

# IN PURSUIT OF THE BRIGHT FUTURE: RUSSIA'S SOCIALIST AND POST-SOCIALIST EXPERIENCE IN EVERYDAY LANGUAGE AS A SUBJECT OF THE CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

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**Abstract:** Distinguishing between the things existent and the due humanity focused its efforts on achieving a certain perfect state. The world history is full of examples of building a "kingdom of God" on Earth. The Russia's history could also be interpreted as an endless search for the town of Kitezh (fairy-tale town of happiness) and Russia's place in the system of international relationships; the country is in a state of permanent denial of imperfect present for the sake of bright future. The authors focused on the conceptual analysis of the Russia's socialist and post-socialist practices expressed in the language of everyday life. Language is an indicator of changes in the world of human life, and the society in general. The study uses Soviet and post-Soviet everyday life's language expressions that reflect the key aspects of social development - ensuring material and moral well-being of citizens, relationships between domination and subordination, achieving harmony of the individual and the collective, respect for the fairness in the geopolitical space. Based on those expressions, the authors of the research demonstrate the progress in the views of the Russians about the past, the existing, and the due of their social world order. Thus, the conceptual approach makes it possible to clarify not only the destiny of Soviet Russia and the situation in post-Soviet Russia today, but also to make reasonable predictions about the future of the country.

**Key definitions:** socialism in Russia, concept of "Soviet socialism", transition period, post-Soviet Russia, concept of "post-socialist Russia", language of everyday life.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century in the destiny of Russia stands apart, after centuries of suffering the fortune finally (So it seemed. At least, to the majority of the people of the Russian Empire) smiled upon the Russians, and they started materializing their dream about the fair society. However, at the turn of 80 – 90s of the same century, the country rejecting the existing social order and led by the notions of the due order entered another voyage into the future. The whirlpool of changes in which the country found itself once again confirmed the correctness of the well-known Russian proverb about the ravines forgotten on the paper - the reality was full of losses, and acquisitions proved to be questionable. As a result, the transition from the past to the future was subjected and is being subjected to the conceptual revision.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The use of the conceptual research is required for the philosophical apprehension of the issue specified in this article. In turn, it appears that the language of everyday life is an adequate reflection of the ongoing conceptual changes. The authors, of course, are aware that the chosen method cannot explain all of the changes in understanding the transition from

Soviet past to the desired future. Adhering to the principle adopted by the study, the authors come from the fact that the language is the house of being, and the everyday life is the level of human existence, so to speak, its flesh and blood [1, 2, 3]. Appealing to the everyday life as a measure of conceptual changes is all the more justified as it (everyday life) is, for the authors, not only the object of their theoretical attention. Post-Soviet Russia's everyday life, from its very beginning, is their life-world, and in everyday life of the USSR's developed socialism they got the first life experience. Immediate stay in this world makes their claims grounded in nature. However, the authors do not only rely on their personal experience, but also base themselves on the theoretical research and the political documents that assess the ongoing changes in the country.

### 3. RESULTS

The entire history of socialism in the USSR is full of painful search for the answer to the vital question - what was that for? The question first arose by the end of the civil war that brought country to the state which was generally reflected by such everyday definitions as "*ruin*", "*sabotage*", "*expropriation*", "*surplus appropriation system*", "*hunger*", "*execution by firing squad*", "*terror*", etc. The picture is clearly not in favor of Bolsheviks, amid their promises of the bright future and their criticism of the tsarist autocracy. The authorities found a way out in the NEP (New Economic Policy). As a result of it, the everyday life language enriched by such words and phrases as "*Nepman*", "*kulak*", "*bloodsucker (parasite)*". In them, there is a contradictory attitude towards the reality, as the freedom and the revival of the business and economic activity stated in those words and phrases people had found not only the democratization of the society, but also kind of a backward movement to the past. Perhaps, herein are the origins of the question emerged a little later (that tortured the souls of the ordinary communists until the liquidation of the USSR) - whether what happens is according to Lenin's plan of building socialism?

The uniqueness of the situation in the world history - unprecedented anywhere hitherto practice of the socialist construction - plunged into doubt not only the rank and file, but also the tops of the Bolshevik Party, from where the divisions, factionalism, and inner-party struggle were. This circumstance was due to various reasons interpreted and perceived as a fierce resistance to socialism, in particular, may have given rise to Stalin's statement about the aggravation of the class struggle with strengthening of the new social relationships. The quintessence of this worldview were the expressions like "*enemy of the people*," "*repressed*", "*58<sup>th</sup> clause*" which, sometimes spawning maniac suspiciousness, helped develop the notion that the country is in the ring of enemies. From here a system is born, called "*barracks socialism*", where asceticism, egalitarianism, and, of course, the personality cult of the leader thrive. So what is a personality cult but autocratic power? And this is a country of the victorious socialism?! Of course, not. So the personality cult of Stalin as well as Khrushchev's voluntarism are condemned as incompatible with the nature of the phenomenon of socialism. However, the nature of socialism is incompatible with lots of things like "*life on the coupons*", and when you are "*travel banned*", and "*Dear General Secretary*", and more, so that the question arises - whether socialism existed in the USSR?

However, there is another appropriate question about the viability of the views about socialism without any deficiencies as it is known that the contradictions are the driving force of social development in general and socialism in particular [4]. From this, the result emerged itself - socialism is not a paradise on the Earth. This is a process of the contradictory

combination of the public and the private, the collective and the individual, directed, ultimately, to the disclosure of the essential human forces. Having this forgotten, we find ourselves in the illusions the consequences of the return from which are unpredictable for the individual and for the society as a whole [5, 6].

At the final stage, the farewell to Soviet socialism proceeded to the accompaniment of the declaration-demand "We can't go on (living) like this!" rapidly spread in the late 80's and early 90's of the twentieth century. The answer to the question "How to live?" wasn't then nor, moreover, now is unambiguous. In our opinion, this issue had several scenarios of its decision. In the first case it was about the complete rejection of socialism and transition to the bourgeois rails. In the second case, it was not about renouncing socialism in general, only its Soviet edition. Its image in everyday consciousness were revived by pretty scathing but very precise expressions such as "*country of the food trains*", "*socialism of the special stores and special canteens*", "*communism for the elite*", etc. Strictly speaking, such socialism was condemned by the Communist Party itself who offered a way out of this situation in building "a humane, democratic socialism" without "aggressively obedient majority", where anyone without papers is not a bug but a man [7]. Another option can be conventionally interpreted as a converged one, combining the communist and bourgeois foundations. Perhaps, it is the one that is settled in the Constitution of the Russian Federation of the 1993. According to this document, Russia is a democratic constitutional federal state with the republican form of government, and its economic basis is variable but equal forms of ownership [8].

Such quite uncertain situation in understanding of the country's past and its future found, in our view, its adequate reflection in the language of the Russian everyday life by the two terms - "*Sovok (a person with Soviet mentality)*" and "*the new Russian*". The first one expressed the need to abandon them; the second one stated the birth of a man who is consistent with the views about new Russia. As transient exacerbation of their contents were gradually undergoing a change and, first of all, it affected the concept of a "new Russian". That positive that was put in it initially was forced out by the evidently negative. It turned out that he couldn't live without "*the roof (crime-sponsored cover)*", permanent "*wrangles*" and "*kickbacks*", without the "*black money*" and "*gray salaries*", and etc. These and similar to them pseudo achievements make one wonder whether they are temporary or permanent? If they are inherent to the nature of a man of the new generation is it worthwhile to sacrifice our past for the sake of such present? And it (the present), in turn, will create the future which may definitely carry the "birthmarks" of the present.

The nature of the Russia's inter-ethnic and inter-cultural relationships determines its present and its future. The collapse of Soviet Union was accompanied by worsening of the relationships between the nations who once peacefully coexisted in different regions of Soviet Union, and now, by the will of fate, became migrants and refugees. In our opinion, this situation is most accurately characterized by the expression "*a person of Caucasian nationality*". Strange and even absurd in structure, this expression gave rise to racism in the post-Soviet space, as it started being applied to all people of non-Slavic appearance. Subsequently, the words such as "*black*", "*animals*" and the like, in which there is more of a recognition of an animal rather than a social in a man, pointed out the strengthening of the racist tendencies in inter-ethnic and intercultural relationships.

A notable trend of the inter-ethnic relationships in post-Soviet Russia was the conversion of the purely ethnic issues into the channel of the confessional ones. It is based on the activation of the religious factor in general and the Islamic in particular in the everyday

life of Russians. As is known, the separatist movements in several regions of our country had among other things religious cover. This trend was further strengthened by the phenomenon of terrorism, which incidentally is almost a commonplace nowadays. One more thing, converting ethnic issues into the channel of the confessional ones breaks not only the inter-ethnic space, but also the intra-ethnic one. This is evidenced not only by the experience of the North Caucasus, but also by the experience of other regions of Russia, including Tatarstan. We have in mind the following, in the mode of life of the population the word "Wahhabi" is used with increasing frequency. In everyday life, it reflects not so much a particular religious position as focuses on the appearance of the person (beard, clothing), the way of his life (protrusion of the rejection of the prevailing social behaviors and values). But more importantly, the word is addressed not only to the representatives of other nations, but also to the people of the same nation. Thus, the problem of the national unity starts being substituted by the religious unity, which demonstrates the different quality of the inter-ethnic space. Under these conditions, the term "*tolerance*" which replaced the term "*internationalism*" of the Soviet everyday life became demandable on the political and propaganda level. Both terms are based on the recognition of the natural ethnocentrism, hence the separation of the nations on the principle of "us" and "them". But the term of "internationalism" draws nations' attention to the commonality of their fundamental interests and, therefore, involves not only the unification of ethnic groups but, to some degree, even their "dissolution" of each other. And the term "tolerance" limits the horizon of interaction of different nations by the tolerance to each other. As they say, feel the difference! The authors are far from idealizing the inter-ethnic relationships in Soviet Union, but the concept of "the Soviet people as the new historical community of people" was not, in our opinion, only a pure abstraction, but reflected the real processes of the union and dissolution of the nations in each other. The results are impressive, if one remembers, in what state the problem was in October 1917, the Pole in Russia was referred to as "*polyachishka*", the Tatar as "*prince*", the Ukrainians as "*hohol*", the Georgian as "*kapkazsky man*" [9]. Having that in mind, how not to adjust the assessment of the past and vision for the future?

In the new geopolitical space emerged after the collapse of the global socialism post-Soviet Russia has chosen the so-called "highway of human civilization" which is essentially the same as the Western model of the development of the society. This was too facilitated by the changes in the balance of power in the international arena after the collapse of the USSR and the world socialism. And because the collapse took place under the cover of an ideology of an alleged understanding between the two formerly warring systems, the illusion of the universal brotherhood arose and began to strengthen. It began to seem (especially to the former Soviet people who obtained the ability to freely move around the world) that Earth is really a common home where the boundaries are practically just a convention. But gradually, in international relationships a clear imbalance in favor of the leading Western countries started being observed, the world was becoming "mono-polar". There was a danger of turning Russia into a "backyard" of the world because of its own weakness as well as of the fierce "global competition". Having disagreed with the course of events, Russia models an acceptable for itself picture of the changing international relationships based on the concept of "multi-polar world". In this world Russia identifies itself as one of the leading powers of the world believing that this status corresponds to its potential and the real state of the world. Regarding the latter (the situation in the world), there is no definite self-identity - whereas the first years of the post-Soviet history the unique status of a Eurasian country was emphasized,

then subsequently one began to focus on that it was, it is and it will be the largest European nation. However, this identity has not become an ultimate one - in today's unpredictable world, Russia identifies itself with the power bearing a special responsibility for the maintenance of stability. This is not abandoning common human values and is not a claim for the role of one of the world gendarme, and is not a search for an isolation and opposition to the so-called "progressive mankind" represented by Western democracies. Russia only stopped self-flagellation and got over the humiliating its dignity desire to please the strict judge represented by the West [10]. The country has reached a certain level of awareness of its own identity - the past, the present, and future one. To date. And tomorrow again the same problem - how do we organize Russia? And so is permanently. That is life!

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The research made by the authors of the article leads to the following conclusions:

- the entire socialist and post-socialist history of Russia is riddled with searching for the best system for the country, adequate reflection of which is the language of everyday life
- ambivalence towards socialism is expressed in the language of the Soviet everyday life; despite the significant discredit by the practice it inspired Soviet Russia as the idea until the formal dissolution of Soviet Union
- the language of everyday life of post-Soviet Russia demonstrates understanding of the iniquity of the critics of socialism as completely insignificant theoretically and practically as well as disappointment in the post-socialist future of the country related to the so-called "highway of human civilization"
- this means that today, in the awareness of its own identity, Russia has reached the state of equilibrium; time will tell what happens tomorrow, but there is one thing one can be certain - the search for the answer to the question about the best structure for the country will continue.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Authors confirm that the data do not contain any conflict of interest.

#### **TESTIMONIAL**

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#### **LINKS**

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