

**Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Department of Photography**

Assessment of the Bachelor's Thesis

Author of thesis: Leevi Toja

Title of thesis: Aleksei Gastev and His Relevance in Art Practice

Assessment of the primary advisor

Assessment of the opponent

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace):

Mgr. Josef Ledvina Ph.D.

Evaluation of the content and final form of the thesis (A/excellent – B/very good – C/good – D/good with objections – E/satisfactory – F/unsatisfactory – not recommended for defence)

Suitability of the selected objective and work approach.....B.....

Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic.....B.....

Ability to critically evaluate and use scholarly literature.....B.....

Logicity of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters.....C.....

Language and stylistic level of the thesis.....B.....

Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence).....B.....

Sufficient extent of image attachments, justifiability and suitability of attachments, graphic layout.....C.....

Originality of the thesis, contribution to the development of the field of study.....B...

Overall evaluation of the thesis.....B.....

Verbal evaluation of the thesis including questions that the candidate must address in his/her thesis defence:

Leevi Toja's thesis gradually evolved into a monographic study about a Russian avant-garde poet and proponent of the scientific organisation of labour Aleksei Gastev. This less known protagonist of the "Great Experiment" characteristically mixed in his writings ruthless technocratic pragmatism with poetic visions of totally desubjectivized society where individuals will be, for example, numbered instead of named.

There is no doubt that Leevi Toja sometimes "surrendered himself" to his subject. There are places in his thesis where more cautious formulations would be appropriate, especially when he fails to distinguish between the Gastev's ideas and the consequences of putting them into practice. Yet despite Toja's fascination with the

idea of totally desubjectivized life he is also clearly aware of the rather dystopian dimensions of many of Gastev's proposals. Particularly revealing in this regard are sections discussing the revolutionary's militarist rhetoric and his aggressive diatribes against "the Russian backwardness" that must be erased at all costs. At one point, Toja succinctly claims that Gastev, executed during Stalinist purges, was "a victim of his own cruelty": "He was killed [...] because he wasn't a good 'fit' with society anymore."

I do understand (and share) Toja's fascination and am grateful for learning more about Aleksei Gastev thanks to him, nevertheless I miss in the text more systematic reflection of this fascination. Is Gastev obscure piece of intellectual history or can his ideas tell us something about our contemporary conditions?

I propose evaluation B.

Date: 30.5.2021

Signature: 