind the play by Gorky", the author recognizes behind it great public value as in the play Gorky says to a huge layer of Russian intelligentsia that "it is enough to stir, it is enough to lie", "meaning of life - in an active unification with a people at large" [27].

The esthetic, art party of dramatic art of M. Gorky - one of art criticism "riddles". Extraordinary, sometimes its opposite estimates accompanied and accompany it still (what by us it was told earlier about). For example, one of the first Bolshevik literary critics, the eminent person of V.V. Vorovsky party considered that "since M. Gorky ceased to picture only and began to set to the creativity certain social tasks on permission, the art form at him left on a background before social contents more and more. He became a publicist in art" [28].

4. SUMMARY

The analyzed material of the provincial press allows understanding lines of social and political delimitation in a general view. Ideologists, publicists of revolutionary social democracy, being guided by the ideas of party membership of art, used both the Bolshevik, and democratic and liberal press for the statement of the idea of civil mission of the art designed to tell the word in moral and political condemnation of tsarism. Revolutionary social democrats and revolutionary-democratic publicists adjoining them in art criticism review articles resisted to a reactionary and guarding tendency in the social thought seeking to disavow bright social sounding of the best scenic actions flying the flag of "clean" art [29].

The beginning of the XX century in Russia was time of revolutions and time of revision of traditional views of theater, for its place and a role in society. The provincial theater developing within the all-Russian theatrical tradition was an active participant of the political events which were taking place in the country. The ruling elite tried to soften the radicalizing influence of theaters on the population, using administrative ways of influence. However, the inability of the government to dialogue with the public, did not promote elaboration of accurate strategy of response to "oppositional" moods of "bohemia". In

process of removal from the capitals the confusion of the authorities shown, in particular, in strengthening of guarding actions concerning attendants of muses increased. For example, the plays allowed for imperial theaters often could not be put on the provincial stage.

5. CONCLUSION

During revolution actors proved and as citizens: it concerned also refusal to participate in chernosotenny performances, and support of October events of 1905 when theaters of Samara, Saratov and Kazan stopped the performances, and participation in demonstrations during submission of plays of M. Gorky.

Thus, having carried out reconstruction of cultural existence of Russia to the critical period of development of the country we could see that a considerable part of the art and creative intellectuals of the Volga region showed, though is inconsistent, with fluctuations, the aspiration to join in a public impact on tsarism. And to the mode, first of all, "Asian" methods of policy of the government in the spiritual sphere which more and more came to collision with the pro-European system of values, the peculiar creative intellectuals of the beginning of the XX century were the cornerstone of this opposition.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that the provided information has no conflicts of interest.

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