Dialogical Strategy in V. V. Mayakovsky’s Poetry of the 1920s

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Abstract

Objectives: The article aims at understanding dialogical strategies in Mayakovsky’s poetry of the Soviet period in comparison with those developed in pre-revolutionary creativity due to the change of his ideological and esthetic paradigm.

Methods: Methodologically the study relies on the researches of a phenomenon of the Russian poetry dialogism in general and the Silver age in particular exemplified by works of Broytman, Grekhnev, Levin, Kikhney, Fedoseyeva, etc., the articles and the theses devoted to studying of V. V. Mayakovsky’s literary, genetic and biographic connections, genre features of his lyrics, his esthetic concept and dialogical tactics.

Findings: In late Mayakovsky’s works, the addressee’s axiology sharply changed in connection with declaration of the positive purpose of the art urged to serve “the cause of revolution”. Utilitarian propaganda tasks step forward. The new self-awareness of Mayakovsky was formed. On the one hand, the poet did not stop being a prophet, a fighter giving orders. But on the other hand, he became the private of the revolution, its subordinate follower destined to unconditionally carry out the will of the party, ready to smother his own voice. Mayakovsky gradually understood inadmissibility of a complete separation with traditions of the Russian classical literature. In this connection, he created “his evolutionary ladder” on which the literary authorities of the past were placed. In communicative and poetological discourse of the late 1920s, Mayakovsky offered three ways of communication, addressing to some poets of the past, to contemporary poets and to the future generations. Genetically bound with futurism, after the October revolution Mayakovsky significantly changed the character of poetological addressing. Novelty: Mayakovsky contributed constructive and dithyramb features caused by pathos of the “future society” construction on the communistic beginnings into a lyrical communication in addition to previously available invective trends.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Communication, Lyrics, Lyrical Dialogue, Poetics, Silver Age of the Russian Poetry, Tradition, V. V. Mayakovsky

1. Introduction

The main communicative strategies are, as a rule, classified according to the aims; they have in this or that discourse that, in particular, was written by N. E. Tropkina¹. It is determined in the works of premodern years that the main objective of artistic communication in V. Mayakovsky’s pre-revolutionary creative works “as well as other significant poets, for example, M. Tsvetaeva” is an explication of the conflict of the new world and old one, of a poet and a crowd. Hence, there is the disclosure of different kinds of mismatches in addressee and mass addressee positions²,³.

After the October revolution V. Mayakovsky’s art of declamation begins to work in a slightly different communicative aspect: addressee strives not to maximally cloister himself from addressee, to oppose himself and to exclude from a dialogue, but on the contrary, to manipulate him. The image of a poet-teacher appears within this manipulative communicative strategy. Though the Mayakovsky’s lyrical hero hasn’t overcome the lyrical monologism, he nevertheless aspires to the dialogue with other poets.

If in pre-revolutionary creativity Mayakovsky
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perceived other poets “except for futurists” as representatives of obsolete art, the revolution considerably changed the addressee’s image in his works. Now the poet has to get on the inside, i.e. to make a certain contribution to achievement of the declared ideal in new social and political space. In 1917 within the work of the Union of artists V. Mayakovsky declared the necessity “to welcome the new authority” and “to contact with it”. This position leads V. Mayakovsky to completely different communicative strategies: staying true to the keynotes of futurism in general. He consistently moves from negative poetics to positive one, seeks to create a new art – proletarian one. This way eventually leads to almost complete disassociation with futurism, however as well as with any “narrow guild” poetic communities. “Tribune” of the revolution recognizes only one art – the communist one, the rest is brought to “a common denominator”.

In fair opinion of N. L. Leyderman, Vladimir Mayakovsky’s creativity became the slogan of practical activity. It is the slogan form of the presentation of poetic material that helps V. Mayakovsky to capture a semantic space of the statement completely, to force the recipient to accept thereby unconditionally propagated ideology. V. Pertsov notices, “Characterizing the features of the lyrics generated by the October revolution reality, Mayakovsk said it “slogan”, “urging forward the revolutionary practice”. Its advantages were estimated in this case by effectiveness of a verse. Hence, the poet’s addiction to a genre of “march” where the word that is directly turned to a huge audience is urged to tell a charge of purposeful energy.

One more new feature of the Mayakovsky’s post-revolutionary addressed lyrics is readiness for self-sacrifice for the sake of the highest revolutionary ideals. Hence, there are various destructive motives anyhow connected with a human corporality. However now it is not a sign of disharmonic world perception, and, on the contrary, aspiration to gain a foothold in a new status, in a new vital space. For example, in the poem “Don’t your shoulder bones itch?” there is an idea of a mechanical reorganization of a human body which also correlates with an idea of creation of new society, Nietzschean idea of a new person, a man-god.

Besides, V. Mayakovsky actively propagandizes an image of the poet prophet, considerably reinterpreting a classical formula. Now the poet is not just the mediator between God and people, but the prophet of a future life. In “The order on art army”, he appeals to his creative adherents: “Only that communist is genuine, who has burned bridges to retreat. It is enough to walk, futurists, jump into the future!”.

The idea of the new life achievement, the communist future can be realized only through destruction and death of old, including, “the former person”. This idea can be affiliated with motive and image complexes that correspond to eschatology. At that, the post October V. Mayakovsky’s eschatology, unlike his early apocalyptic literature, is not affiliated with personal individual experience. Now it expresses collective world perception in many respects. Sharing the common poetic writing with other masters of the word, the poet aims to unite life, art, poetry and revolution. And here already in other communicative foreshortening V. Mayakovsky develops vanguard pragmatics: he fills abstract mythic and poetic forms with concrete socio-political content now.

2. Results

Awaring himself as the first founder of new poetry, V. Mayakovsky aims to be heard by each reader “listener”, in particular by the beginning proletarian poet. This aspiration within the communicative strategies aimed to strange art thinking is realized in two options. First, in active use of the poetic order genre, second, in elaboration and development of an idea of the word as a factory craft. Let us consider these options in details.

The lyrical hero of V. Mayakovsky approaches understanding of art from militaristic positions. In many poetic texts V. Mayakovsky’s main form of communication is the military order which is perceived as a new genre form: “Comrades, give new art–such as, to drag out the republic from dirt”. Here it is obvious that V. Mayakovsky aims to make poetry a fighting tool, a military tribune on which it is possible to make up dialogue with other poets. Feeling like a warrior of a new art, modern times and a new state, V. Mayakovsky by means of poetic appeals constantly addresses to fellow writers, thereby, figuratively speaking forms his own “poetic army”.

On the other hand, Mayakovsky’s hero appears to be the adherent of the new art, the owner of a new type of thinking. For this reason within propaganda communicative strategies he completely obeys any orders working for a common goal. It is revolution in V. Mayakovsky’s art consciousness that completely levels the side between individual and collective, helps to overcome existen-
tial solitude that we meet in pre-revolutionary period'. Therefore, late V. Mayakovsky can be compared with a worker.

Mayakovsky consistently develops a subject matter of poetry-factory, poetry-production. In the context of this idea he creates in the poem “Poet Worker” the new art according to some grandiose plan: “I am a factory too. And if without pipes, that, maybe, for me it is more difficult without pipes”7. Considerably expanding his communicative strategies, V. Mayakovsky aims to appeal to the mass recipient, and not only to poets. In this dialogue the poet casts himself as a role model. If in early lyrics V. Mayakovsky, constantly praising his individual self, aimed to oppose the verses to creations of other poets, then now he becomes an allegory of a new poetic craft, a master who needs to train others. For example, V. Mayakovsky understands revolution as an especially private matter, calling others for it “My revolution”.

In his post-revolutionary creativity V. Mayakovsky does not refuse futuristic pragmatics. On the contrary, having received other semantic filling, it is understood from a point of view of the public importance now, i.e. art has to not just model life, but also constantly actively interfere with it. For this reason the art creativity for V. Mayakovsky is understood much more widely now. The fiction should not be limited only by verbal forms in which there is an esthetic category in the forefront, it has to include also publicistic writing, advertising, propaganda and some other texts. Hence the abovementioned poet’s roles: a poet-builder, a worker, a commander-in-chief, an engineer, etc.

The form of poetic nihilism, self-expression through a protest, scandalous behavior attracted young V. Mayakovsky more. Now there is another task in front of the poet – to explain to an artist how it is necessary to create. Here, as we can see, we face two defining features of his post-revolutionary communicative strategy. First, for V. Mayakovsky’s lyrical hero the art and the state are one whole. The poet completely levels a side between art creativity and the life. Now the poetry is not just a way of creation of a new format of life, but also the guarantor of its further existence and development: “Hey, worker, Russia is yours! Revive and use”7. Paradoxically, but V. Mayakovsky practically refuses poetry in its traditional understanding, suggesting to completely Listen! Steam trains are groaning, it blows in cracks and in the floor: “Give coal from the Don! Engine fitters, mechanics to a depot!”7. Thus, for V. Mayakovsky the true art is possible only when it is of a practical advantage for the country. Hence, the second feature of his communicative strategy follows: in his poetic recitations V. Mayakovsky constantly imitates alive oral speech, filling it with the maximum expression. The poetic language in his messages is rather simple and in many respects gravitates to publicistic style. Notice that the denoted V. Mayakovsky’s publicistic manner in many respects is defined by the general pragmatical foreshortening of his poetry.

The traditional literary message of the poet turns to the mass manifesto. Hence the principal openness of dialogical forms of V. Mayakovsky’s poetry: each reader “listener” is an addressee of the poet, besides, for the lyrical hero of V. Mayakovsky an active position of a recipient is the main objective of his speech communications. Notice that situation of this kind was peculiar also to early Mayakovsky’s poetry. However now it is not just reaction, shock and rejection that important for him, but it is approval and response working according to the scheme: word – action: “Be brave. Be able. Be always ready to be the first to rush in the first flash”7. The most proper reaction of the recipient is to go ahead with a common matter.

Personal addresses are framed in a form of anthems of songs, odes, etc., thereby the poet again emphasizes an addressing to the mass recipient. Now all his creativity is penetrated with pathos of collective creativity. A. Subbotin calls such attitude a choral polyphony. “Marching monologues, – the researcher specifies, – are intended for a mass pronunciation, from the first person plural “we” of the people, unanimous in the main objective to make the life better, finer, more fair”7. In the context of addressing Mayakovsky even his personal affairs makes a property of everyone. He refracts intimate matter through public. So, appealing to the beloved “in “The Letter to Tatyana Yakovleva” the poet declares, “Whether in a kiss of hands, or lips, in a shiver of a body of my loved ones red color of my republics also has to burn”7.

### 3. Discussion

All addressees of post-revolutionary Mayakovsky can be united into two groups of interests: the generalized recipient (for example, proletarian poets) and concrete (Pushkin). In the first case, it is about the mass addressee, the representative of this or that class, profession, and way of life. Mayakovsky addresses the typified correspondent, focusing his attention on his social function.
Let us address to the poem “Message to Proletarian Poets”. Already in the first lines V. Mayakovsky’s hero calls himself the senior companion “clever and sensitive”. Here we see the hero’s readiness for a dialogue with poets- adherents. At the very beginning, the author addresses to the Soviet poets popular at that time: to Alexander Bezymensky, Mikhail Svetlov and Iosif Utkin. The fact of the real reason that has induced V. Mayakovsky to write this “message” is known: A. Bezymensky published “The ode for modesty” in the “Komsomolskaya Pravda” newspaper in which he reproached Mayakovsky for excessive attention to his image. The latter on pages of the same “Komsomolskaya Pravda” not just enters into polemics with the fellow on poetic “shop”, but also recites the poetic manifesto of the new art with his answer. In terms of M.Yu. Lotman, he aims to come into contact with other poets, appealing to the general ideological code and a solidarity of objectives of an addressant and addressees, “There is / a huge work / in front of us – / to every person/ the necessary poem writing. / Let’s work / to the seventh sweat / on a quantity raising, / on quality improvement”.

In his aspiration to generalize, to teach a new poetic craft V. Mayakovsky comes to refusal of strict polarization of a lyrical hero and a recipient as it was in the pre-revolutionary period of creativity. Generalizations of this kind are easily read at the linguistic level: the pronoun “we” is actively used in the text, thereby the author lays emphasis on the immersiveness to other poets. Notice that change of V. Mayakovsky's communicative strategy is also observed at a genre level. The analyzed “Message to Proletarian Poets” breaks traditional form and content of the classical message, which is, as a rule, presented in the form of intimate dialogue between two people. V. Mayakovsky makes a form of his dialogue the most open. There is a dialogue in the presence of the third in front of us: the reader (listener) becomes a kind of a witness of poetic debate, and all addresses and appeals in this case have slogan character.

The idea of creation of the general poetic commune appears in “Message to Proletarian Poets”. V. Mayakovsky partly adopts this idea from the colleagues – Cubo-Futurists (in particular, from V. Khlebnikov), but fills it with absolutely other contents. A creative community of poets has to work not only for the benefit of new art creation, but first of all of the new state of social justice. For this reason after the revolution V. Mayakovsky gradually departs from romantic individualism, replacing it with a collective communicative model. Now the poet is an embodiment, an allegory of other poets, his poetic consciousness is public property.

When Mayakovsky addresses to the particular person, he puts the reader in a position of a detached onlooker at a lyrical dialogue. Here the poet to some extent carries on traditions of the classical message, but also at the same time considerably reinterprets them. He skillfully transforms the intimate lyrical dialogue to a duel between two poets. He gets into dispute with literary tradition in his revolutionism manner though rebellious pre-revolutionary notes are already considerably muffled. V. Mayakovsky watches deeply into himself now, tries to imprint personal bygones artistically. Hence, all dialogue forms are a peculiar attempt to realize the role in literary and political life. In particular, in “The letter of the writer Vladimir Vladimirovich Mayakovsky to the writer Alexey Maksimovich Gorky” the addressant though makes a reservation that he “neither kibitzes with morals, nor tries to be a rescuer”, nevertheless allows a number of instructive and polemic attacks. In particular, Mayakovsky complains: “I am so sorry, comrade Gorky, / that no one sees / you / in a construction of our days. / Do you think – / from Capri, / from a hill / you see it better?”. The letter concerns also poetological questions, in particular, quality and subjects of the modern art. Gorky is accused of his excessive omnivorous, of the fact that he is ready to give “wholesale praises” to everyone randomly. At the same time Mayakovsky speaks about high authority and experience of the addressee, resorting to ambivalent technique of “reproach-praise” which is urged to set the companion who has lost the right way.

“Anniversary” stands apart among V. Mayakovsky’s lyrical addressings. Here a radical turn in creative attitude of the revolution singer to domestic literary sources is carried out. He is no longer going “to dump classics from the steamship of modernity”, and calls himself the successor to a tradition of the great predecessors. In the address to A. S. Pushkin V. Mayakovsky places an emphasis on the necessity of a “lifetime” dialogue with the great classic and political life. In particular, in “The letter of the writer Vladimir Vladimirovich Mayakovsky to the writer Alexey Maksimovich Gorky” the addressant though makes a reservation that he “neither kibitzes with morals, nor tries to be a rescuer”, nevertheless allows a number of instructive and polemic attacks. In particular, Mayakovsky complains: “I am so sorry, comrade Gorky, / that no one sees / you / in a construction of our days. / Do you think – / from Capri, / from a hill / you see it better?”. The letter concerns also poetological questions, in particular, quality and subjects of the modern art. Gorky is accused of his excessive omnivorous, of the fact that he is ready to give “wholesale praises” to everyone randomly. At the same time Mayakovsky speaks about high authority and experience of the addressee, resorting to ambivalent technique of “reproach-praise” which is urged to set the companion who has lost the right way.

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an equal one, as a contemporary, as a companion in literary work. That is why at the stylistic and syntactic levels the dialogue as much as possible approaches a situation of real communication, "Alexander Sergeyevich, / let me introduce myself. / Mayakovskya. / Give me your hand! / There is the chest. / Listen, / it's not a beating any more, but groan ...". Thus, it is a lyrical message rather than a poetic talk.15

A. S. Subbotin, referring to Z. S. Paperny's research "Mayakovskya poetic image", speaks about an ontologic basis of V. Mayakovskya's lyrical talks-addresses; cf.: "It is a poet's conversation with life, a familiar conversation ("The comrade life...")"12. Constantly imitating an alive speech, a real conversation, V. Mayakovskya aims to remove any sort of temporary oppositions. He makes A. S. Pushkin's image alive, relieves it of "axiomatic glamour". V. Musatov notices, "Without feeling like a successor of Pushkin's tradition, he (Mayakovskya) correlated himself to "living" Pushkin functionally, but not successively"16. The great poet is truly important for him only here and now. The classic for V. Mayakovskya is already not just a sign of traditional literature, of outdated axiomatic forms, he is the poet of the modernity. And here, as it seems to us, it is necessary to argue with habitual treatments of "Anniversary" which comes to perception of this poem as a poetic declaration of V. Mayakovskya's love and respect for classical heritage. Connecting two different semiotics models, V. Mayakovskya completely removes temporary opposition. A real life becomes a value orientation point for the poet: "I hate / all kind of carrion! / I adore / all kinds of life!" Pushkin is "a good poet", a poet is a figure ("an expert in life") for V. Mayakovskya. "Putting himself near Pushkin, lighting this row with an easy ironical smile (speaking about himself after all), Mayakovskya thereby removes nihilistic pathos of former statements about classical author"17.

On the other hand, A. S. Pushkin's image in this poem provokes V. Mayakovskya to a poetic confession. The poet as if reports to the classic on a current state of literature. Thus, there is a unique dialogue, which is an attempt of self-comprehension, a dialogue with himself in front of us. The lyrical hero and his great predecessor, in fact, are inseparably linked. Pushkin's image here is an incentive to address to himself, to imprint poetically individual, personal, endured. V. Alfonsov calls "Anniversary" a confession-report, a conversation with destiny and about destiny: "Both of them <Pushkin and Mayakovskya> are of one destiny. A joke and an irony recede when this motive suddenly breaks on a dramatic nature limit."18

The division of poets into worthy and mocked and blamed is remarkable in "Anniversary". The former ones (among classics) are not only Pushkin, but also "protorevolutionary" Nekrasov, Mayakovskya and "Aseev Kol'ka" adjoin them. The whole gallery of authors more or less famous at that time led by "a balalaika player" Yesenin belongs to the latter ones.

It is Yesenin to whom the poem, which has become one of program ones in the context of the addressed Mayakovskya's lyrics, will be devoted. This concerns the poem "To Sergey Yesenin", a poetic response to Yesenin's death. Important poetological theses were announced in the poem. The genre of this work can be defined as the epitaph though possessing a number of uncharacteristic features. By the way, from the epitaphic tendencies Mayakovskya tried to keep separate in "Anniversary" in every possible way. Here a response to recent death of "the last poet of the village" is proclaimed. Mayakovskya has tragic and elegiac notes: "No, Yesenin, / it's not a sneer. / In the throat / there is a grief lump – / not a snicker ..."17.

Yesenin was an old opponent of Mayakovskya with whom they started "poetic duels" more than once including on a variety stage. The death of "the last poet of the village" helps Mayakovskya to see Yesenin not as a representative of "a peasant gang" but as a big poet with tragic destiny. Though the esthetic positions of the two poets are still different, the critical charge in relation to the former rival is considerably lowered. There is not a single word about Yesenin in the second part of the poem. Mayakovskya switches to a subject actual for himself. It is the fight against narrow-mindedness. After series of blows to petty-bourgeoisie "rubbish", the poet finishes the poem with his own vital credo in which Yesenin's "mortal" lines are modified: "In this life / to die / isn't difficult. / To make the life / is much more difficult"17.

The descendants also belong to the type of interlocutors who are at a historical distance with Mayakovskya. This peculiar type of "a providential interlocutor" and an image of "far communism" in general appears at the poet repeatedly. In particular, in the introduction to the poem "At the top of the voice" Mayakovskya addresses to "dear comrades descendants" to tell "about time and about himself". He begins his story with poetological issues, which were already solved in the previous addressed verses, in particular, of epitaph character. In principle this work can
be to some extent called an epitaph – Mayakovsky’s voice sounds as if from the death. Looking at modern to him literature, the singer of revolution points to the special role for art of the future. He opposes himself to “Yesenin’s songlike pro-hero”, as well as to the gallery of other poets-contemporaries (to K. Mitreykin, A. Kudreyko, I. Selvinsky) to whom it is indicated directly or implicitly. The introduction of the poem ends with a large-scale metaphor. Mayakovsky compares his verses to an army which “will break through a bulk of years”, and hurries life, aspiring to the happy future – to “socialism built in fights”.

As we see, a number of new features appear in Mayakovsky’s creativity after the October revolution. These features demonstrate essential changes at the level of poetics. Therefore, there is an expansion of addressees’ types: the concrete personified messages appear (for example, to Yesenin, Pushkin, and Gorky). The genre structure of addressings increases because of the expansion of types of the lyrical interlocutor. Homiletic messages and letters appear. These letters messages are caused by both aspiration to set the hesitating correspondent on a “devoutly faithful communistic” way (the letter to Gorky), and the desire to discuss the major poetological questions in “a circle of friends” (“The message to proletarian poets”). Notably, messages to colleagues are a convenient platform to state the poetological bases of the new art. It is right here where the accent shift from negative poetics (“away with your art”) to positive one is formed. It shifts to ideas about functions, tasks, forms, etc. of the art creativity serving a new social and political formation what was thought the communism to be.

The addressee’s axiology sharply changes, since the positive purpose of art is to serve the cause of revolution. The poet’s activity finds its own meaning in the service. Therefore, propaganda tasks are exposed to the forefront in addresses. Appeals are aimed on consolidation of all forces and the art directions. That is why the areal of addressees is sharply expanded. Since this is the time of military communism, a genre form of “the order in army” arises. Poets are equated with warriors. This is explicated in specific metaphorics, for example, the pen is identified with a bayonet, etc.

Thus, the most important of poetry functions is utilitarian one. Mayakovsky also aims to influence the events in the world by means of poetry alike theurgic objectives to transform reality. However, here transformation has to be not spiritual and mystical (the poet doesn’t accept “chat-tering like spiritism”), but revolutionary one. The poetry becomes production, work (“extraction of radium”) to increase of economic power of the Soviet state, as well as an active fight against everything ideologically alien. In this sense Mayakovsky’s words do not disperse with acts. He actively participates in the statement of a new system (work in Windows of ROSTA).

Due to these utilitarian tasks Mayakovsky’s new feeling which is quite often declared in the poetological addressings is formed. On the one hand, the poet does not stop being the prophet, only peculiar one – understood “in a communistic way”, his creativity is also an “advanced front line”. He remains a fighter giving orders (“in the army of art”), the pacer, leading the way to new socialist achievements. Eikhenbaum wrote about it, “History has set the task of huge importance and difficulty for Mayakovsky. He had to change not only poetry, but also the idea of it and of the poet that, perhaps, was even more difficult”.

However, on the other hand, the poet, according to Mayakovsky, becomes a private of the revolution, its subordinate urged to unconditionally carry out the will of the party and the Soviet power. Such position is accompanied with stoical acceptance of any fate, even death if it is required for the highest (i.e. revolutionary) aims. Therefore, Mayakovsky’s hero is ready “to smother his own voice”, even intimate subjects refracting through a revolutionary prism, constantly coordinating personal matters with the fight for the sake of the public benefit.

Late Mayakovsky has a change of a communicative paradigm again. The quiet and reasoned promotion of socialist values and necessity to uphold it with literature comes to the place of front propaganda in the form of the order. Therefore, such genres as “letter”, classical “message” and “conversation” come to replace the march and the order.

In course of time Mayakovsky understands that the complete separation with the previous traditions, mainly, remote at some historical distance, does not allow the Soviet art to recognize itself as the top of the literary and historical process. Probably, being conformed to consecutive change of historical formations (up to desired communism) within Marxist-Leninist philosophy, Mayakovsky begins to build his “evolutionary ladder” on which literary authorities of the past are placed. Ignoration of “proterevolutionaries” (such as, for example, Nekrasov) gave spontaneity to literary and communistic ideas. And it had to concern stage pro-
cesses, logical conclusion of history, including literary which in communism found the highest point. Thus, late Mayakovsky for the best legitimation of his own esthetic ideas uses the mode of adaptation, sometimes “violent” embedding, of authorities of the past, such as Pushkin, into his own esthetic paradigm. Similar adaptation was peculiar also to some symbolists. However, they used creativity of contemporaries, but not predecessors as material for transformation.

4. Conclusions

Appellatives to the poets of the past in the genre relation led to an emergence of the epitaph tendencies at Mayakovsky’s works. Besides, an actuality attitude, an instant response to recent events, orientation to “the social order” in poetry led to the fact that the addresses to the passed away contemporaries fell within the sphere of epitaph messages. These addresses in Mayakovsky’s works have both panegyrical (“To comrade Nette, to the steamship and the person”), and instructive and polemic character (“To Sergey Yesenin”). Thus, epitaphs quite often become latently or explicitly polemic, with cynical overtones in Mayakovsky’s works unlike symbolists and acmeists. Moreover, tragic can be expressed in the lowered lexis (“you were able to use strong language”), with the use of travesty elements. However, that does not destroy the general pathos of such addresses. Mayakovsky skillfully teeters on the brink of lowered and elevated style, due to ambivalent lyrical intonations. This balance gives considerable credibility to the conversation with the dead, and reduces a distance between himself and addressee.

Mature Mayakovsky does not completely refuse the negative messages in the manner of early futurism. These messages are aimed both against internal enemies (the “rubbish” which is still not cleaned from the Soviet society) and against external enemies – “the bourgeois”, and representatives of “bourgeois” art.

In late communicative and poetological discourse Mayakovsky develops three vectors of communication. The first of them is the address to some poets of the past as to forerunners and “co-workers” on the poetic front. The second vector is the address to the poets of the present. It is aimed to solve three tasks. The first task is the response to the vital issues of the modernity, rough poetic work as a “nightman and water carrier”. The second task is the consolidation of proletarian literary forces, discussion of the major poetological questions, correction of positions in the manner of “leading and directing”. The third task is the address to strange or fluctuating people who have chosen an incorrect way. At last, the third vector is the address to the future generations. Due to the started construction of “new society”, tendency to communism and expectation of the birth of “the new person” new verses appear. The verses with addressees in the future are created. These addressees can be called providential interlocutors (“At the top of the voice”). As a rule, they are the descendants who have overcome everything negative and bourgeois that “builders of communism” contemporary to Mayakovsky should fight. People of the future are allocated with supernatural abilities (for example, ability to raise the dead) and are carriers of an absolute “moral imperative”.

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