



The Mental Image of The City in Turkish Painting of The Metamodernism Era

Metamodernizm Dönemi Türk Resminde Şehrin Zihinsel İmgesi

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ABSTRACT

In our time, special requirements are put forward for the creation of urban space. These requirements reflect the transformation processes of the city, which is a complex socio-cultural object included in the system of global connections. The design of urban space emerges as the primary reflection of the city and embodies an understanding of the city's structure, functional use and aesthetic form. In H. Lefebvre terminology, space is created according to these concepts. The works of the artists, for whom the city has become an object of interest, take on a secondary reflection task. The reality of the modern city calls for the expression of its definition to be sought. This quest is clearly reflected in the works of Turkish artist Nuri Kuzucan. Nuri Kuzucan's works from the two first decades of the 21st century, provide very clear data on how the ways of speaking about the city have changed. The artist's work on form in many respects repeats the search for artists of the last century. Kuzucan's creativity has three periods. Each of them corresponds to a new concept of the city at the beginning of the 21st century. In this article, it is aimed to examine the languages which are used to describe the urban culture in the beginning of the 20th century. The aim of the study, in which an interdisciplinary approach is used, is to examine the works of the contemporary Turkish artist, Nuri Kuzucan, which show the transformation process of urban culture in the paradigm of metamodernism. The methodological basis of the article is the semiotic analysis of the visual object.

Keywords: Metamodernism, Aesthetics, Urban Culture, Urban Space, Nuri Kuzucan

ÖZ

Günümüzde kentsel mekânın yaratılması için söz konusu olan özel gereksinimler, küresel bağlantılar sistemine dâhil edilen karmaşık bir sosyo-kültürel obje olan şehrin dönüşüm süreçlerini yansıtır. Kentsel mekânın dizaynı, kentin birincil yansımaları olarak ortaya çıkar ve şehrin yapısına, işlevsel kullanımına ve estetik biçimine ilişkin anlayışı somutlaştırır. H. Lefebvre terminolojisinde mekân, bu kavramlara göre oluşturulur. Şehir, artık sanatçıların ilgi odağı haline gelir. Bu sanatçıların oluşturdukları tabloları çağdaş dönem şehir algısını yaratır. Modern şehrin gerçekliği, tanımını yapacak ifade biçimlerinin aranması ihtiyacını doğurur. Bu arayış ise Türk sanatçı Nuri Kuzucan'ın eserlerinde belirgin bir şekilde yansıtılır.

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Nuri Kuzucan'ın XXI. yüzyılın ilk çeyreğindeki eserleri, sanatçıların ve araştırmacıların şehre dair söylem şekillerinin nasıl değiştiğine dair son derece açık veriler sunar. Sanatçının biçim üzerindeki çalışması, birçok açıdan geçen yüzyılın sanatçılarının arayışlarını tekrarlar niteliktedir. Kuzucan'ın eserleri, oluşturulma zamanına göre üç gruba ayrılabilir. Her biri, XXI. yüzyılın başındaki yeni şehir konseptine karşılık gelir. Bu makalede, XXI. yüzyıl başlarındaki kentsel kültürü tanımlamak için kullanılan biçimsel dillerin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Disiplinler arası yaklaşımın kullanıldığı çalışmanın hedefi, çağdaş Türk sanatçısı olan Nuri Kuzucan'ın metamodernizm paradigmasında kentsel kültürün dönüşüm sürecini gösteren eserlerini incelemektir. Makalenin metodolojik temelinde ise görsel nesne olarak şehir algısının semiyotik analizi yer almaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Metamodernizm, Estetik, Kentsel Kültür, Kentsel Mekan, Nuri Kuzucan

Introduction

The chronological scope of this study is the 2000s and 2010s. This is due to the emergence of social, technological and aesthetic changes that led to the formation of a new paradigm of urban culture. The purpose of this article is to analyze the languages of description and explanation of urban culture at the beginning of the 21st century. As the object of the study, the works of the modern artist Nuri Kuzucan were selected, by the example of which the process of transformation of the perception of the city as an anthropogenic environment and the manifestation of new forms of describing reality, which were born in the transition to the culture of metamodernism, will be demonstrated. This culture is not secondary to the previous period. It is shaped by new social needs and technologies for creating art objects. Along with this, new requirements are being put forward for the production of urban space, which in turn reflect the processes of transformation of the city as a complex socio-cultural object involved in the system of global connections. The methodological basis of the research is the semiotic analysis of the visual object, applied within the framework of the theory of spatial production by Henri Lefebvre.¹ This choice allows us not only to reveal the social aspects of changes in our understanding of the urban environment, but also to see how aesthetic preferences form the material structure of urban space and social communities. The study uses an interdisciplinary approach, which allows us to consider the object of study as a result of a complex of complex socio-cultural processes of the formation of the metamodernism paradigm.

The city is changing under the influence of three critical components of globalization: the movement of capital, labor, and goods and services. In the structure of the city's population, a significant proportion of people has appeared who perceive any city as a temporary habitat which should combine the uniqueness of the place and the standard high level of urban comfort. Cities, as centers of economic life, are increasingly meeting the requirements of the development of the creative industry. Since the 1990s, Sharon Zukin has drawn attention to this in "The Cultures of Cities" (1996), Boris Groys "On the New. The Experience of Cultural Economics" (1991), Charles Landry "The Creative City. A Toolkit for Urban Innovators" (2000) and Richard Florida "Cities and the Creative Class" (2005). Over time, these trends have only intensified. At the most superficial level of the city's economic life, this is evident in the development of the housing rental market, exhibition and museum complexes, the restaurant business, etc.

In economic terms, the rental and service market is focused on consumers belonging to the upper middle class and lower premium class segments. It is this layer of the city's inhabitants that belongs to the creative class. The growing number of consumers in this group makes us pay attention to their aesthetic preferences. This is reflected in the processes of aestheticization of everyday life, everyday environment, and gentrification of urban space.

1 Lefebvre, Henri. *Производство пространства*. Москва: Streike Press, 2015.

The complexity of working with this segment of consumers lies in the specifics of their aesthetic needs. This group, due to its level of education and type of activity, has a prepared aesthetic perception and is sensitive to the semantic nuances of visual objects. In the terminology of Gernot Bohme, it can be described as a “well-bred aesthetic subject.” Actually, it is in this environment that the main aesthetic trends are formed, which over time become a marker of the era.

The period of the first two decades of the 21st century is perceived by us as the time of the formation of a new style of the era. The search for new forms of aesthetic expression, rethinking and critical attitude to the postmodern paradigm is obvious. In the emerging paradigm of culture, the pluralism of aesthetic approaches and forms of implementing ideas is preserved, but new types of aesthetic activity, technologies for working with space and organizing everyday practices are becoming more and more apparent.

One of the main features of postmodernism is the multi-layered reality and the simultaneous presence of heterogeneous socio-cultural elements in the everyday environment. The “invention of the everyday”, celebrated by Michel de Certeau², opened up a world of coexistence of differences, multiple identities as well as locality. In urban practice, more and more attention is paid to the balance of authenticity and globality. The beginning of our century was characterized by the development of technology for creating the authenticity of urban areas and the city as a whole. Attention should be paid to the term “creation”, since it is not about preservation, conservation, museumification, but about the creation of authenticity. These trends were noted back in the mid-1990s by Richard Sennett and Sharon Zukin. In this direction, a specific visual narrative of the city space is being developed. This is the production of a kind of urban atmosphere, conditions for experiencing the environment. At the same time, naturalness, historicity, modernity - all these become elements of the technology for creating the entourage of urban space. The processes described by Henri Lefebvre as the production of space³ are gradually emerging. In turn, the production of urban space is inseparable from the creation of conditions for its perception. Infrastructure, architectural objects, and functioning of territories are subject to the concept of perception of the city.⁴ At the same time, the economic rationality of the urban space becomes dependent on the emotional atmosphere, feelings and experiences that are caused by the visual image of the neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Along with this, a certain stereotype of the urbanistic way of life, everyday practices emerges, which are set off by the background presence of the aesthetic embodiment of the city.

The design of the urban space acts as the primary reflection of the city, the embodied understanding of its structure, organization, functional use and aesthetic form. The space is built, and, in the terminology of H. Lefebvre, is made in accordance with these ideas. The

2 Certeau, Michel de. *Изобретение повседневности*. St. Petersburg: Из-во Европейского ун-та в Санкт-Петербурге, 2013.

3 Lefebvre, *Производство пространства*.

4 Artemenko, Andrii ve Artemenko, Yaroslava. “Mental Image of the City”. *Humanities Bulletin*. 1/1 (2018): 82-90.

works of artists act as a secondary reflection, where the city becomes an object of attention. From the point of view of traditional art criticism analysis, the problem of classification of genres and techniques of such works is felt here. Most often, this is a combination of many techniques, with the help of which the most vivid perception of the captured image is achieved. The purpose of this work is to convey the atmosphere, emotional impact, creating conditions for the aesthetic experience of urban space. In fact, urban painting conceptualizes the image of the city and prepares the process of aestheticization of the urban environment.

What is Happening with the City at the Beginning of the XXI century, and How Nuri Kuzucan's Works Express It?

A retrospective of the works of the Turkish artist Nuri Kuzucan makes it possible, on the one hand, to assess the development of the painter's technique as a transformation of the language of describing the city, and on the other hand, to analyze the changes in the perception of the city as an object of experience.

The works of Nuri Kuzucan of the first two decades of the 21st century give an extremely clear idea of how the manner of depicting the city is changing. The author's work on the style is noticeable in them, which in many respects repeats the searches of the artists of the last century. This is not about copying techniques, but about a deep rethinking of the forms of representation of modernity. Of course, the art of our days appears on the soil of postmodern culture with its statements about the impossibility of anything fundamentally new, understanding the process of creating a work as a citation and recombination of techniques and images of the past. R. van den Acker gives an example of architecture, where "we have to talk about collections of styles and how these styles or methods can create a new style of architecture."⁵ The only thing that changes in this concept today is that the postmodern itself becomes the past, and its techniques are involved in the creative process as material for citation. The culture of the beginning of the century is in the space "between" and in a state of metaxis (transition), which T. Vermeulen and R. van den Acker write about as a sign of a new era.⁶ This period is of extraordinary interest for research, since a complex mechanism of selection of techniques, manner of storytelling, understanding of the images of the modern world is manifested. The work of Nuri Kuzucan demonstrates the process of the artist creating an adequate language of speaking about the changed object of the narrative. The reality of a modern city needs a search for expressive forms of its description. This search is reflected in the evolution of Nuri Kuzucan's works.

His works evoke many associations with various art movements of the twentieth century, but these paintings do not look secondary to their predecessors. This is a fairly independent,

5 Van den Acker, Robin. *Интервью в Москве*. <http://metamodernizm.ru/robin-van-den-akker-interview-in-moscow/>, 2020, 15.11.2021.

6 Vermeulen, Timotheus ve Van den Acker, Robin. *Заметки о метамодернизме*. <http://metamodernizm.ru/notes-onmetamodernizm/>, 2010, 15.11.2021.

original evolution of the author, which reflects the complexity of the situation in contemporary art. We see the formation of the author's style, which absorbed the traditions of 20th century art, but at the same time found forms of aesthetic expression acceptable for the culture of metamodernism. If we systematize the works of Nuri Kuzucan, then they can be conditionally divided into three groups according to the principle of transformation of the object of the image and the technique of painting. Each group of works testifies to a certain stage in the artist's work.

The first group includes works presented at personal exhibitions of the early 2000s "Open Space" (2004) and "Traffic" (2006). The second group includes the works of the exhibitions "Are You Happy?" (2008), Plan (2010), Interior-Exterior (2011). The third group of works was presented at the exhibitions "Blissful Defect" (2016) and "Name" (2018)

The modern city became the main "character" of all Nuri Kuzucan's works. Moreover, each of the three stages quite clearly conveys the special atmosphere of the urban space. The form of depicting the city reveals those structures of perception on which the mental image of a modern city is based. Step by step, Nuri Kuzucan's works not only create the atmosphere of the city, but also demonstrate changes in the techniques and methods of creating it.



Pic. 1: Nuri Kuzucan. "Purple Window" (2004)



Pic. 2: Nuri Kuzucan "Gray Window" (2004)



Pic. 3: Robert Delaunay Windows (2nd Simultaneous Motif, 1st Part) (1912) oil on canvas 55×46. Solomon Guggenheim Museum

In the works of the first period, the urban landscape is fragmented, and turns into a layering of reflections overlapping each other. The perspective disappears, or rather, is replaced by the play of reflections, as it is presented in the paintings “Purple Window” (Pic. 1) and “Gray Window” (Pic. 2). The image looks more like the parallax of multilevel lines, resulting from the layering of reflective and transparent surfaces. Subjects are indistinguishable and turn into colored blur spots. The impression of an illusory space is created. These works evoke a number of associations with the works of twentieth century painters, in particular with a series of works by Robert Delaunay “Windows” (Pic. 3), where the artist experiments with highlights and reflections that form a kind of color puzzle⁷. However, Nuri Kuzucan works in the art paradigm of the early XXI and achieves a slightly different, but very important effect, for example, in the painting “Purple Window”: the emanation of purple as the properties of a window. This is a kind of paraphrase of Gernot Bohme’s blue cup flowing into the world.⁸ The blue color of the cup can be seen as the way it is present in space and makes its presence felt. Likewise, the purpleness of the window becomes a way to sense the object and its surroundings. This is, according to Gernot Bohme, the task of general aesthetics, “to give a word and make transparent this broad field of aesthetic reality.”⁹ Nuri Kuzucan literally makes this field of aesthetic reality transparent.

Nuri Kuzucan’s works from this period simultaneously resemble paintings of two completely different directions of painting of the 1960-70s - photorealism and the figurative movement of the Bay Area. With the former he is related to work with reflections in the cityscape, for example, with the works of Richard Estes¹⁰ “Horn and Hardart Automat” (Pic. 4) or “Central savings” (Pic. 5). Nuri Kuzucan’s works “Office” (Pic. 6), “Fastfood-2” (Pic. 7) play with the glare and reflections of glass surfaces, these transparent boundaries of the city, which at the same time fragment it, but do not allow it to disintegrate, since their transparency allows the integrity of the space to be maintained. Unlike photorealism, these paintings do not focus on the clarity of rendering layered images, but break up into groups of multi-colored spots, due to which the author leads the viewer to abstraction. This also happens in the works presented at the “Traffic” exhibition, where color spots are concentrated in the outlines of the flow of cars or the interior of a car, which cause the experience of a situation of waiting, returning, and fatigue. These are works that capture the existential state of a person in the dense space of a city.

7 Delaunay Robert, Delaunay Sonia. *The New Art of Color*. New York Viking Press, 1978

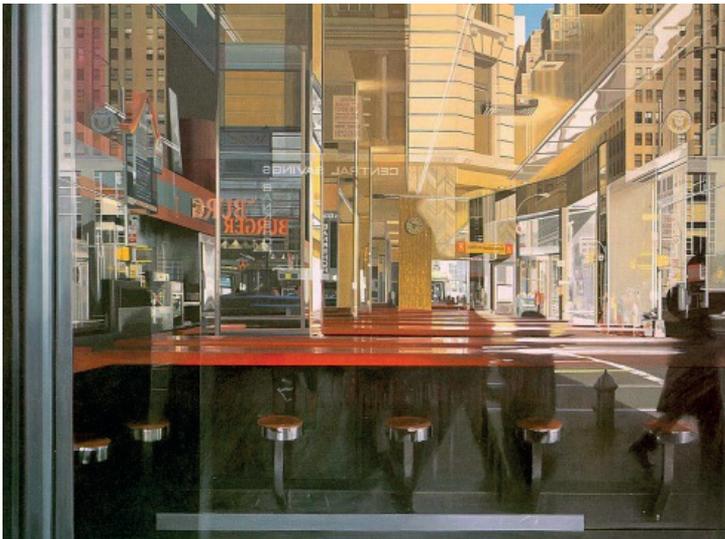
8 Böhme, Gernot. “Атмосфера как фундаментальное понятие новой эстетики”. Пер. с нем. Дэвид Робертс, на рус. Стас Онасенко. Онлайн-журнал <http://metamodernizm.ru/atmosphere-and-a-new-aesthetics/>, 2018, 15.11.2021.

9 Böhme, “Атмосфера как фундаментальное понятие новой эстетики”.

10 Wilmerding, John Richard Estes . New York: Rizzoli, 2006



Pic. 4: Richard Estes, Horn and Hardart Automat, 1967. Oil on Masonite, 48 x 60 in. Private collection. Photo by Luc Demers



Pic. 5: Richard Estes 'Central Savings' (1975), Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri 91,44x121,92



Pic. 6: Nuri Kuzucan "Office" (2008)



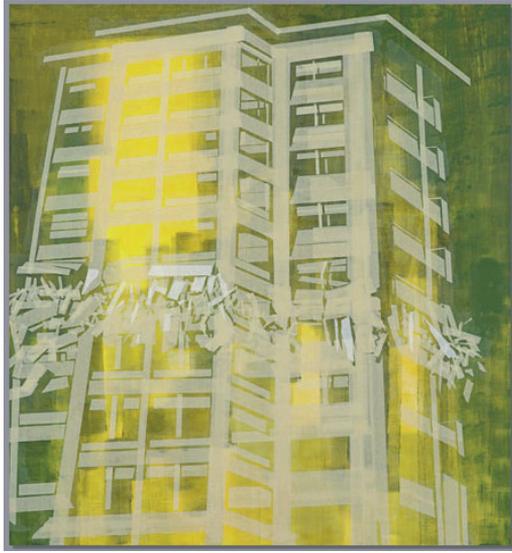
Pic. 7: Nuri Kuzucan "Fastfood-2" (2008)

In the works of 2004-2008, the city retains many human “speaking” objects. The absence of a person is made up for by the things left behind: clothes in the wardrobe, a bicycle, an old chair ... The possibility of a person’s existence is, as it were, indicated by these things, the space is inhabited, but it exists by itself. Things exude the atmosphere of a city without a person. Nuri Kuzucan very subtly visualizes object-centricity: you need to look out for it in the depths of glare surfaces. The artist, in his own way, reveals the anthropogenic city of the city in these details, which make the viewer see the world of the human presence. At one time, Rene Magritte in his work “A man reads a newspaper” presented the world of a room without a man. Space has physical self-sufficiency, but it acquires meaning through a connection with a person.

From the usual street landscape “Across” (Pic. 8) with a deserted night street to the emotionally tense “Neighbor” (Pic. 9) with a torn floor of a high-rise building - there is no person here, but there is a human space with sadness and fatigue, openness and constraint. The work of Nuri Kuzucan “The Corner” (Pic. 10) is an embodied experience of the compressed space of the city. Everything here is made out of fragments that do not require clarification. The viewer literally squeezes into the space of the city. A desire to move further in order to change the angle appears, but this cannot be done. It’s like you’re hitting the wall of the house. The narrow strip of the picture literally physically makes you experience the closedness of the city space, where the light panel of the car burns like a bright spot against the background of a blurred urban landscape. These works make the space of the city live, create an atmosphere of its perception, but at the same time the city has no specific reference. This is a city in general, the same global city that comes along with the new century.



Pic. 8: Nuri Kuzucan “Across” (2004)



Pic. 9: Nuri Kuzucan “Neighbor” (2008)



Pic. 10: Nuri Kuzucan “The Corner” (2006)

In the works of the second period, the artist's painting "language" changes. Previously, the painter conveyed the density of the urban environment with the help of recognizable outlines of objects, cars, buildings, which are folded into bizarre graphic objects. But starting with the exhibition "Are you happy?" (2008), the theme of the city is revealed in the images of the outlines of buildings and plans of city blocks. So in the work "Kabir Sehir" (Mausoleum City) the city seems to grow out of some tectonic structures. This emphasis on the movement from deep foundations to the architectonics of urban space has become a common way for many contemporary artists to talk about the city. For example, in Ali Alishir's work "Virtual Places No. 16" (2011), the city grows out of the sea and the ruins of the coastal *yalı*. Undoubtedly, this can be perceived as an echo of the epochal problems of the search for identity, preservation of authenticity, adaptation to socio-cultural transformations. In fact, in the system of existential philosophy, it was defined as "rooting". This coincides in time with the discussions of urbanists on the issue of the authenticity of urban space. But it is quite possible that in the works of Nuri Kuzucan we are faced with another equally important aspect of the perception of the city. This movement is similar to what Peter Zumthor described in *Notes on Architecture*: "For a moment, I felt that our project eluded us and became independent, because it grew into an eternity of material that obeys its own laws."¹¹ Nuri Kuzucan emphasizes this feature of the perception of the city as a hallmark of the new century. At the 2008 exhibition, he presented two paintings: "20th century" and "21st century". In the first work, the city moves from the depths of the painting into the free space of the foreground. It is the power that orders emptiness. In the second, the city swallowed up the entire space of the painting. It appears as a continuation of the rhythmic chaos of the foreground lines. A similar composition is repeated in the works "Red City", "Mars".

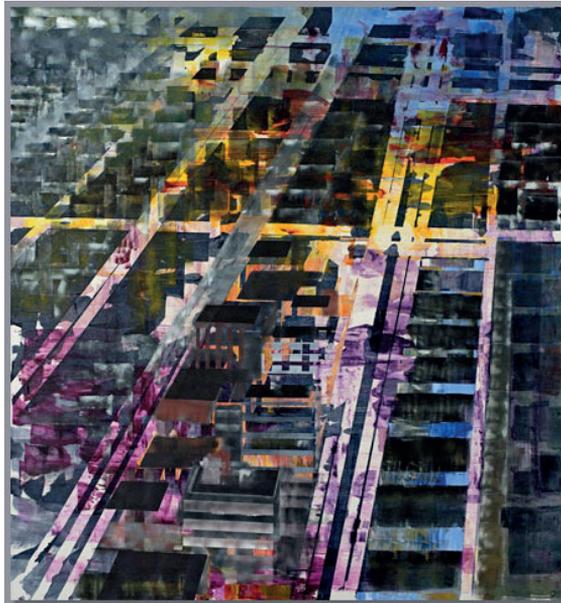
With the *Figurative Movement Of The Bay Area*, namely with paintings by Richard Diebenkorn (especially the *Ocean Park* series) by Nuri Kuzucan, colors and compositional features are connected, as well as the idea of a city perspective from a height, when the configuration of neighborhoods turns into a system of geometrically arranged color spots. While Richard Diebenkorn was inspired by the view from an airplane, then Nuri Kuzucan was probably inspired by Google Maps. The landscape painter Diebenkorn sees in this perspective an opportunity to work with a plane, and Kuzucan sees an opportunity to work with volume. The shadows of the houses turn a flat map into a three-dimensional image. At the same time, the grid of quarters in the paintings of the Turkish artist is moving more and more towards a graphic object, just as Diebenkorn's "City Landscape No. 1" (Pic. 11) was transformed into a composition of colored rectangles of his later works of the "Ocean Park" series. But if for Richard Diebenkorn the *Ocean Park* series was a return to abstraction, then Nuri Kuzucan's works of the second period still resemble drawings from nature. In addition, the 2011 *Interior-Exterior* exhibition ironically combined the traditional urban landscape with the title *Nature* and the work *New Nature*, which repeats one of

11 Zumthor, Peter. "Размышляя об архитектуре". *ЭКА.ру интернет-журнал*, 2009. http://www.ec-a.ru/index.php?mn=razdel&mns=wzp6g59pplxu7_ru, 15.11.2021.

the fragments of a Google map. Thus, the author makes his attitude to this technical innovation clear, just as a new perspective of the city's appearance.



Pic. 11: Richard Diebenkorn "City Landscape No. 1" (1967)



Pic. 12: Nuri Kuzucan "West" (2008)



Pic. 13: Nuri Kuzucan “Exotic East” (2011)

The peculiar “Google-landscapes” of Nuri Kuzucan make it possible to mark the special features of the city of the East and West. The rhythm of the quarters, which the author associates with the “West” (Pic. 12), and the failure of the rhythm of the planning turns into “Exotic East” (Pic. 13). This opposition of the rhythm and arrhythmia of the eastern and western cities is repeated as a refrain in several paintings of the 2011 exhibition, flowing into the opposition of internal and external, i.e. interior and exterior. We are faced with a drawing of an imaginary city, even if it looks like a satellite map. As in the paintings of the previous period of Nuri Kuzucan’s creativity, the views of city streets were formed from the colored spots, so the image of the city appears from the rectangles of the quarters. At the same time, the lattice of the facade turns into a lattice of quarters and we see an unexpected discovery made by the works of the 2011 exhibition: the views of a modern city from the side and from above repeat each other - this is a combination of rectangles, rhythmic regularity of lines, creating depth, perspective, volume. This is reminiscent of the new suprematic discovery of the human nature of the city. We find the very square that Kazimir Malevich considered an unnatural geometric figure¹², and it becomes the basis of the city’s nature, discovered by Nuri Kuzucan. The author proves that it is possible to achieve the experience of the city by repeating its spatial structure. This paved the way for a further transformation of his work in the next period.

12 Malevich, Kazimir От кубизма и футуризма к супрематизму. Черный квадрат. Москва. Азбука, 2001. С.26

The image of the city created by Nuri Kuzucan gets its own reality. And this reveals the peculiarity of what Jurgen Habermas called “post-metaphysical thinking.” It requires an accentuated relationship to the real world, then a clarification of the relationship between reality and fantasy, and this process ends with the creation of a relationship to the constructed reality¹³ It is in this vein that we can understand the works of Nuri Kuzucan, presented at the 2018 exhibition “Name”.

The artist moves to graphic abstraction and this is accompanied by the expression of the artist’s emotional experience, recorded in the work Further-3 (Pic. 14). The repetitive plot of the quarter lattice is rather rough and temperamentally shaded. Thematically related works of past years are repeated in the form of pure graphic compositions. The New Residential Area (Pic. 15) and Flaneur (Pic. 16) will transform into Black And White Shapes (Pic. 17) and 124 Square (Pic. 18) in 2018. More and more often the author resorts to monochrome images, repeating the path of cardinal changes repeatedly demonstrated by the artists of the twentieth century. But working in the paradigm of the culture of the new century, Nuri Kuzucan achieves an amazing result. In fact, the didactic scheme of the New Aesthetics proposed by Gernot Bohme is triggered when the artist receives a trained viewer who perceives his work as the development of an urban landscape transforming into an abstract graphic drawing. The image of the city is guessed exactly the same as New York in the grids of Piet Mondrian. In this clarification of the relationship of reality to fantasy inherent in post-metaphysical thinking, universal structures of speaking about the city as an anthropogenic space are revealed.



Pic. 14: Nuri Kuzucan “Further 3” (2018)

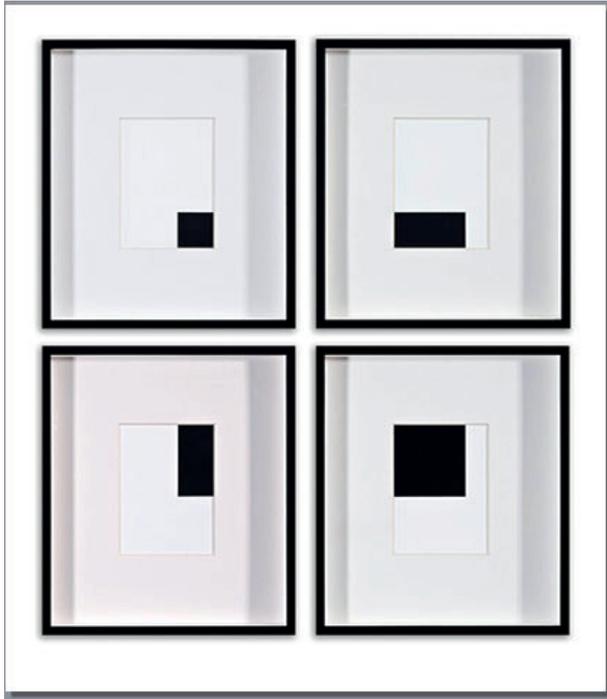
13 Habermas, Jürgen. *Постметафізичне мислення*. Київ: Дух і Літера, 2011, 198-216.



Pic. 15: Nuri Kuzucan New Residential Area: JW 14812 (2011)



Pic. 16: Nuri Kuzucan "Flaneur" (2011)



Pic. 17: Nuri Kuzucan Black And White Shapes (2018)



Pic. 18: Nuri Kuzucan "124 Square" (2018)

In fact, Nuri Kuzucan created his own semantic model and language of the story about the city. There is no person in his works, but at first we came across “speaking things” denoting his presence. Then they disappear. Glare and reflections dissolve objects, expressing the relationship of reality to fantasy. The atmosphere of the city is born, which is verbalized in strange combinations of color spots that evoke associations with experience and emotions. The author continues to improve the language of describing the city, resorting to symbols of space organization in the form of a quarter lattice, highlighted by the shadows of buildings, building facades lined with elements of assembly structures. That is why, when the works “Incomplete Squares” and “Open Perspective” appear, the viewer has no doubt that the painter is depicting the anthropogenic world with its dynamics and rhythm or consciously admitted arrhythmia. These paintings evoke associations with the view from the window of a high-rise building. Incomplete Squares resembles the concrete structure of a house under construction. “Open Perspective”(Pic. 19) is a view of an office building as a symbol of visible and hidden structures of urban space. The building dissolves into space, since the facade is not a supporting structure, but a pulsating membrane separating the outside and the inside. At the same time, attention is drawn to the change in perspective. This is not a view from an airplane or a satellite map, but rather a view from the window of a multi-storey building onto the street.



Pic. 19: Nuri Kuzucan “Open Perspective” (2018)



Pic. 20: Nuri Kuzucan “Geomatic City” (2018)

The attitude to the constructed reality is expressed in the work “Geomatic City” (Pic. 20) a mesmerizing density of urban spatial structures, evoking, on the one hand, a feeling of compressed space, since the viewer’s gaze rests against the corner formed by rectangles in the center of the picture. On the other hand, lines diverging from the center create a feeling of expanding space. The city occupies the entire space. The world has been transformed into an anthropogenic space.

In his works presented at the 2018 exhibition, Nuri Kuzucan solves the problem of describing the perception of architectural spaces, which is so important for modern urban aesthetics. He acts in the spirit of the Gernot Bome’s New Aesthetics principles, adopted by the supporters of the concept of metamodernity. The artist confirms that the perception of urban space depends on its representation through geometric shapes, color sequence, distances. But the main thing is that this representation reflects the order of life and feelings inherent in the city.

In representing the spatiality of the city, Nuri Kuzucan approached the type that, from Gernot Bohme’s point of view, is of the greatest importance for aesthetic discourse: to create a certain atmosphere, that is, the mood of the space.”¹⁴ It is through this that the results of interaction between man and the world are revealed.

The City of Nuri Kuzucan’s Paintings as a Reflection of Urban Trends

The beginning of the 21st century marked the transition to a new urbanistic paradigm, the return of the “human scale” architecture and the comfort of everyday life, which is associated with the authenticity of the urban environment. The first place was taken by the aesthetic and emotional factors of perception of the city, which determine the comfort of everyday life. Urban

14 Böhme, “Атмосфера как фундаментальное понятие новой эстетики”.

culture is presented as a sphere where material objects act as a key mechanism for visualizing everyday practices.¹⁵ At the same time, visual practices are understood as a kind of non-traditional and traditional socio-cultural practices in the urban environment. And all this was fully reflected in the works of Nuri Kuzucan in the early 2000s. Painting the city in different artistic styles underlines the transition to a new perception of the city. This is a search for an adequate language for describing the experience of being present in the modern urban space.

The works of this period are focused on the idea of spatiality presented as corporeality. It draws our attention to the presence of a person - the main condition for the emergence of meaningful relations between objects. At the same time, the artist makes it clear that the reflection has its own reality, it does not repeat the reflected object, but adapts it to the individual perception. The works of the early 2000's focus on the problem of living space, the situation of the environment, and form the narrative of the place as the co-presence of the perceiving and perceived realities. Remnants of figurativeness emphasize the bodily perception of urban space. The city is filled with human-made objects that have supplanted nature. Its occupant is constantly involved in the space of the city, even outside the walls of his apartment, where huge windows let the street inside the rooms.

In the works of Nuri Kuzucan, one should note the fundamentally important changes in the attitude towards the city, which is characteristic of the emerging metamodernism paradigm - the city becomes spatial, not historical, personal, and not collective. The individualized society described by Zygmunt Bauman at the same time received a beautiful visualized image in the works of Nuri Kuzucan.

As a result, we meet a subtle reflection of the city's experiences in the early 2000s, associated with the fragmentation of social reality, the individualization of perception, the birth of a "cut anchor culture" characteristic of the formation of a global city. Nuri Kuzucan perfectly portrayed the represented city, which moves with the person. It is attached to personal experience, corporeality and spatiality, but not historicity. We see the mental form of a city, a certain city, which will be the same everywhere, like "my own city".

The works of the second period indirectly reflected a shift in the concept of urban space. Developing the concept of metamodernism, T. Vermeulen and R. van den Acker draw attention to a special type of objects with which contemporary art works - objects with zero historical value-¹⁶ their meaning is spatial, not historical, realization. Nuri Kuzucan creates a "Google-landscape" of city blocks. At the same time, he finds the difference between the cities of the East and the West in the structure and configuration of the quarters, which are embodied in the saturation of the lines of streets and the outlines of houses. There is not a single reference to historicity or visual cultural marker here, but there is a geometry of the living space that expresses local specialty.

15 Artemenko, Andrii, Eda Ünlü Yücesoy. "Istanbul quarters authenticity: local communities and space design". *Bulletin St Petersburg State University Sociology*. 12/2 (2019). P.164-175

16 Vermeulen, *Заметки о метамодернизме*.

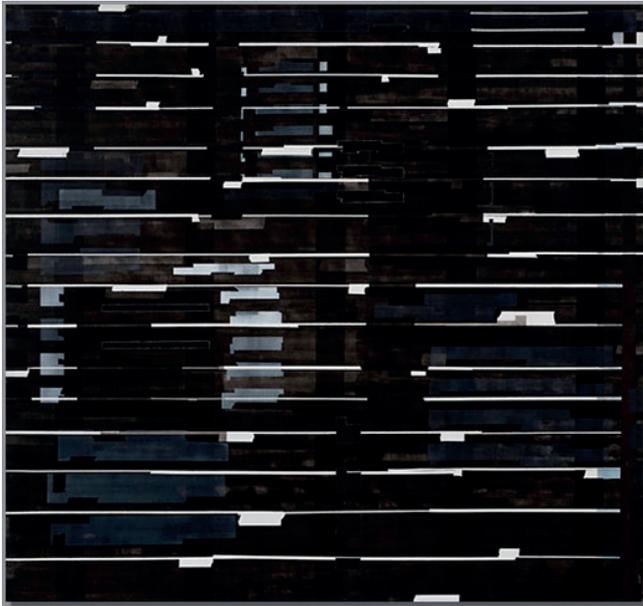
Nuri Kuzucan's paintings are not about an ideal city, but about a city understood, structurally, and rationally correct. In the topographic works of the artist, the skeleton of the visible world appears, embodied in a geometric structure. Gradually, the author gropes for the balance of the ideal geometry of urban space, as a reflection of world harmony. In this case, we are talking about a vegetable garden as an anthropogenic space, a world created by man for himself, where the idea of harmony has already been realized. Therefore, the works of Nuri Kuzucan are not a metaphor for accordion, but grasping it in lines and colors, as a projection of living in an urban space.

In this direction, the transformation of the style of the artist's works of the third period takes place. The author seeks to prove that the space of the city is like a visible object, created using the technology of aestheticizing the environment and structuring spatiality. This is not the decomposition of the figurative image into elements, as it was in modern painting, but the identification of the geometry and crystal structure of the city. In fact, we find confirmation of the idea of H. Lefebvre about the development of a code of space, carried out at the level of pragmatics, which "correlates with experience and perception."¹⁷ The new art is dedicated to the depiction of existential reality, where lines reflect the dynamics and acuteness of the experience of the environment. Before us is the ordered geometry of the anthropogenic world, captured in his works by Nuri Kuzucan "Graphic Memory" and "Monochrome City". Working with a plane, dividing lines leads to a logical transition from geometry to ornament, and the desire for pure colors - to monochrome. Existential stress is brought out of the image. A reminder of him remains in the rare failures of the rhythm of the drawing. The global city, along with the uniformity of space, also proposed a matrix of experiences similar to an ornament. Ornamental white horizontal lines are superimposed on a background of dark spots of color, reminiscent of the rhythmic pattern of streets and building facades.

¹⁷ Lefebvre, *Производство пространства*, 77.



Pic. 21: Nuri Kuzucan “Graphic Memory” (2018)



Pic. 22: Nuri Kuzucan “Monochrome City” (2018)

It can be assumed that “Graphic Memory” and “Monochrome City” were a test of a new style of work for Nuri Kuzucan. And at the same time, we can talk about a way to express the feeling of nostalgia, which, according to T. Vermeulen and R. van den Acker, is so characteristic of the metamodern culture. It is like a layering of personal experiences and a way of experiencing proposed by a global city. The constellation of these matrix gaps and background spots gives a “flash” of experiences, similar to the moment of recognizing “my city”.

Conclusions

This evolution of Nuri Kuzucan’s style reflects profound shifts in the perception of the nature and space of the city at the beginning of the new century. Sh. Zukin presented this process as the emergence of a “naked city” in the early 2010s. The city involved in the process that U. Beck called the convergence of global culture.¹⁸ This is an approximation to the same forms and meanings of cultures with different origins. The global city is universal in its manifestations and, as a result, the coldness and impersonality of the megalopolis, “the city in general”. Nuri Kuzucan clearly demonstrated this in his work. This example shows that the condition for convergence is the same environment for the development of cultures of different origins, which is provided by the system of a globalized world, where the abandonment of a person is experienced even more acutely. Here we meet that “weightless emptiness of silent autism” that has become a sign of metamodernism metaxis.

“My city” accompanies the metamodernism human everywhere, and he is not historical, but existential. He makes up with him a kind of single phantom body with extremely sensitive visual variables. The created urban atmosphere requires experience, mental structuring, and as a result, the most important moment in the production of space comes, when the space of places that are meaningful and expressed in visual images must coincide with the environment.

Thus, in modern culture, urban aesthetics becomes the spokesman for the idea of anthropogenic space as an orderly, harmonious human environment. The modern pragmatic approach to the problem of urban space production uses the sphere of aesthetics and is perceived as an effective mechanism for constructing economic and social relations, structures, and communities in cities. In this regard, we open not only an understanding of how the “social” and “economic” produce the sphere of aesthetic, but also the reverse influence - how the aesthetic shapes the social and economic relations of a modern city. Metamodernism offers a new way to relate to urban space and the aesthetic experience it creates, and therefore the innovations of modern artistic practices require further in-depth study, including specialists in the field of environmental design, aesthetics, social philosophy and philosophy of culture, urbanism.

18 Beck, Ulrich. *Что такое глобализация?, Ошибки глобализма - ответы на глобализацию*. Москва: Прогресс-Традиция, 2001, 269.

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Visual Resources

Picture 1: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/purple-window/>

Picture 2: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/grey-window/>

Picture 3: <https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/1023>

Picture 4: https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/in_focus/richard-estes-at-mad-52702

Picture 5: <https://art.nelson-atkins.org/objects/27547/central-savings;jsessionid=0C4E9700E0DEC7F50CF60D6E9325075D?ctx=2e5dc77b-f747-4981-b24f-908ebe61aac7&idx=1>

Picture 6: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/office> |

Picture 7: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/fastfood-2/>

Picture 8: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/across/>

Picture 9: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/neighbour/>

Picture 10: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/the-corner/>

Picture 11: <https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/64.46/>

Picture 12: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/west/>

Picture 13: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/exotic-east/>

Picture 14: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/further-3/>

Picture 15: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/new-residential-area-jw-14812/>

Picture 16: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/flaneur/>

Picture 17: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/black-and-white-shapes/>

Picture 18: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/124-square/>

Picture 19: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/open-perspective/>

Picture 20: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/geomatic-city/>

Picture 21: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/graphic-memory/>

Picture 22: <http://nurikuzucan.com/en/monochrome-city/>