

26. XI-18. XII 2013

Pihkva Riikliku Ühendatud Ajaloo-, Arhitektuuri-
ja Kunstimuseumi maaligalerii

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The Picture Gallery of the Pskov State United Historical,
Architectural and Fine Arts Museum

Jutustus järvest

Hedi Rosma vaatleb Birgit Püve isiknäitust "Järv".

A Tale of the Lake

*Hedi Rosma analyses Birgit Püve's solo exhibition
"By the Lake".*

Birgit Püve
Seeriast "Järv" (Leonid)
2011
Pigmentfoto
Kõik õigused kunstnikul



Birgit Püve
From the series "By the Lake" (Leonid)
2011
Pigment print
Courtesy of the artist



Alati, kui räägitakse Pihkvast, meenub mulle Sergei Eisensteini suurejooneline ajaloodraama "Aleksander Nevski" (1938). Selle, nüüdseks kinematograafia klassikasse kuuluva propagandateose kulminatsiooniks on nõukogude versioon 13. sajandil toimunud Jäälahingust, kus kinikülmunud Peipsi järvel on vastamisi ordurüütlid ja vürst Aleksandri juhitud Novgorodi väed. Sissetungijad sunnitakse taganema, Peipsi järve jää möraneb ja rasketes raudrüüdes saksa rüütlid (väidetavalt olid sõjasulastena kaasatud eestlased selleks hetkeks juba põgenenud) kaovad igaveseks süngmusta vette. Dramaatiline stseen, millele järgnevad jääl lebavate haavatute oiged ja ööpimeduse varjus surnukehade ümber kraaklevad näljased varesed. Film lõppeb Aleksander Nevski kuulutusega Pihkva kremlis treppidelt: "See, kes tuleb Venemaale mõõgaga, hukub mõõga läbi!"

Kuigi erinevate riigikordade ajal on Jäälahingu tähtsust nii üle paisutatud kui ka tühiseks kähmluseks taandatud, loetakse seda sümboolselt sündmuseks, millega pandi paika ida- ja läänekristluse piir. "Россия начинается здесь!" (Venemaa algab siin!) on Pihkva deviis ja nii Venemaa ajaloo kui ka õigeusu kirikute kontsentratsioon selles linnas on tõepoolest silmatorkavalt kõrge.

Aeg peatub

See on kontekst, milles eesti fotograafi Birgit Püve seeria "Järv" (2009–...) avab hoopis uued tähenduskihid. Piirina ei lahuta Peipsi järv mitte ainult kahte erinevat kultuuriruumi, vaid ka poliitiliselt täiesti erinevaid maailmu. Ühe ja sama järve kallastele mahub nii ühe uhke tsivilisatsiooni sünnilugu, kui ka Euroopa absoluutne perifeeria. Mõisted nagu "algus" ja "lõpp" muutuvad suhtelisteks, aeg peatub.

Võib-olla just sellepärast leidsid 17. ja 18. sajandil teisel poolt Peipsit siia saabunud sügavalt usklike venelaste järeletulijad siin endale pelgupaiga patriarh Nikoni reformide eest. Tõsi, kerge pole vanausulistel siin kunagi olnud, kui ehk Eesti Vabariigi esimene periood välja arvata. Nõukogude ajal puudus neil võimalus normaalseks, väärikaks usueluks, Eesti taasiseseisvumine tõi küll vanausu taassünni, kuid ka kalurikolhooside lagunemise ning piiride sulgemise, millega lõigati ära Pihkva ja Peterburi turud. Võrreldes Teise maailmasõja eelse ajaga on järve ääres elavate vanausuliste arv kaks korda kahanenud, ülesharitava maa pind on vähenenud kaheksa korda, Peipsist kalapüüdmisele on Eesti pool kehtestanud ranged piirangud. Nii on Peipsiäärest saanud üks vaesemaid valdu Eestis, kust noored parema elujärje otsinguil lahkuvad.

Birgit Püve piltidelt aga näeme, et aeg, nagu ruumgi, ei pruugi olla homogeenne ega pidev. "Suhtumine aega eristabki usklikku mitteusklikust: usklik keeldub elamast ainuüksi ajaloolises olevikus, nagu seda tänapäeval nimetatakse, ning püüab tagasi pöörduda sakraalsesse aega, mis teatud mõttes on samastatav igavikuga."¹

Sakraalne ja profaanne

Huvitaval kombel on Püve pildid väga sakraalsed, kuigi nad kujutavad harilikke inimesi. Sakraalseiks ei muuda neid mitte pühasenurgas paiknevad ikoonid ega ka vormistus – diptühonid, mille ühel pool näeme inimest oma koduses keskkonnas ning teisel pool mõnd kõnekat detaili tema eluruumist –, vaid teatav küllastatus olemisest, mis on omane sakraalse avaldumisvormidele üldiselt. Inimesed on üles pildistatud

Whenever someone mentions Pskov, I am reminded of Sergei Eisenstein's epic historical drama "Alexander Nevsky" (1938). The culmination of the propaganda film, now considered a cinematographic classic, is the Soviet version of the 13th century Battle on Ice in which the army of Novgorod led by Prince Alexander and that of the Teutonic Knights battled on the frozen Lake Peipus. The invaders are forced to retreat, the ice on the Lake Peipus cracks and the German knights in heavy armour (supposedly, the Estonians who were hired as soldiers had escaped by then) disappear into the dark waters forever. It is a dramatic scene, followed by one depicting the moaning wounded on the ice and the hungry crows circling the bodies as darkness descends. The film is concluded with the declaration by Alexander Nevsky, made on the stairs of the Pskov Krom: "Whoever will come to Russia with a sword, from a sword will perish!"

Even though the significance of the Battle on the Ice has been amplified as well as reduced to a meaningless brawl throughout different polities, it is still symbolically considered an event that drew the borders of Eastern and Western Christianity. "Россия начинается здесь!" (Russia starts here!) is the slogan of Pskov and the concentration of Russian history as well as Orthodox churches in the city is remarkably high.

Time stops

This is the context in which the photographic series "Järv" (By the Lake) (2009–...) by the Estonian photographer Birgit Püve opens an array of new layers of meaning. Lake Peipus does not only separate two completely different cultures, but the two sides are also politically worlds apart. The shores of the same lake have seen the birth of a powerful civilisation, yet are also home to the utmost periphery of Europe. Notions like "beginning" and "end" become relative, time stops.

Maybe this is the reason the descendants of deeply religious Russians came here from the other side of Lake Peipus during the 17th and 18th centuries and sought refuge from the reforms initiated by Patriarch Nikon in this very place. It is also true that the Old Believers have never had it easy here, except maybe during the first decades of the Republic of Estonia. During the Soviet period they were unable to follow their traditions of worship to the full extent, and even though, after Estonia regained its independence, the Old Believers' traditions were revived, it also brought the decay of the fishing collectives and the closing of borders that cut them off from the markets of Pskov and St Petersburg. Compared to the time before the Second World War, the population of the Old Believers living by the lake has decreased two times, the area of arable land has decreased eight times and Estonia has strictly regulated fishing. As a result, the Peipsiääre parish has become one of the most impoverished in the country, increasingly abandoned by younger people in search of a better life.

As we see in Birgit Püve's photographs, neither time nor space is necessarily homogenous and continuous. "This attitude in regard to time suffices to distinguish religious from non-religious man; the former refuses to live solely in what, in modern terms, is called the historical present; he attempts to regain a sacred time that, from one point of view, can be homologized to eternity."¹

respektiga, diskreetselt, mõjumata seejuures kuidagi sätitult. Ja nii nagu ikoonidki, võimaldavad ka need pildid näha mingit inimeseks olemise saladust.

Seda tunnet rõhutab veelgi näitusepaik, Pihkva muuseumi maaligalerii, mis loob pildidel näha olevatele keskkondadele järsu kontrasti. Galeriid läbiv pidulik punane vaip, tohutu kõrged laed ja lopsakast kangast valged kardinad mõjuvad kuidagi kohatult. Tekib isegi pisut ebamugav tunne, nagu vaataks pildid (mis on riputatud vaataja silmade kõrgusest veidi ülespoole) näituseküllastajat, mitte vastupidi. (Efekt, mida kannab ka ikoonidesse sisse kirjutatud nn tagurpidi perspektiiv.) Kõik sulab üheks tervikuks ja korraga valdab sind tõsikindel teadmine, et seesama punane vaip, millel kõnnid, eeldab teatud kohustusi ja vastutust. Eelkõige hoolitsemist oma hinge eest, et võiksid olla parem inimene, ka teistele.

Peegel

Peategelane ise, järv on see, keda me nendel pildidel kordagi ei kohta. Ja ongi hea. Sellisena on järv saladus, salajane vahendaja elu ja surma, mineviku ja oleviku, siinse ja sealse kalda vahel.

Nii nagu legendides on järve vaikne veepind kahepoolne peegel loomuliku ja üleloomuliku maailma vahel, võib ka Birgit Püve järv olla piir, mis eraldab, aga ka sild, mis ühendab.

Hedi Rosma on KUNST.EE eesti keele toimetaja.

¹ Mircea Eliade, *Sakraalne ja profaanne IV. Religiooni olemus*. – *Vikerkaar* 1992, nr 7, lk 65.

The Sacred and the Profane

Interestingly, Püve's images have an extreme air of sacredness, even though they depict ordinary people. These photographs are not sacred because of the icons in the icon corners or the way the photographs are placed – as diptychs with a person in their home on the one side and a characteristic detail from their environment on the other – but due to a certain saturated atmosphere that usually comes through in the various manifestations of the sacred. The people have been photographed respectfully and discreetly without being forced into preconceived compositions. And just like the icons, these photographs allow us to glimpse the secrets of being human.

This impression is amplified by the site of the exhibition, the picture gallery of the Pskov Museum that offers a sharp contrast to the environments in the photographs. The floor of the gallery is covered by a ceremonial red carpet, the ceilings are remarkably high and the voluptuous white drapes seem almost inappropriate. There is a slightly uncomfortable feeling as if the photographs (hung a little higher than the visitors' line of sight) are observing the audience, not the other way round. (This impression is also created by the backwards perspective in icons.) Everything blends into a whole and suddenly you are overcome with a conviction that the same red carpet you are walking on bestows you with certain obligations and responsibilities. And above all, that you have to look after your soul to be a better human being – to others as well.

Mirror

The main character, the lake is actually not shown even once. And that is good. As such, the lake is a secret, a hidden mediator between life and death, past and present, and the two shores.

Just as in legends, where the lake is a quiet surface, a two-way mirror between the natural and supernatural world, Birgit Püve's lake can be a border that separates as well as a bridge that connects.

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¹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harveth/HBJ Publishers, 1957, p 70.