THE INTERACTION AND CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ART AND POLITICS

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Abstract

The article examines one of the pressing cultural issues of our time, facing political science – the question of the connection between art and politics, which involves identifying its possible causes, the nature of its manifestation and the degree of their interaction or confrontation. Based on the fact that society, as a complexly organized system, for its unimpeded functioning at all times strives to establish, as far as possible, harmonious connections between its components, be it the economic, political, social or cultural spheres, the existence of a certain connection between politics and art is also recognized. It is argued that ignoring this problem can confront a person with inexplicable processes occurring in society, complicating the understanding of their causes and consequences. The specific manifestations of this relationship are analyzed in two contexts: firstly, from the point of view of the subordination of art to political goals, and secondly, taking into account the ability of art to specifically influence political processes. The defining role of art in the processes of aestheticization of politics and politicization of art, which has become especially strong since the beginning of the 20th century, is emphasized.

The analysis demonstrates that many avant-garde movements of the 20th century contributed to the aestheticization of politics, while political regimes – especially autocratic and totalitarian ones – intensified the politicization of art. The article concludes that although art in democratic societies seeks to

function independently of politics, in today's conflict-ridden world the work of any genuine artist inevitably reflects a civic position.

***Keywords*:** Art, politics, mutual influence, propaganda of political ideas, aestheticization of politics, politicization of art, Futurism, Dadaism, art of the Third Reich.

Introduction

One of the pressing cultural issues facing political science today is the relationship between art and politics, which requires identifying its possible causes, the nature of its manifestations, and the degree of their possible interaction or confrontation. Given that society, as a complexly organized system, has always strived to establish harmonious connections between its components, be they economic, political, social, or cultural, for its smooth functioning, it is necessary to recognize the existence of a certain connection between politics and art, especially since they are the most important forms of social consciousness and manifestations of human spiritual culture. Of course, during the development of various nations, the latter did not always manifest itself in an obvious form. More often, it was veiled, not prominent. But it would be difficult to point to any state whose ruler would completely reject the potential of art as a means of strengthening his power, if such an opportunity were outlined. Therefore, the existence of a connection between art and politics should not be questioned in any way.

Even with the most superficial approach to studying the problem at hand, one cannot lose sight of the fact that art is primarily aimed at a specific emotional reaction of people. And this cannot pass by politics, which, in shaping people's political orientations, assessments and attitudes towards the government, towards the state, also relies in many ways on their emotional reaction, is guided by the latter, and therefore cannot ignore the suggestive (inspiring) power of art. It is also important for politics that art is an indispensable means of moral and aesthetic education of a person, shaping his attitude to reality, as well as his norms, values, and style of behavior. Politicians try to use all these artistic possibilities to achieve their goals, i.e., to propagate a worldview, values, ideas, and orientations that are preferable for the current political situation, and to disseminate a specific political doctrine.

It should be noted that, depending on the nature of the research being conducted, different questions may be identified as principal. For example, the possible indirect influence of art on the formation of a particular state's ideology is of interest, as is the reverse process associated with investigating the influence of the socio-political situation on the formation of the content and specific form of art. It is also important to clarify the role of specific

artistic movements and individual artists in this process, related to the nature of their political views and orientations, as well as to understand how the encouragement or punishment of artists, based on certain political goals, for example, the destruction of works of art, the ban on creativity and even the killing of creators of art, can affect the quality of the emerging cultural situation as a whole.

Examples of the obvious interconnection between the artistic and political components of the social system became especially evident in the 20th century – a time of global and numerous local political and economic revolutions, two world wars, i.e. processes leading to a change in the world as a whole. Indeed, the 20th century provides us with a wealth of material demonstrating the intimate relationship between art and politics. This includes, first and foremost, the art of the historical avant-garde, represented by Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and so on (Bürger, 2014; Turchin, 1993), as well as the opposing Socialist Realism (Morozov, 2007; Schultz, 2024, pp. 5-15). They are spreading across various countries, which gives rise to the hypothesis that the process is perhaps logical, rather than random, and is directly linked to the intensification of the interaction between the political and artistic consciousness of artists. The significance of this interaction increases especially during critical times that touch upon the problem of human existence.

No less important are other, more local manifestations of this interaction, among which we can point to expressionism, the art of fascist Germany, the art of the so-called "new left" – a revolutionary movement that engulfed students and professors of universities in Europe and the USA, which experienced a violent manifestation especially in 1968 in France and claimed to create a "counterculture". Although the movement included such renowned thinkers as Herbert Marcuse, Frantz Fanon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, Mikel Dufrenne, Charles Wright Mills and Guy Debord, inspiring young people with a critique of capitalist society, but its stated goal was not achieved (Davydov, 1975). We should also note the so-called "Sots-art", which developed in the USSR in the 1970's as an alternative to the culture encouraged by the government (Erofeev, 2007, pp. 14-23). Of interest are also various performances that touch upon important social and political issues that have become widespread in Europe, the USA, Latin America, many post-Soviet countries, etc.

Does this mean that, when considering the relationship between art and politics, politics should play a leading role? At first glance, this seems to be the case. However, when you consider that art has the ability to have a powerful emotional impact on a person, causing excitement in his soul, that it is capable of giving birth to certain feelings and moods, then you understand

that the problem is much more complex. It seems clear that politicians consciously turned to art to address the political challenges they faced. Art appealed to them as a means of non-violent, powerful influence on the masses, while also evoking a sense of aesthetic pleasure. Thanks to art, the "powers that be" moved towards the specific political goal they had set in a "bloodless" way. The point is that many ideas that are important for one's life are more easily assimilated by a person with the help of artistic images that carry an emotional charge, rather than ideological doctrines or scientific concepts. This is why many rulers of various states, in order to strengthen their power, turned not only to the help of the army or to the propaganda of political and economic reforms by forceful methods, but also to the help of art, turning its capabilities into a tool for solving pressing socio-political problems. For example, the exaltation of the image of the ruler, bringing him closer to the image of God, with the aim of generating feelings of reverence and submission necessary for establishing order in the country, has become common for artistic practice in all periods of the existence of state entities.

Art as a Means of Glorification of Rulers

One of the earliest examples of the crucial role of art in commemorating historical events and addressing political issues is the Stele of the Vultures (Stele of King Eannatum), created in the 25th century BCE. This unique Sumerian monument, featuring several rows of relief images and an inscription, recounts the victory of Eannatum, the ruler of the city of Lagash. The victory, achieved through divine intervention, is evidenced by the image of the city's Supreme God, who has caught his enemies in his net. The king, meanwhile, triumphantly walks over the corpses of his fallen enemies, whose heads and limbs are carried off by ravenous vultures (Chegodaev, 1956, p. 54). As a clear demonstration that every enemy of the country would suffer the same fate- to perish and become prey to the vultures – this terrifying scene was intended to awe the viewer, evoke strong emotions, and become a means of successfully promoting the policies of the ruler.

The famous Stele of Hammurabi's Laws, created by order of the ancient Babylonian king Hammurabi around 1780 BCE to perpetuate laws establishing order and justice in the country, also serves a propaganda purpose. The cuneiform text recounts the titles, power, and majesty of a just king, almost equal to a god, caring for the people and the country's patron gods – Enlil, Marduk and Shamash – revealing its important sociopolitical significance (Afanasyeva, 1976, pp. 69-71).

Similar processes are observed in the art of Ancient Egypt. For example, on the famous Stele of Djet, the "Serpent King" (3100 BC), the pharaoh's name is

inscribed, and below is a falcon, the embodiment of Horus, the Egyptian god of sovereignty, hinting at the pharaoh's divine nature (Pomerantseva, 1976, pp. 220–221; Stele of Pharaoh Djet, n.d.). To avoid repetition and numerous examples, we note that the practice of glorifying rulers, inextricably linked with the promotion of the cult of gods, would become an essential component of art, a clear indication of the influence of politics on it. Art would later become interested in perpetuating the images not only of kings but also of individuals who had achieved high social status and played an important role in the life of the nation, whether in politics, science, philosophy, etc., as evidenced by the art of Ancient Greece.

All ancient Greek art is aimed at cultivating a morally and physically harmoniously developed ideal person, a phenomenon that Socrates conceptualized with the concept of "kalokagathia" (Losev & Shestakov, 1965, pp. 100-110). This concept is the most important expression of the socio-political and aesthetic ideal of Ancient Greece. And the criticism of art carried out by Plato in the dialogue "The Republic" was connected only with the problem of creating an "ideal state" populated by ideal citizens, as close as possible to this ideal, whose harmonious souls should be formed with the help of music and gymnastics controlled by statesmen. In his dialogue with the Adeimantus, Socrates asserts, "For they must beware of change to a strange form of music, taking it to be danger to the whole. For never are the ways of music moved without the greatest political laws being moved…" (Plato, 1991, p. 102). It's noteworthy that Plato directly states that changes in music will lead to changes in the state (Plato, 1991, pp. 102-103). After all, musical education shapes people's morals and social order. Clearly, the philosopher opposes innovations in art primarily for political reasons and purposes. In his view, any innovations will lead to the destruction of the foundations of society and the decline of the state, which he sought to make "ideal".

The ancient Romans, who created a great empire, also invested considerable effort in developing art that served political purposes. Suffice it to mention the creation of triumphal arches, which were erected to commemorate Rome's victories over its enemies. These majestic structures depicted scenes of Roman generals' victories over their enemies.[*] A vast number of sculptural portraits were also created – of emperors, military leaders, senators, and so on. The sculptural portrait of the Emperor Augustus, seated on horseback, is impressive. Many portraits emphasize his noble origins and godlike qualities. His portrait in the image of Jupiter is famous. Emperor Claudius is also depicted as Jupiter, demonstrating that the mythologization of

[*] The most famous of them are the arches of Constantine, Titus, Janus, Drusus, Septimius Severus and others.

the ruler's image was actively used for political purposes as an effective tool of influence. A large number of portraits of emperors – Hadrian, Trajan, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Constantine, and others – with minor variations to emphasize certain details, had one goal – to portray a truly valiant, noble, "ideal" ruler, who directed his efforts towards strengthening the power of his country and its exaltation (Chegodaev, 1956, pp. 313-335).

The Roman Empire also produced a huge number of portraits of Roman aristocracy and wealthy citizens. Interestingly, some of these were destroyed, while others have survived disfigured. This was not always the result of some random accident, but rather the direct consequence of a conscious decision. Destruction or disfigurement, such as beheading, damaging the nose, eyes, etc., was the result of a decision to subject a person who had committed a crime to the "curse of memory" (Latin: "Damnatiomemoriae"). As a special form of posthumous punishment, it was intended to erase the memory of a person who had committed certain sins and was even applied to emperors, including Domitian, Caligula, Common, Nero, and others (Hanaghan, 2024).

The practice of "memory erasure" for political purposes was used not only in Ancient Rome but also in other states and cultures, dating back to ancient times, and has retained its significance to this day (Anisimova, n.d.). Art played a significant role in this.

The Middle Ages, which followed antiquity and was a time of religious dominance, subjugated all other spheres of human activity, including politics and art, to the powerful influence of religion, forcing them to act as "servants", as is often figuratively noted. Religion acted as a meta-ideology. Therefore, any aspect of the culture of this time, including political or artistic, must be discussed only with an eye to religion, noting that one of the main conclusions following from theological tenets was that the state and law are the result of divine design. They were created by God to establish order and regulate relations between people.[*] Based on this premise, political thought aimed to justify the authority of the church and monarchy as manifestations of divine will (Anisimova, n.d.). Art followed the same path, figuratively instilling in the people ideas about the divine origin of the state and power in general and the ruler himself in particular.

It is enough to look at the architecture of the Middle Ages, in particular at the inimitable Armenian apostolic churches and monasteries, Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, to be convinced that they were created in accordance with a religious worldview, first of all pointing to the greatness of God and the path leading to him, and also testify to the power of the state in which they are

[*] See more in detail in Augustine, 1998.

erected and to the greatness and invincibility of the king ruling this state. A religious context was a constant backdrop for depictions of medieval rulers, defenders of faith and state. Images of holy kings, benefactors of the church, and valiant warriors affirmed their divine right to rule. Statues of rulers adorning cathedrals and other public buildings symbolized their role in defending the state and faith. They were also depicted in various manuscripts, stained glass windows, and mosaics, most often in allegorical or historical scenes, as characters from biblical stories, and as patrons of the church. (Tyazhelov & Sopotsinsky, 1975, pp. 20-40; Tyazhelov, 1981)

Freed from the pervasive influence of religion and acquiring a free character, art, inspired by the ideas of Renaissance humanism, nevertheless continued to express political content in the same vein as in previous eras, creating images of sovereigns, members of the upper class, and the clergy, presenting them in an aura of glory (Zheglova, 2017, pp. 199-212). Numerous examples can be cited confirming that the primary message of these images remains the same – emphasizing the king's greatness, his divine election, and his commitment to Christian virtues – wisdom, justice, and so on. We believe that nothing has changed in this regard; the presented images are, once again, purely visual propaganda with a political subtext. What has changed is that, with the development of printing (1445), which made it possible to replicate not only texts but also images, the people were able to see their rulers through engravings, which became a new, additional means of promoting their political greatness.

Thus, the main purpose of statues, paintings, engravings, medals, etc., depicting the German King and Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I of Habsburg, representatives of the English Tudor dynasty – Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, the equestrian portrait of the Spanish King Philip IV by Diego Velázquez, the equestrian portrait of Charles I by Anthony van Dyck, portraits of the French "Sun King". Louis XIV, and many others – radiate imperial confidence, the qualities of a strong and noble personality. Their images are often mythologized (Frolova, 2018; Dmitrieva, 2012. pp. 22-47; Makarova, 2017, pp. 20-46). For example, the depiction of Louis XIV with a laurel wreath, crowned with the sun, i.e., the attributes of the god Apollo, or in the guise of Alexander the Great, indicate that he is God's viceroy on earth and a powerful ruler (Voitenko, 2022)

The above confirms that, from ancient times onward, rulers have sought to present themselves to their people in the best possible light. To do this, they needed art as a means to exalt, idealize, and mythologize them, presenting them as courageous knights, enlightened and noble monarchs, patrons of the arts, and even God's representatives on earth. Viewed from this perspective, art was directly subordinated to political goals. It was used as a means of

political propaganda, without exerting any significant influence on the political processes developing in the state.

The Formation of Anti-War Art

The connection between politics and art intensifies with the foregrounding of the issue of war, to which the artist expresses his attitude. The first to address the theme of war, not to glorify rulers but to document its horrors, was Jacques Callot (1592-1632), who created a series of 18 large-format etchings, "The Great Disasters of War" (Callot, 2018). Turning to the Thirty Years' War, which engulfed Europe from 1618 to 1648, he depicts scenes of battle, mass executions of soldiers, beatings, fires, cripples, poverty, robbery and other crimes, i.e. disasters that befell the majority of people, but which were not usually depicted within the boundaries of official art. It's clear that Callot's etchings, which depict the devastating consequences of war, are directed against it and should be perceived as essentially anti-war statements. They offer a veiled call for peace, since the objective depiction of the disasters that war leads to breeds hatred for it. It is clear that the artist sowed the seeds of anti-war art, which sprouted first in the work of Francisco Goya, in particular in his etchings "The Disasters of War" (Doronchenkov, 2015).

Despite working at the court of Charles IV, Francisco Goya (1746-1828) never sugarcoated reality in his works, boldly presenting pressing social issues and criticizing political power. In his satirical series of engravings, "Caprichos", he exposed the abuse of power by members of high society and the imperfections of humanity in general. In his 82-piece series, "The Disasters of War", he protested the cruelty of war, depicting the pain and suffering of ordinary people, especially the victims, and demonstrating their despair and resilience (Doronchenkov, 2015). Another famous work by Goya is the painting "The Third of May 1808: Execution of the Defenders of Madrid", which depicts the execution of Spanish revolutionaries who rose up in defense of their homeland. In his works, the artist focuses on the inhumanity that has become dominant. Death, torture, atrocities, dead and wounded bodies are the main themes of his works. It is no coincidence that Goya's ideas resonated with some 20th century artists in their perceptions of war itself and its consequences (Doronchenkov, 2015). Following Callot, Goya strengthened the foundations for the development of anti-war art, which gained new momentum in the 20th century.

In the 20th century, the First World War served as a direct stimulus for the emergence of anti-war art. Expressionist artists, most notably Käthe Kollwitz and Otto Dix, were among the first to respond, capturing the suffering and destruction brought on by war in their works. Kollwitz opposed the war,

especially after the tragic death of her 17-year-old son, who had volunteered for the front. Her series of etchings "War", sculpture "Grieving Parents" and poster "Never Again War", are a powerful call for peace and condemnation of war (Byron, 2024). Like Goya, she focuses the viewer's attention on the human tragedy of ordinary people – the victims of a brutal war, including her.

War is also a central theme in the work of Otto Dix, a veteran of World War I, who volunteered for the war at the age of 22 and served until its end. The 1924 series of graphic works "War" consisting of 51 etchings is placed on a par with the cycle "The Disasters of War" by F. Goya, indicating the same powerful emotional impact that a truthful representation of the horrors of war has. Indeed, having witnessed death, injuries, rotting corpses in the trenches, and other shocking scenes firsthand, he depicted them all without embellishment in his works, unashamedly depicting horrific details. It is no coincidence that after the Nazis came to power in Germany, preparing for revenge and propagating war, his art was rejected and declared "degenerate", and Dix was dismissed from his post as a teacher at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts on the grounds that his works "undermine the will of the German people to defend themselves" (Lesin, 2019).

Another artist whose work has been compared to Francisco Goya in terms of its anti-war content is Pablo Picasso, whose work includes Guernica, a painting created after the bombing of the Spanish city of the same name on April 26, 1937, during the Spanish Civil War. The Cubist technique used in the painting somewhat complicates the understanding that the artist is painfully narrating the brutality of war, which creating chaos and death, despair and hopelessness. Only after discerning the images of the unfortunate woman holding a dead child, the soldier with severed hands, the despairing women, and so on, does one understand the full tragedy of the situation, an impression heightened by the work's black-and-white color scheme. The painting depicts death and destruction, pain and helplessness (Robinson, n.d.). An anti-war sentiment is also present in Picasso's work "Massacre in Korea", which condemns the massacre of civilians as a result of US intervention in the Korean War. Researchers consider this work a direct quotation from the composition of Goya's painting "The Third of May 1808 in Madrid". Like Goya, Picasso depersonalizes the executioners, presenting them as a faceless mass, directing the viewer's attention to the victims. He depicts unfortunate women and children facing the guns of robotic executioners. Art historian Kirsten Hoving Keen argues that the painting was "inspired by reports of American atrocities" in Korea (Keen, 1980, p. 464).

Art and Aesthetization of War (Futurism)

One of the influential artistic movements of the 20th century, Futurism, founded by the Italian poet, writer and political figure F.T. Marinetti, had a diametrically opposite, militaristic orientation.* Political ideas were no less important to him than artistic principles. He was closely associated with fascism and served as cultural adviser to D. Mussolini. He was elected to Parliament and, in 1929, received the title of academician. But it's no secret that long before the fascist regime came to power, the Futurists advocated war, believing that the world needed to be cleansed of "unnecessary" people and that war was the best means for this. The movement's ideological inspirer, already in his first manifesto (1909), asserted, "We want to glorify war – the world's only hygiene – militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of anarchism, beautiful ideas that condemn to death and contempt for woman" (Marinetti, 1914, p. 7). And these were not just empty words. The Futurists were sincere adherents of this idea. Many of them, as volunteers, personally participated in the First World War. Moreover, some of them became victims of this merciless slaughter.** According to the renowned philosopher and founder of the Italian Communist Party, Antonio Gramsci, Futurism was popular among the working class before the war. But after the peace, the Futurist movement lost its influence among workers (Gramsci, 2012).

In 1920, the Italian Futurist Party merged with the Fascist Party, but Futurism did not develop into fascism, primarily because of the movement's split, secondly, because Marinetti strove to aestheticize politics. Thus, regarding the colonial war in Ethiopia, he writes, "… War is beautiful because thanks to its gas masks, it's terrifying megaphones, its flame throwers, and light tanks-it establishes man's dominion over the subjugated machine. …War is beautiful because it creates new architectures, like those of armored tanks, geometric squadrons of aircraft, spirals of smoke from burning villages, and much more.... Poets and artists of Futurism... remember these principles of an aesthetic of war, that they may illuminate ... your struggles for a new poetry and a new sculpture!" (Benjamin, 2008, pp. 41-42).

The Italian journalist and writer Giuseppe Prezzolini was one of the first to point out that fascism shares characteristic features of futurism. He notes that

* Futurism spread across Europe, the United States, and Russia. Armenia also participated in this process, represented by the futurist group "The three" (Charents, Abov, Vshtuni) and others, among whom Kara-Darvish stands out.

** Marinetti volunteered in World War I, the Ethiopian War, and World War II, where he was wounded twice. Many Futurists were seriously wounded, and two of them – the sculptor and artist Umberto Boccioni and the architect Antonio Sant'Elia – were killed. However, this did not stop Marinetti. He attempted to translate Futurist ideas into political struggle and establish Futurism as the official art of the Fascist regime.

"the cult of speed, the attraction to strong decisions, the contempt for the masses and simultaneously the captivating appeal to them, the penchant for the hypnotic power of crowds, the exaltation of national sentiment, the antipathy toward bureaucracy – all these emotional positions passed from futurism to fascism almost completely" (Prezzolini, 2013). But he also pointed out their contrast, expressed in fascism's quest for hierarchy and order, for the past, for the spirit of Rome. Meanwhile, one of Futurism's main demands was the rejection of all traditions and the pursuit of complete freedom. Concluding that Futurist art and Italian fascism are distinct entities, he writes: "It was a misunderstanding, born solely from the circumstances of close proximity, from purely chance encounters, from the sheer confusion of various forces that led Marinetti to Mussolini's side. It worked well during the revolution, but it will be surprising under the current government" (Prezzolini, 2013). He was convinced that Italian fascism could not accept the destructive program of Futurism, and he was right. Having squeezed Futurism to its limits, the Fascist regime began to distance itself from Futurism by the late 1930's, denying it the status of "officially state-approved Italian art". One of the reasons for this was the alliance between Hitler and Mussolini.[*] Since avant-garde art was banned in the Third Reich, Futurism lost its former significance for Il Duce. But before that time, the Futurists continued to influence the formation of fascist ideology and even contributed to the rise of the fascist regime. It's important to remember that Futurism emerged as an artistic movement. Its goal was to create an art of the future, oriented toward technological progress. Choosing speed, aggression, force, and punching as their main principles, they entrusted the implementation of their plans to young people. But the goal of revolutionizing the artistic sphere soon acquired socio-political implications. Already at the outset of World War I, the Futurists established themselves as a serious political movement. They advocated Italy's entry into the war and advanced their militaristic program. One of Marinetti's main political demands was the establishment of Italian dominance over the world. All nations must submit to Italy, Marinetti asserted, burning Austrian flags. Thus, the Futurists led to the creation of the first "Political Futurist Fascia" and the "Association of Italian Arditi", with ideas that almost entirely became part of the fascist program. Mussolini did indeed utilize the Futurists' practical methods. He favored extravagant actions that attracted popular attention. It was through Futurist tactics that Mussolini initially maintained his influence among the masses, using their ideas to advance his own political career. In 1919, he founded the political party "Italian Union of Struggle", which three years later was transformed into the "National Fascist Party". Mussolini's political

[*] Let us recall that the collaboration between Hitler and Mussolini began in 1936.

program incorporated many provisions of the "Manifesto-Program of the Futurist Party of Italy", presented in 1918 (Nesterova, 2004, pp. 159-164). The Futurists also adopted the idea of combat units – "arditi" – which were transformed into paramilitary "Blackshirt" units. The Futurists' most important achievement was the creation of the "myth of the Leader". They presented Mussolini as a superman, a figure Marinetti had already described in his 1910 novel, "The Futurist – Mafarka: An African Romance". They presented him as a hero leading the people to great goals, the builder of a "beautiful" future in which technological advances played a central role. Ann Bower drew attention to this, noting that the image of the dictator is brutalized and mythologized, as evidenced by this description: "… Rising to speak, he bends forward his masterful head, like a squared-off projectile, a package full of good gunpowder, the cubic will of the state.... His will split the crowd like a swift antisubmarine boat, an exploding torpedo" (Bowler, 1991, p. 777). The term "Il Duce", which became synonymous with Mussolini, was also coined by the Futurists. "This was done by the artist Gerardo Dottori, who painted a portrait of Mussolini by the same name, in which airplanes, familiar to Futurists, circle above the fascist leader's head, forming a halo. ... Beginning in 1925, the image of the Duce became a central theme in the work of Italian Futurist artists. They depicted Mussolini as a trainer taming the Lion of Judah, as a giant helmsman standing at the helm of the Italian nation, in profile, hovering above the Colosseum", and so on ("Free Verse and More", 2021). In 1923, the manifesto "Italian Empire" was published, dedicated specifically to "Benito Mussolini, the Head of Italy". Marinetti appealed to the youth, calling for the conquest of an Italian empire destined to rule the world, pointing out that it was "in the hands of the best of Italians. He will rule without Parliament, with the help of the Technical Council of Youth". This was followed by honors for Marinetti and greetings to the Futurist Congress (November 23, 1924, Milan), at which Mussolini admitted that "without Futurism there would be no fascism" (Girin, 2010). For Marinetti, art and the state shared a common goal, and so he believed that the victory of a Futurist artist would be a victory for the entire Italian nation, for the new art would lead to a transformation of life as a whole. Art is inseparable from life, which is an endless struggle, without which there is no beauty. While glorifying violent methods, he was unable to transcend his vision of politics, which remained largely within the confines of the aesthetic, thereby undermining the alliance between Futurism and Fascism. According to Anne Bower, "that while the Futurist movement was explicitly political from its inception, the Futurist project for the creation of an art that would give form to a new social order could not in the end succeed because of the Futurists' inability to

subsume their aesthetic vision under the imperatives of a concrete political order" (Bowler, 1991, p. 777).

It has already been noted that actions that had an impact on the masses were important to the nascent fascist movement. This is precisely what attracted them most to the Futurists' work. In this context, we must recall another extraordinary figure that influenced both Marinetti himself and the rise of fascism in Italy. This figure is the poet, legendary figure, and beloved people's hero, Gabriele D'Annunzio, whose heroic life demonstrated his sincere love for his homeland and his dream of restoring its glory. Promoting Italy's entry into World War I, he volunteered for the front at the age of 52. His nationalist ambitions led him to embrace and celebrate fascism. The legendary capture of the Croatian city of Fiume by a small detachment of legionnaires and the creation on its territory of an independent "Republic of Beauty", which existed from September 1919 to December 1920, made him a man worthy of the highest honors and awards, followed by the people. He is considered one of the creators of the aesthetics and many rituals of Italian fascism. During his time as mayor, he held mass rallies, delivering fiery speeches to crowds from the balcony of his residence. He introduced the so-called "Roman salute" – a greeting with an outstretched arm – which became popular among fascists, and organized torchlight processions in black shirts. The fascists also adopted D'Annunzio's oratorical style, transforming the poet's images and slogans. Thus, the "March on Ronchi" would soon become the "March on Rome", and the famous motto "Fiume or Death" would become "Either Rome, or Death" (Sushkov, 2021, pp. 94-95).

The poet's artistic potential was demonstrated in the composition of the "Constitution of the Republic of Fiume" (or "Charta of Carnaro"), presented in verse form and an expression of his aesthetic views on the political structure of the state. The text of the "Charta" demonstrates that for D'Annunzio, aesthetics was the highest value. He extols the beauty of the surrounding world, which is essential for the education of people. Recognition of the importance of aesthetics was also expressed in the involvement of artists in the management of state affairs: the brilliant conductor Arturo Toscanini became Minister of Culture, and the anarchist poet Leon Kokhnitsky became Minister of Foreign Affairs. The highest office in the state – "Comandante", intended for a poet and thinker endowed with dictatorial powers – was naturally destined for him. Annunzio was a proponent of the "art state" ideology. His unwavering faith in his own strength and the young republic's successful future was expressed in the fact that its "state" flag bore the phrase "Who is against us?!" As Sushkov notes, "the historical myths that permeated the poet's pathos regarding the origins of the Italians and the role and place of the 'Latin race' became firmly entrenched in the cultural milieu of the 'Twenty

Years'; the spirit of leadership, of a man of universal abilities, was supported and spread through the figure of Mussolini, and D'Annunzio himself was not rejected; he became a living legend for fascism, a model of a man of 'true' feeling, a patriot who fully reflected the renewed 'Latin' spirit" (Sushkov, 2021, p. 95).

The Anti-war Pathos of Dadaism

The direct connection between politics and art becomes evident in Dadaism, one of the most radical and experimental expressions of the artistic avant-garde of the first half of the 20th century, which spread across Europe, the United States, Russia, and Japan. Unlike the Futurists, who voluntarily participated in military operations, the Dadaists were opposed to war. They were repelled by the militaristic spirit of Futurism. Of course, they called for destruction, but these calls had nothing in common with militarism. They were anarchists, striving for freedom in all things. Many of them, fleeing the horrors of war, emigrated to Switzerland, a relatively peaceful country, and all their activities were carried out in opposition to the war, which they considered senseless and absurd, and which they opposed with their anarchic art, which they identified with "Nothingness". The political orientation of Dadaism is evident in the fact that, to carry out their "artistic" or "anti-artistic" activities in Zurich, they rented a small pub and beer hall, the "Mayerai", renaming it the "Cabaret Voltaire". The name of the French enlightener Voltaire, a prominent rebellious thinker, was chosen specifically to emphasize the rebellious nature of the movement (Arzumanyan, 2022, pp. 111-132). The primary goal of Dadaism was a critique of bourgeois society and its culture. The critique stemmed from the fact that this society not only failed to prevent the brutal massacre but, in many ways, contributed to its incitement. It is not surprising that they were inspired by Nietzsche's philosophical propositions, aimed at re-evaluating and destroying the values of European culture. The anarchist ideas of Max Stirner, Franz Brupbacher, Mikhail Bakunin, and Peter Kropotkin also significantly influenced some of the movement's founders, particularly Heinrich Boell, Raoul Hausmann, and Johannes Baader (Sedelnik, 2010). The anarchic spirit inherent in Dadaism found direct expression in various manifestos, statements, declarations, etc., the purpose of which was to promote Dadaist art, created through the use of unusual, experimental techniques and methods. The texts were most often intended for public reproduction, in the form of a performance, accompanied by dancing, singing, pantomime, incoherent cries, trumpeting, drumming, and other noise effects that irritate the audience and lead to scandal, proving that Dada is "Freedom, … a weave of opposites and contradictions, … life" (Tzara, 2016, p. 70).

Dadaism cannot be approached simply by emphasizing its focus on shock value. It addresses complex aesthetic, ethical, psychological, and sociopolitical issues of the time. It represents life itself and fights for the rights of a reality formed on the basis of new ideals. As R. Huelsenbeck believes, "Dadaism (…) tears to shreds all concepts of ethics, culture, and inner life, which are merely a mask concealing a flabby body" (Gülsenbeck, 2001, p. 207).

It's worth noting that the German branch of Dadaism had a distinctly revolutionary character. In 1919, the Dada Club, founded by Huelsenbeck, was established in Berlin and included artists such as George Grosz, Otto Dix, Raoul Hausmann, and others. Some of them advocated for an art that expressed the interests of the proletariat and revolutionary forces in general. Among them was Hausmann, with his articles "Communism and Anarchy", "The Proletariat and Art", and "Individualism and Dictatorship". The authors of the manifesto "What is Dadaism and What Does It Want in Germany?" demanded "an international revolutionary unification of all creative and thinking people throughout the world based on radical communism" (Hausmann et al., 2001, p. 213). The political content of Dadaism becomes more apparent thanks to the work of artists such as Otto Dix and George Grosz, who created brilliant examples of social satire. In his caricatures, Grosz ridiculed the army, the church, and the entire state apparatus. He later wrote: "We mocked everything; nothing was sacred to us; we simply spat on everything, and that was Dada. Not mysticism, not communism, not anarchism. All these movements had their programs. We, however, were complete, absolute nihilists; our symbol was Nothingness, a vacuum, a hole" (Gross, 2010). With the Nazis' rise to power, difficult times began. Hitler needed art to strengthen the influence of his ideology.

Art of the Third Reich

"After Auschwitz, any word that could be described as sublime loses its right to exist" (Adorno, 2003, p. 328). This categorical thought by the eminent German philosopher Theodor Adorno also raises the question of how the very existence of Auschwitz and other concentration camps became possible, and what role does art play in this? With the tragedy of World War I in mind, the Dadaists responded to this question. They blamed a culture founded on faith in lofty ideals. Adorno also pointed this out, noting that culture stinks, and admiring Brecht's phrase that its palace "is built of dog shit. Years after these lines were written", the philosopher writes, "Auschwitz proved that culture had collapsed" (Adorno, 2003, p. 327).

To answer the question, "How did the Auschwitz phenomenon become possible?" requires a thorough analysis of the vast body of research examining

the socio-political situation that emerged in Germany after its defeat in World War I. We are interested in another question: how art became one of the main means for inciting nationalistic sentiments, presented in the guise of patriotism, and how its various forms were used to spread Hitler's Nazi ideology, which put forward the goal of establishing world domination of the Aryan race and eliminating any foreign influence in politics and culture. It seems contradictory that Nazism, one of the most inhumane regimes in human history, accorded such a significant role to art as something meaningful in the life of an Aryan. Some attribute this to the fact that, while possessing a certain creative talent, Hitler, who aspired to receive a professional art education but failed to achieve it, deeply considered himself an artist and carried a love of art throughout his life. This love was expressed in a very peculiar way. Just three months after he came to power, bonfires of books were lit on the streets of German cities. Soon, the visual arts were also included.

Hitler rejected any manifestation of avant-garde art, which he considered a manifestation of so-called "degenerate art". According to the established ideological cliché, the latter was considered dangerous to the Aryan race, "Jewish-Bolshevik", anti-classical, and incomprehensible to the people. Consequently, works of art were removed from museums. The "blacklist" of untrustworthy individuals included Ernst Barlach, Max Beckmann, Max Ernst, George Grosz, Otto Dix, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, Käthe Kollwitz, and others. At the opening of the "Degenerate Art" exhibition (July 19, 1937, Munich), featuring 650 works confiscated from German museums, it was noted that "These are the products of madness, degeneration, and impotence. Everything presented in the exhibition evokes anger and disgust in us" (Schumann, 2017). In total, more than 20,000 works of art by 1,400 artists and sculptors were confiscated from more than 100 museums in Germany. Artists residing in Germany at the time were banned not only from exhibiting but also from painting. The ban, which applied to all forms of art, was primarily based on nationality. Writers Franz Kafka and Stefan Zweig were banned because of their Jewish origin. But beyond nationality, political views were also taken into account. Thomas Mann, who had already won the Nobel Prize, and Erich Maria Remarque were banned for supporting liberal or socialist views.

A "revision" was also carried out in the field of music. Again, due to Jewish nationality, the music of F. Mendelssohn, G. Mahler, P. Hindemith, J. Gershwin, K. Weill, E. Korngold, A. Schoenberg, and others was banned. Schoenberg's music, in particular, was banned because of its atonality, which was met with hostility. It was noted that "atonality in music signifies degeneration and artistic Bolshevism", and that "the entire atonal trend in music contradicts the rhythm of the blood and the soul of the German nation" (Levi, 1991, p. 17). But it shouldn't be thought that the public was offered

only light music, consisting of folk or popular songs. Works by such great composers as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Bruckner, and Wagner were also performed. The role of the latter, with his interest in Germany's mythical past, deserves special mention. Hitler idolized Richard Wagner. He noted that to understand the Nazi Party, one must first understand Wagner, in whose music he saw the artistic source of his ideas about the superiority of the German race. "I recognize in Wagner my only predecessor… I regard him as a supreme prophetic figure". This confession of Hitler was recorded by Heinrich Rauschning in the book "Hitler Speaks". According to Sh. Zalampas, "Hitler saw himself as Parsifal, the savior of Aryan blood... He was to answer Wagner's call for a new Barbarossa, a spiritual reincarnation of Siegfried or Parsifal, who would save Germany" (Zalampas, 1990, p. 50). She also sees Wagner's influence in the dramatic power of his speech, noting that, striving for spectacle, he carefully honed his speech, combining "elements borrowed from the circus, grand opera, and the church such as banners, march music, repetitious slogans, communal singing, and repeated cries of 'Heil'. In looking at the type of rallies Hitler held, it is easy to see that he was a fan of the dramatic spectacle with his speeches often stirring the crowed into an emotional frenzy" (Zalampas, 1990, p. 41). Hitler knew how to manipulate people, to make them react the way he wanted. As strong as Wagner's influence was, a surge of new energy was needed, and it arrived in the form of D. Eckart, F. Tönnies, and E. Hanfstaengl. The latter convinced Hitler that the rhythms of orchestral music had a beneficial physical and psychological effect on audiences, leading to an increase in the number of orchestras, drum corps, and brass bands, bolstering the nation's spirit. Hitler believed that "the government was responsible for the security of the 'man's inner life and a nation's will to live' through the promotion of a culture which was rooted in appreciation of traditions of the past" (Zalampas, 1990, p. 66). These were distorted interpretations of ancient art traditions, pressed into service of Nazism in the neoclassical style. The latter emphasized monumentality, order, and a return to misunderstood classical ideals. It was in this style that new art was created, the criteria for its recognition being Hitler's personal artistic priorities. An important requirement was that art be accessible to the masses. Artists eager to implement this program were immediately found. Among them were the sculptors Arno Breker and Josef Thorak. Their goal was to create physically perfect, idealized figures of nude women and men in a monumental style. Artists Arthur Kampf, Konrad Hommel, and others also strove to achieve this, creating landscapes and everyday scenes alongside nudes. Characterizing this art, Klaus Fischer notes that it was "colossal, impersonal, and stereotyped. People were stripped of all individuality and became mere symbols expressing eternal truths. Looking at Nazi architecture,

art, or painting, one might get the impression that faces, shapes, and colors serve a propaganda purpose; all of this is a stylized assertion of Nazi virtues – power, strength, solidity, and Nordic beauty" (Fischer, 1997, p. 368).

The party also monitored the development of cinema, which was also dependent on the liberation of the dominant non-Aryan elements. German descent became a prerequisite for working in the film industry. Understanding that cinema was one of the most powerful means of influencing the masses, the government transferred propaganda to the screen, transforming it into a means of expressing the German spirit. Propaganda films began to be produced beginning in 1933 (such as "The Young Hitlerite Quex", "Hans Westmar – One of Many", about young people killed by communists, and others). This was followed by the anti-Semitic films "The Rothschilds" (1940) and "Jew Süss" (1940), the anti-British "Uncle Kruger" (1941), "Kolberg" (1945), and so on. However, they were outnumbered by entertainment films – comedies, operettas, family or romantic dramas – which, firstly, brought in significant profits and, secondly, distracted people from the hardships of real life. The insufficient number of propaganda films was compensated for by newsreels (like the "Deutsche Weibliche Review"), whose showing in cinemas became mandatory.

In the cinema of the Third Reich, the most significant figure was the actress and talented director Leni Riefenstahl. She achieved fame with the documentaries "Victory of Faith", dedicated to the first congress of the NSAP, which captured the grand procession with mega-banners and featuring a giant eagle with a 30-meter wingspan; the 18-minute short "Freedom Day: Our Army", which depicts the demonstration exercises of the German armed forces in 1935; and, especially, "Triumph of the Will" and "Olympia".

"Triumph of the Will" documents the 1934 Nazi Party rally in Nuremberg. Featuring speeches by Nazi leaders and mass parades, the film presents Germany as a great power. It is considered one of the most popular propaganda films in history. The film's use of crowd scenes, monumental architecture, and Nazi symbols created a powerful impression of national strength and unity. Dedicated to the XI Summer Olympic Games held in Berlin in 1936, the film "Olympia" documents the entire competition. The film utilized cutting-edge filming techniques for its time, including underwater cameras and aerial footage. It is considered revolutionary for its time in terms of camerawork and editing. The hard work of the director and cameramen paid off with a gold medal at the Venice Film Festival.

Riefenstahl also initiated a documentary about the "new Berlin", designed by Hitler's favorite architect, Reich Minister of Armaments and War Production Albert Speer. He was one of the few people granted complete freedom to implement his designs. A. Tiefentale writes, "Speer's projects are

always viewed in the context of Hitler's policies, and it would hardly occur to anyone to speak of them as self-sufficient architectural objects, alienated from the ruling ideology – they became an integral part of the condemned policies of Nazism" (Tiefentale, 2013).

His calling was to create an imperial style for the Third Reich, demonstrating its greatness and superiority over other cultures, based on recreating ancient ideals of beauty, strength and grandeur. Speer's unrealized Berlin projects are striking in their scale. Among the completed projects, the most impressive is the main grandstand of the Third Reich, built on the grounds of the Nazi Party rallies in Nuremberg – the enormous Zeppelin Grandstand, 20 meters high and 360 meters wide. It was built based on the Pergamon Altar, one of the largest pagan temples of antiquity. Of the many planned halls, palaces, temples, stadiums, and squares, only one, called the "Temple of Light", was completed. As P. Romanov noted, "Speer understood his patron's aesthetic preferences perfectly, and all his projects were overpowering in their scope and gigantomania... Essentially, it was Albert Speer who shaped and embodied the visual style of the Third Reich in all its ruthless power, oppressive grandeur, and pomp. In the 'halls' and 'palaces', squares and avenues, there was no room for the individual, no room for individuality. This was a space for the masses – a faceless crowd in the shadow of the imperial eagle's wings" (Romanov & Orlova, 2021).

So, in the Third Reich, all forms of art were used as a means of influencing the consciousness of the masses and successfully manipulating them.

Conclusion

After examining some of the problems of the interplay between art and politics, we identified some important aspects. The problem of interaction between art and politics has existed since the emergence of the first states and their rulers. With rare exceptions, art remained subordinate to politics until the 20th century. Harnessing its inherent power of aesthetic and emotional impact, art typically served to glorify rulers and states, idealizing them. Only in the 20th century did politics begin to utilize artistic ideas that resonated with it, and political figures began to employ particular artistic styles in their speeches. A reverse process of art's influence on politics began, manifested in its aestheticization. This process was significantly influenced by many avant-garde artistic movements (Futurism, Dadaism, Expressionism, and others), which, along with aesthetics, also revealed political content. As for the politicization of art, this process becomes decisive when art ceases to act as something self-valuable and self-sufficient and, ignoring the artistic and aesthetic goal, concentrates on solving a political problem that is different to

its essence. More often than not, the propaganda of a particular ideology takes center stage. It's no coincidence that autocratic and totalitarian states witness a process of unequivocal politicization of art, the goal of which is to demonstrate the superiority of a particular ideology. In contrast, since the 20th century, art in democratic countries has attempted to function relatively independently of politics, which in our time of conflict is becoming increasingly difficult, since the work of any genuine artist becomes an expression of his civic position.

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