

## MODERN RUSSIA IN THE MIRROR OF HISTORICAL AND LOGICAL

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**Abstract:** The formation of modern Russia in the interaction of history and logic is the subject of this study. It covers a chronological framework from the socialist revolution of the 1917<sup>th</sup> to the present day. The initial principle of the authors is that the adequate analysis of the problem raised in the work is possible only from the standpoint of understanding social changes as a natural historical process. Consequently, the theory of fatal inevitability, as well as the conspiracy theory in explaining the arrival of the post-Soviet present of our country, is unjustified. In other words, the revolutionary turn in October 1917 could not help splitting society into hostile forces, the struggle between which never ceased. At the same time, the CPSU as a leading and guiding social changes force not only proved inability to work out the answers to the challenges of history but also itself degenerated. In the conditions of severe rivalry between the two worlds – socialism and capitalism – these factors multiplied many times. Post-Soviet realities have sobered the Russians: did they fight for it? Did not they throw out the child together with the delivery water (whatever was good in socialism)? In the public consciousness, a turn is made towards recognizing, if not all, at least some socialist values. At the same time, there is a growing awareness of the need to take into account the cultural peculiarities of Russia when moving "along the high road of human civilization", that is, on the way to affirm the values of the Western world. Based on the documents of the CPSU, the messages of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly, the works of the classics of culture (and not only Russian), the language of everyday life the authors come to a fundamental conclusion, that is, there is a situation developing in the country that will be reflected in the public consciousness in the form of another project for the reorganization of Russia on perfect principles. And it will be the next one, i. e. not the last.

**Keywords:** project, reality, the Soviet Union, culture, society, social relations, man, post-Soviet Russia, modernity, everyday language, post-Soviet man, revolution, consumption, values, consumer society, democracy, state, socialism

### 1 Introduction

An appeal to a reinterpretation of historical reality that is not satisfactory is a characteristic of a person beginning from the deep antiquity to the present. However, an adequate understanding of the contradiction between the present and the desired future is difficult to achieve. The history of Russia fully confirms this thesis. Since the late 80's of the twentieth century to present days the debate about how to assess the Soviet past and post-Soviet present country still goes on. In this article, the authors, using the published materials of the CPSU, the messages of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly, and based on the works of classics of Soviet and Russian culture (and not only them) and the evidence of the language of everyday life offer their vision of the problem.

### 2 The main content of the study

In the XX century, dissatisfaction with the autocratic tsarist past caused, firstly, the birth and the victory of the Soviet project. For almost 75 years of its existence, the total illiteracy of the population was eliminated, industrialization of the country was carried out and much more was achieved which became the salt of the earth for the whole world, and Russia.

To implement the basic projective principle of the "people's power" in the USSR, the corresponding structure of society was organized, i.e. from now on, any Soviet person is declared, first of all, "the sum of social relations" (More on this: 1: K. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, 1970; 2: K. Marx, Theses on Feuerbach, 1976) and assumes the obligation to enter all kinds of public and socio-political organizations. In total, there were more than 275 such organizations in the country (For example, see 3: list of organizations approved by the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs 1928-1929). To maintain the only kind of identity the "Soviet man" approved by the government one needed to belong not to one but several such

communities. It should be noted that the newly organized government became quickly unsatisfied with public organizations that functioned under the previous government. Some were closed, i. e. free philosophical association ("Vol'fila"), the Russian veterinary society, the society of friends of the opera studio named after Stanislavsky, the all-Russian society of photographers, the all-Russian union of poets, the association of passenger carriers, the Moscow society of agriculture, almost all local history societies ... (See 4: M. Sokolov, Down with shame..., 2013). After experiencing incredible difficulties, the Soviet system managed to establish itself in such a way that it was possible, as the poet wrote, to be proud of the fact that you are a citizen of this country. (5: V. Mayakovsky Poems about the Soviet passport, 1929).

However, it would be wrong to say that Soviet ideas completely took over the people's mind. The ideas and works of those who disagreed with Soviet values replenished huge containers of "anti-Soviet". The work of S. Yesenin is significant in this sense, who soon realized that the processes of industrialization and collectivization would be too expensive for ordinary peasants: "... the trumpet horn blows!" (6: S. Yesenin, Sorokoust, 1920).

After the lapse of 34 years after the creation of the USSR, N. Khrushchev, speaking at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU, with a report condemning the cult of Stalin's personality, stated the need for another (third in a row) work on the mistakes. They were so large-scale and serious that they caused pain in the public consciousness and raised doubts about the possibilities of socialism<sup>1</sup>.

With Mikhail Gorbachev coming to power, the Soviet history of the country was subjected to ruthless criticism, the excesses in which, among other things, led to the collapse of the USSR.

The profound disappointment in the old ideals which, if present before in the form of indistinct feelings, burst out absorbing the population of the newly formed Russian Federation. "The Soviet man was not ready to be post-Soviet. The Soviet past was still too dominant in his thinking, his views, the conditions of his life, the stereotypes of his behavior, his ideas about the world. Soviet people entered the post-Soviet space (including territorial, political, economic) still clinging to... the world of the past" (11: N. Khazieva, Virtual Reality ..., 2015; 12: A.K. Khaziev, N.O. Khazieva, E.V. Klyushina, In pursuit of the bright future ..., 2015).

### 3 Main results of the study

It is legitimate to assert that post-Soviet Russia is a project of the Soviet system itself. The many reforms implemented in the Soviet Union in recent decades have not helped to save the state from the 1991 coup. The Soviet people demanded radical changes that could not coexist peacefully with the existing political and economic Soviet reality. This has paved the way for the emergence and implementation of a post-Soviet project in a revitalized Russia.

Speaking of modern Russia, we often specify "post-Soviet" Russia, in order to emphasize some consistency of the historical process and the continuity of two cultures, two social and political systems. Partly, because, once again, rejecting his past, the Russian man will find himself in a cultural hole which in the modern world can mean a loss of identity. Another weighty argument is that the socialization of the overwhelming majority of the indigenous population of modern Russia has successfully flowed in the era of socialism under other value orientations (the benefit and success of the family and the party, equality in

<sup>1</sup> V.Vysotsky wrote: "Will lose true faith - It hurts me for our USSR ..." (7: V.Vysotsky, It hurts me..., 1964). About this was written by the opponents of socialism from the diametrically opposite position. (See 8: M. Djilas, The New Class, 1957; 9: S. Cohen, Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives, 2011; 10: S. Cohen, The Friends and Foes of Change, 2005).

society, the clear priority of thinking over consumption). Despite all their abstractness, today they look more weighty and true while much of the modern society is oriented towards the consumption and over consumption, the immediate satisfaction of one's own needs, for the momentary pleasure.

This is quite easy to trace by referring to the language of everyday life. The Soviet time was full of encouraging slogans: "Be ready for the cause of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union!", "The Party is the mind, honor and conscience of our era", "Party plans – people's plans", "Life has become better, life has become more fun "" Peace to the world!", "Glory to the Soviet people!". The post-Soviet space initially dazzles with quite different, no less catchy phrases: "We need another Russia!", "Russia for the Russians!", "Fascism will not work!", "Go out to the street – regain your city", "Workers need decent salary!", "First the salary and then the rent!" No less colorful are the everyday languages. Thus, for the characterization of interethnic relations under socialism, words such as "comrade", "friend", "internationalism", and "Soviet people" were used. There are absolutely different expressions in the space of post-Soviet everyday life, i. e. "black", "animal", "a person of Caucasian nationality".

Every year, the President of the Russian Federation tells us about the completely realistic goals, tasks and results achieved in 1991 of the democratic form of government of post-Soviet Russia. In 2003, V. Putin formulated the value orientations of Russian society in the annual message to the Federal Assembly: "Russia must and will be a country with a developed civil society and a stable democracy. It will fully ensure human rights, civil and political freedoms. Russia should and will be a country with a competitive market economy. A country where property rights are reliably protected and economic freedoms allow people to work honestly and earn. Earn without fear and limitations... And such a country people cannot just be proud of. They will multiply its wealth. They will remember and respect our great history" (13: Message of 2003). However, in subsequent messages to the Federal Assembly he is forced to recognize the existence of a "closed circle of bureaucracy" and "terrorism" of tax authorities in relation to business" (14: Message of 2005), reports the presence of "distrust of individual institutions of state power" (15: Message 2006), that "corruption scandals are constantly shaking local governments" (16: Message of 2014). There will be a noticeable tendency in these messages to increase the number of usage by the president of concepts since 2001: "economy", "fund", "budget", since 2004: "library", "art", "culture", "creativity", in the subsequent appeals of the President of the Russian Federation the number of president's appeals to the concepts of "reform" and "society" increases.

It is known that not only politics can be ideological if the ideology is understood more broadly i. e. it is not just a "false consciousness" or an illusory representation of reality surrounding us, but as reality itself. And in such a case, such an ideology (in fact reality) will be "working" if the basic rule ("non-knowledge") is observed. Ideology "works" as long as people who fulfill its principles and laws do not imply its existence (More on this 17: Žižek S. *The Sublime...*, 1989; 18: *The Ticklish Subject ...*, 2000) constantly reproducing its main provisions with its actions. In this case, it can be argued that the whole of modern culture is permeated with ideological background. The modern form of public ideology uses all possible means: art, books, films, fashion; it does not disdain for second-rate advertising. We have not been told for a long time: "think, think for yourself", we are told to "act", "consume", "everybody has already thought it over for you": "life is too short. I do not want to wait, I act. I learn, feel, try, take risks, I love – I live!"

The project of the liberation of the Soviet man from the bonds of socialism and communism, from the ways of an extreme degree of impersonality and interchangeability, in reality turned into freedom of unlimited production and over-consumption. J. Baudrillard writes: "The consumption society is also a society of

training in consumption, social training in consumption, that is, a new and specific way of socialization..." (19: J. Baudrillard *Consumption Society...*, 1998; 20: Z. Bauman, *The Individualized Society*, 2001; 21. Z. Bauman, *Liquid modernity*, 2000). The modern structure of the megalopolis, supermarkets and even our houses is a heap of goods. The post-Soviet man, having failed (and not wishing to) to avoid another danger, plunged into life with the prefix 'fast': fast food, fast money, fast as a modern form of communication of people, etc. Together with the real goods, he consumes signs contained in the goods, as well as the process of consumption itself first by anticipation, and then – retrospectively, which indicates a high degree of psychologicality of the process itself. Consequently, as before, a new project has been in demand to correct the mistakes made and to remedy the newly emerging problems.

#### 4 As a conclusion

Implementing the project of the desired future is always preceded by a complex and contradictory process for its creation, debugging and multiple subsequent adjustments. The project of the Soviet society was not successfully implemented, because it failed to take into account world politics and the economy, assuming its own isolation; it also failed to correctly take into account and allocate means to achieve the goals – the strength of the people; failed to exclude the gulf between the ruling party and the people.

#### 5 Summary

For more than a quarter of a century we have been participating in the implementation of the new project of post-Soviet Russia which designed to correct all past mistakes and bring the Russian person to welfare. However, a constant revision of the very foundations of this project is needed again, since its basic principles and mechanisms on Russian soil produce completely different growths than, say, in the countries of Europe or even formerly friendly republics. And then again one recalls the assumption about the uniqueness of the Russian way of development, about its irreducibility to the examples of the West or the East. Not external or abstract values, principles and mechanisms for their implementation should be used as the basis for further, obviously inevitable, corrections of the post-Soviet project, but the ones peculiar to the Russian people, first of all, so that in due time our current project is not replaced by another project to create a bright future.

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