

Politically-Technological Potential of Cultural Practices in Ukrainian Perspective

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The article is devoted to the consideration of historical dynamics of the organization's means of cultural practices in Ukraine, in their power and politically-technological perspective, taking into account their optic modes. The difference between classical culture industry and global culture industry is formulated by British researcher Scott Lash is basis of our analysis. It is also taking into account his distinguishing a high culture model of Enlightenment in contrast to a cultural industry. Everyone has its own specificity in the constructing of cultural practices within the organizational dominance of social institutions. In describing the features of each historical form of cultural practices, an attempt has been made to outline their specificity in the Ukrainian cultural space.

Each historical type of cultural practices organization (high culture, the classical culture industry, global industry of culture) has its own ways of involving in political technology, its mediators, and the modes of vision. The early Modern form of the material culture production was balanced by the normativity of social institutions and their disciplinary practices. The discursive practices of Modern provided the status of a high culture and its model of power-over. Its textual mode of vision served the cultural practices of the implementation of the national state. The classical culture industry on the basis of commodification ensures the penetration of the principle of identity in the sphere of cultural practices. Vision mode of the spectacle is the basis of the visual culture in the stage of its industrialization. The global culture industry carries out immanent power such as working from within. There is a global mediation of things. De-differentiation of the principles of reflexivity and spectacle creates a new mode of vision as the transparency of the Internet-space. Classification of ways of cultural practices organization is intended to clarify the situation in contemporary Ukrainian culture.

Key Words: cultural practice, politically-technology, Ukraine, high culture, classical culture industry, global culture industry, optic mode

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Introduction

The long time of Ukraine's involvement in the European tradition with its religion dominating in the sphere of spiritual culture has led to the general cultural appearance of Christian values, which are still a common background for many Ukrainians. Although the technologies of the global culture industry have strongly pushed the culture control by conscious internalization, which had been found in Christianity, is still remains a powerful potential in formation of cultural identity in Ukraine.

Situation of High Culture

The formation of a national state in the secularization conditions required a new way of culture organization and management of social processes. Such a model was formed in the circumstances of the early Modern era, where identity was the basic principle of the modern material culture: "Goods as commodities are all alike. They are distinguishable only by the quantities of money for which they exchange... Commodities only have value in the way they resemble every other commodity" [Lash, 2007: 6]. Material practices of industrial society does not require personal compelling and correlate with interactions of individuals through the system of exchange of the abstract equivalence. The subject in these circumstances is not constituted by the imitation of the previous tradition, but by the passing through the social institutes of the Modern. Enlightenment modification of modern culture has constructed a number of social institutions, including institutions of medicine, law and primary education to control the micro-processes of everyday life. The university has become the highest achievement of the technology of European cultural management as a space for the formation of democracy and civil society. Higher education was not only a "social lift" (in the bourdieusian formulation), the presence of which within itself reduces the conflict potential of society, but also the management technology of the national society, where it took place "to influence the people by certain teachings" [Kant, 2002] (in formulation of Immanuel Kant). The University as a social institution and the space of discourse (in what is the "heroic way" and the tasks of the philosophical faculty) was a main mediator of cultural practices during the era of national state domination. The University, beside and through the autonomous spheres of the spiritual culture of Modern, acted as a mediator of a high culture model. The latter through the sophisticated technique of consciousness self-control, becomes a "prison" for the human body in Foucauldian description.

Visual practices of the text not only serve as "cultural roots" [Anderson, 1991: 9] and a condition for the formation of an "imaginary community" (expect tomb emblem of Unknown Soldiers) [<http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/anderson.htmgf>], but actively working in the formation of such a values set of person as a citizen: consistency, systematicity, linearity, self-esteem and even supremacy.

Being in the space of freedom and the origin of regulative ideas, a high culture adjusts its participants to appropriate habits which carry out the function of disciplinary practices at the level of their routine, High culture as well as complements disciplinary practices by sophisticated content, formulated in discursive practices. "It carries out normalizing functions of domination" [Lash & Lury, 2007: 57], noticed Scott Lash.

Ukraine, which had begun its way of construction of higher education institution since 17th century, has its own collision of formation. The cultural tradition has led to the theological dominance of discursive practices and imperial control over the organization of education until

the years of Ukrainian independence. However, the presence of such a socio-cultural institute as higher education would not make an impact on the organization specifics of domestic cultural practices.

Classic Culture Industry

The gradual penetration of commercialization from the sphere of material production into culture reconfigures its original organizational intentions. This was considered by the founders of critical theory as an extreme negative tendency, noticed by Scott Lash:

A previously autonomous or relatively autonomous sphere now itself came under the industrial principle. This meant that culture, once a space of freedom, came under the principle of instrumental rationality, became instrumental in the hands of Hollywood and the emergent monopoly concentration of capital in publishing, recording and advertising. It meant that culture, previously a source of edification, the *Bildung* of human potential, turned into a machinery of control, whose main goal was the expenditure of resources in the interests of the financial profitability of corporate oligopolies. Culture took on the same principle of accumulation already widespread in the capitalist economy. Now the logic of the factory colonized the dream factories of the culture industry. Now culture, previously associated with the development of human subjectivity, became objective like any other commodity. The implication for Horkheimer and Adorno was that culture, previously a site for critique and a place of non-identity, became subsumed under capitalism's logic of identity. In this identity-logic, the heterogeneity — the grain of the artwork is reduced to identical units of utility; the qualitative, internal values of things are reduced to identical units of exchange-value and quantities of money. Industrialized culture, for Horkheimer and Adorno, is homogenized culture. In homogenized culture, one unit is like every other. One unit, in its nature as commodity and instrumentality, is identical to any other. This was the principle of identity that Horkheimer and Adorno deplored. It was the principle against which critique was to be launched [Lash, 2007: 2-3].

The prevalence of the classical culture industry in the contemporary Ukrainian space is represented by the domination of TV media and the corresponding organization type of cultural practices. Television does not implies answers and communications, as representatives of post-structuralism have argued. Therefore, by simulating and the immediacy of communication, TV in certain way is “the end of social.” In particular, this is manifested in the appearance of “intellectual crowd” [Bourdieu, 1998: 46] “intellectual stock market” [Bourdieu, 1998: 57], and even “anti-intellectualism” [Bourdieu, 1998: 58], as Pierre Bourdieu pointed out. The rigid frameworks for debates and discussions that have established radio and television (the lack of consistency, limitation and fragmentation of the presentation of the subject logic, the background frame of the TV and radio broadcasting) undermine the “heroic way” of discursive practices as they had been carried out at the university. Thus, television as a cultural practice of the classical culture industry represents a de-differentiation of technology and cultural form. Famously influential figure in the field of TV studies Raymond Williams wrote: “Analysis of a distribution of interest or categories in a broadcasting programme, while in its own terms significant, is necessarily abstract and static. In all developed broadcasting systems the

characteristic organisation, and therefore the characteristic experience, is one of sequence or flow. This phenomenon, of planned flow, is then perhaps the defining characteristic of broadcasting, simultaneously as a technology and as a cultural form” [Williams, 2003: 86]. In the dimension of the political-technology TV turns into a follow of some mantras, the contradictions of which is not obvious to the “The Unhappy Consciousness” [Hegel, 2001]. Uncritical thinking in the Ukrainian situation shows a regional spread, which, unfortunately, represents a split position. Concerns about these issues are reported of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine for 2017 [Report, 2017].

The attention drawing of the viewership on the surface of the television screen is carried out by the optic mode of the spectacle, which organizes not only the general flow of television programs, but also the whole of political material, according to its own logic. The spectacle mode corresponds to the intensification of the significant dynamics and to the reduction of the event’s semantics. It correlates with the logic of the policy’s transformation in the show and bureaucratization of management functions. Thus, the disciplinary practice of controlling through consciousness, which conformed to the rational argumentation set of high culture, was superseded by techniques (not only and not primarily political) of manipulating consciousness in organizing the “Mass Ornament” [Kracauer, 1995: 1]. And the emphasis of technology (especially political technology) is a symptom of the fact that the idea of self-organization of civil society remains as unattainable as the Perpetual Peace.

The optic mode of the classical culture industry is based on the visual practices of the spectacle, with their entertainment, fragmentary, background, every day, multilinearity. TV spectacle is so tempting to the certain audience in Ukraine, which makes it all the obsession of long-term advertisements.

Global Culture Industry

The audience gradually reorients to the Internet space in “a shift in power from the hegemonic mode of ‘power over’ to an intensive notion of power from within (including domination from within) and power as generative force” [Lash & Lury, 2007: 56]. So many researchers assume Trump’s luck with his more successful political-technology in social networks. In Ukraine, the priority of the Internet is characteristic for certain age groups, ranging from middle-aged people. Their livelihoods in organizational way do not allow them to be tied to the schedule of television programs. That is why the future of the audience with free work schedules is more connected with the Internet environment, which is based on the logic of the global cultural industry. The latter is characterized by Scott Lash as follows:

In Horkheimer and Adorno’s culture industry, mediation was predominantly through representation. In global culture industry, we have the mediation of things. Horkheimer and Adorno’s culture was commodified. But these were commodified representations and not cultural things. Mediation by representation is quite other to the mediation of things. The object of art is different from an object like a hammer in that we engage with the former primarily in terms of meaning, while the latter is a matter of doing or ‘operationality’. Painting and sculpture are media or mediums, as writers like Rosalind Krauss (1999) insist. They are media before the age of the mass media of communications. But they are media only insofar as their value is primarily cultural: only insofar as their value has to do with meaning. When media become things,

however, they no longer exclusively have cultural value. They come very importantly to have use-value and exchange-value [Lash, 2007: 7-8].

Global industries of culture get used to cultural practices of branding, informatization, events through the logic of media things. Internet technologies of the contemporary political system cannot be pretended through the monopoly of television channels in the process of consciousness manipulation (in the Soviet past of Ukraine, this state monopoly was total). Therefore, the choice of browsing mode is not so limited and even so censored as for the viewership. Even the national control frameworks are not very productive here. As recent Ukrainian experience shows.

It is also worth noting that the wider format choice of Internet products varies over time parameters. You can choose not only the speaker, the style arguments and the topic, but also the genre of cultural products, as well as the duration of the arguments being explained from the short message and the sarcastic phrase to a rather long and even pedantic statement of a certain issue. And while entertainment in the organization of Internet communication also plays an important role, it is only one of dimensions of “policy poetry,” “thinking aesthetics,” “event architectonics” and many other indicators that really allow the use of Internet-technology to the mean of organization in global culture industry as the Scott Lash classified.

The technical easiness of stopping an Internet broadcast and rewinding a video allows you to repeat your favorite and obscure places, and allows you to delve into the essence of the matter. All of these mentioned points give optimism to Scott Lash’s expectations as for the specific type of reflexivity, which is not equaled, with the high standards of discursive and disciplinary practices of university, but so far exceeds the emotional and imbalance of the spectacle society.

It is not less important for our analysis of the differences between cultural practices and the ability to respond to Internet practices. Contemporary cultural studies distinguish between two types of involvement in the multimedia environment of the Internet. The first one is formulated by Renira Rampazzo Gambarato in concept of Transmedia Storytelling [Gambarato, 2016] as interaction. In this case, human activity on the Internet resembles the possibilities of TV, and only quantitatively exceeds it. The motion of a mouse click on a computer resembles the interaction of a man’s hand with a TV remote, but the multiplatformity of the Internet networks exceeds so far the possibilities of TV multimedia, not only in number of elements of the structure, but also in a high degree of freedom of their organization.

The second possibility of an answer in the Internet environment is classified in Media Studies as a participation. It is not only the ability to click and watch something, but also to intervene, to take part and to leave albeit a virtual contribution: beginning from the like, commentary, posting of someone’s material on its own page in social networks to the publication of your own a video on the same topic or even organization of event off-line. The de-differentiation of consumption and production in the cultural practices of the global cultural industry has just begun. According to Scott Lash:

There is such a thingification of media when, for example, movies become computer games; when brands become brand environments, taking over airport terminal space and restructuring department stores, road billboards and city centres; when cartoon characters become collectibles and costumes; when music is played in lifts, part of a mobile soundscape. Media objects in everyday life come to rival manufactured objects.

We deal with media as representations — painting, sculpture, poetry, the novel — in terms of meaning. When media become things, we enter a world of operability, a world not of interpretation but of navigation. We do not ‘read’ them so much as ‘do’ them (‘just Do It’), or do with them. This was already incipiently the case with the ‘mass media’, newspapers, radio and television. Their ubiquity, and the fact that they were not confined to a separate space, as was art, the museum, cinema or indeed the university, meant that they were already encountered as things. They were much more ready-to-hand already than are mediums such as painting or sculpture. What was incipient with the emergence of mass media has become the axial principle of global culture industry. In global culture industry, what were previously media become things. But also, what were things become media [Lash, 2007: 8].

Therefore, the specifics of political-technologies as an Internet cultural practice are, on our opinion, de-differentiation of reflectivity and spectacle, production and consumption, cultivating new types of experiences other than “pleasure of the text” and of spectacle. “Images and other cultural forms from the superstructure collapse into the materiality of the infrastructure. The image, previously separated in the superstructure, is thingified, it becomes matter-image” [Lash, 2007: 7]. Contemporary Ukrainians are taking possession of all these possibilities very quickly.

Conclusions

It should be said that the presence of the following technological models of medium and their corresponding political-technologies does not deny the existence of previous types of cultural practices nowadays. Despite all demolishing all of the philosophical disciplines studying, the according practice of nation creation has not completely been destroyed in contemporary Ukraine. Television as the popular cultural practice of spectacle society has even prevailed in some age and regional viewships. Internet-practices in the logic of global culture industries conquer and strengthen their positions on the markets of ideas and spectacles. Cuz “Domination in the global communications order is, many argue, through notdiscipline but control” [Lash & Lury, 2007: 67].

This analysis is just an attempt to outline the possibilities of the organization of political technology out of the point of post-hegemonic Cultural Study. After all, it allows to trace not only the ideological content of the cultural product (on which it has always been focused as the interest of critical theories), but the way of organizing its cultural practice, optic mode of perception, coordinating the emotional trajectory of consequences.

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