

## ПРИКЛЮЧЕНИЯ ЦАРСТВА РАЗУМА В СТРАНЕ БОЛЬШЕВИКОВ<sup>1</sup>



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### Аннотация

Цель статьи – раскрыть основные черты большевистского проекта построения в СССР Царства Разума, связанного с радикальным переформатированием проблемы взаимосвязи рационального и иррационального в условиях становления социалистического общества. Теоретическими источниками послужили произведения К. Маркса и Ф. Энгельса, в которых построение коммунистического общества связывается с демистификацией общественных отношений и уничтожением отчуждения и овеществления; труды В.И. Ленина и других видных деятелей советского государства, посвященные вопросам организации планового хозяйства и повсеместного внедрения рациональных методов управления; работы выдающегося педагога А.С. Макаренко, направленные на разработку и реализацию идеи воспитания нового советского человека. В статье отмечается, что отечественной версией социалистического преобразования общества стал большевизм (ленинизм), который унаследовал ключевые идеи эпохи французского Просвещения, включая концепцию построения Царства Разума, что получило свое воплощение в системе рационально организованного государственного планирования, учета и контроля. Однако на практике развитие данной системы, доведенное до крайних форм, породило ряд утопических проектов, которые стали воплощением иррационального способа мышления. Таким образом, идея построения Царства Разума обернулась своей противоположностью. Тем не менее авторы статьи полагают, что советскую модель рационально организованного общественного устройства вполне можно считать пусть не до конца реализованным, но в целом довольно успешным проектом построения Царства Разума в социалистическом государстве и методологически верной социально-педагогической системой формирования нового человека.

### Ключевые слова:

французское Просвещение, Царство Разума, марксизм, большевизм, ленинский плановый подход, учет и контроль, педагогические идеи А.С. Макаренко, новый человек, утопизм, иррационализм.

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## ADVENTURES OF THE KINGDOM OF REASON IN THE LAND OF BOLSHEVIKS<sup>2</sup>

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### Abstract

The article aims to reveal the main features of the Bolshevik project to build the Kingdom of Reason in the USSR, associated with the radical reformatting of the relationship between the rational and irrational in the establishment of the socialist society. Theoretical sources include the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, linking the construction of a new communist society to the demystification of social relations and the elimination of alienation and reification; the writings of Vladimir Lenin and other prominent figures of the Soviet state, devoted to the organization of planned economy

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and the widespread implementation of rational management methods; and the works of the outstanding educator Anton Makarenko, aimed at developing and implementing the idea of educating a new Soviet person. The article posits Bolshevism (Leninism) as the Russian version of socialist transformation, inheriting its fundamental ideas from the French Enlightenment, including the concept of the Kingdom of Reason, manifested in the system of rationally organized planning, accounting, and control. However, in practice, the development of this system, taken to its extreme forms, gave rise to a number of utopian projects that became embodiments of irrational thinking. Thus, the original idea to build the Kingdom of Reason underwent a transformation into its opposite. Nevertheless, the authors of the article believe that the Soviet model of a rationally organized social structure can be considered, if not fully realized, then overall a fairly successful project of building the Kingdom of Reason in a socialist state and methodologically correct socio-pedagogical system for shaping a new person.

Keywords:

French Enlightenment, Kingdom of Reason, Marxism, Bolshevism, Lenin's planned approach, accounting and control, Anton S. Makarenko's pedagogical ideas, new Soviet person, utopianism, irrationalism.

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## Introduction

Studying the history of the Soviet society, modern researchers appear to face the necessity for thorough investigation of spiritual and ideological contexts in which a new society had been born. For that purpose a proper methodology is required, as both foreign and Russian authors fairly remark (Fitzpatrick, 1992; Clark, 1993; Putnam, 2002; Mazur, 2016). One of the fundamental issues that provides us with a more or less complex comprehension of those contradictory transformations taken place in modern society is the issue of the correlation between *rational* and *irrational* in social practices. This issue came into the focus of political philosophy in the late 20<sup>th</sup>, early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The relationship between rational and irrational has acquired a purely practical character with the rapid development of industrial technologies and management as it was mentioned in some contemporary works (Bachelard, 1987; Mudragey, 1994; Shvyrev, 2003; Hübner, 1996; Searle, 2001; Horkheimer, 2011).

However, it should be noted, that the problem of how *rational* and *irrational* were embodied in those revolutionary and transformative activities performed by the Soviet state leaders was rarely considered in scientific literature. It has become the subject of special attention only in the works of several researchers (Rusakov, 1998; Rusakova & Rusakov, 2022).

Radical reformatting of the Russian society based on the principles of Reason and Marxist-Leninist ideology was closely associated with educating *a new person*. It should have been a person of a new socialist formation to have become the main social force of the revolutionary transformation of the society. His consciousness

should have been charged allegedly with attractive images of a bright and rationally organized society of the future. This problem has been reflected in a number of works belonging to both Russian and foreign researchers (Fritzsche & Hellbeck, 2008; Kur-Korolev, 2011; Porshneva, 2017); some of these researchers critically assessed the achievements of the Soviet state in educating a new person. First of all they noticed ideological extremes of the educational Soviet discourse (Kur-Korolev, 2011, p. 376) and how the dream of a educating a new person became subordinated to the goals of political authorities (Fritzsche & Hellbeck, 2009, p. 322).

However, different contemporary researches seem to assess the experience and achievements of educating a new person in a positive way, especially when putting them into a context of achieving goals set by the Soviet state, i.e. educating a reasonable, literate, enlightened Soviet citizen of those years. Especially today it has become a common practice to evaluate the educational system developed by Anton Makarenko very positively, and above all, his methodology of education conducted through the collective labor (Ilaltdinova, 2011; Frolov & Ilaltdinova, 2012; Malkov, 2012; Sannikova, 2013; Boguslavsky, 2018). In the context of our research, it is worth mentioning that Makarenko formulated his approach relying on the rationalistic character of the educational process itself.

The Marxist-Leninist idea of rationally-based reformatting of the society was embodied in different economic, industrial, cultural and educational practices, which the leaders of the Soviet state in the 1920s – early 1930s welcomed with a great enthusiasm. However, this enthusiasm resulted into rationality transforming into its opposite, which, in particular, manifested itself through a variety of fantastic social projects, irrational in their basis.

In this regard, the main purpose of our research is to conduct a theoretical analysis of rationalistic ideas and practices implemented by the leaders of the young socialist state in the early years of Soviet power. Among the main objectives of this research we see to consider the genesis and strategic guidelines of Vladimir Lenin's universal plan for organizing a rational management of the economy; to analyze Makarenko's ideas in relation to rational methods of educating a new person through collective labor; to identify contradictories of the historical process associated with building the Kingdom of Reason in practice.

### **Background of the issue**

The idea that human society should be transformed on the basis of Reason and its principles became dominant in the philosophy of the French Enlightenment. The concept of the Kingdom of Reason reflects the possibility of achieving a social ideal and universal harmony by rejecting various kinds of human prejudices. That may become possible when a society relies on the laws of reason and rational control over social processes. In practice, this ideal, according to Friedrich Engels, turned out to be an expression of bourgeois-based organizing of economic and socio-political life, when *thinking mind becomes the only measure of everything that exists, and all traditional ideas have been considered unreasonable and discarded as old trash*

(Engels, 1961, pp. 16–17). According to Engels, the actual realm of reason to flourish was nothing more than the be a bourgeois democratic republic (pp. 16–17)

Classical Marxism saw itself not just as an heir to the progressive line of Enlightenment ideology, but as a force able to overcome its limitations. The radical change of the Method declared by the founders of Marxism required also a revision of many philosophical concepts. This revision resulted into establishing a different attitude to the traditional dilemmas of the past, including the dilemma of *rational* vs. *irrational*. Along with the new concepts being developed (such as socio-economic formation, productive forces, the way of production, basis and superstructure) old concepts (such as matter, consciousness, subject, object, essence, phenomenon, etc.) also happened to be reformed and reformulated.

It's obvious that the dilemma of rational and irrational, which already reached its limit in terms of philosophical rationalism and irrationalism, was just an imperfect manifestation of the real problem that the predecessors of Marxism at best only posed. For example, it was Engels who expressed the necessity to create a rational dialectic by demystifying the positive core of Hegelian dialectics. Karl Marx used the rational and irrational categories in his *Capital* only to demonstrate the fundamental difference between him and the Enlightenment tradition.

Lenin appeared to have seen all these ideas being not implemented into practice, but they still could be used as more or less clearly articulated instructions for further doings. That is why Leninism was always grounded on the bundle of principles: a rational understanding of the essence of nature, society, thinking and demystification of these; reasonable control over them as a form of dominating over spontaneous nature of social relations. This trend could be traced in the works of Marx and Engels, who associated the construction of a new communist society with demystification of public relations and destruction of alienation and reification. The new Kingdom of Freedom was to become not just The Kingdom of Reason, but The Kingdom of “Producers bound Together” who reasonably controlled their social existence.

All the principles forming the bundle are fundamental and thus required a proper articulation into practice. What else should be mentioned is that we should remember not all of Marx's works were published and known at the time of Lenin. Moreover, Lenin was involved into everyday political struggles which allegedly burdened the solution of theoretical problems. Nevertheless, it is through analysis of his heritage, as well as works of other Soviet leaders, we are able to reveal how the fundamental ideas of Marxism regarding rational reorganization of a society in the process of the socialist revolution were embodied into practice of building socialism in Russia.

The general idea was that revolutionary masses had to create a reasonably organized society. But what should this “*reasonably organized society*” mean? The communist ideal of this society proposed by Marx reveals itself in *the structure of the social life*, and in order to clear this structure *the mystical veil* of the material process of production must be thrown off. (Marx, 1961a, p. 90). Returning to this idea from time to time, Marx tried to unravel it further, discussing that only a free union of people is able to rationally regulate the metabolism of society with nature, put it under control (Marx, 1961b, pp. 386–387).

Engels also attempted to make this idea more accurate, emphasizing that *the conditions of life that surrounded people and still dominated over them now fall under the power and control of those people who for the first time become real and conscious masters of nature*. Then he also added that *the laws of people's own social actions, which have opposed them to the laws of nature, would be applied with full knowledge of matter this time and. And only from this moment would people begin to create their own history quite consciously* (Engels, 1961, p. 295).

These fundamental ideas appeared to be the starting point to the Russian Bolsheviks for planning socio-political transformations. And they emphasized the fact that new socio-economic and political relations were to be created in the process of deliberate actions, since, unlike the bourgeois social system, a new system is not likely to spontaneously arise from the depths of the previous order. Lenin, even before the Bolsheviks came to power, had expressed the idea that accounting and control were to be the main things required to impose the correct functioning of the first phase of communist society (Lenin, 1974a, p. 101). He was considering both accounting and control as the essence of socialism (Lenin, 1974a, p. 97)

As we can see, *the mind of the masses* began to shape in the form of a special type of state power, which happened to be mass representative organizations. Thus, an extremely dangerous and risky path begins that leads us from the heights of a theoretical schemes into the midst of empirical phenomena of political struggle. It's risky, because possible misunderstandings, ambiguities in the original scheme will inevitably come into the light. The idea of an organized, planned and consciously implemented form of state power presented by Lenin was unprecedented. It differs much from that idea of "associated producers" conveyed by Marx as the basis for the rational reorganization of the society. For example, Lenin wrote that *a socialist state can arise only as a network of productive and consumer communes that conscientiously take into account their production and consumption, save labor, and steadily increase its productivity* (Lenin, 1974c, p. 185). It was an old socialist idea that had been already discussed in the framework of utopian socialism by Fourier, Saint-Simon and Owen, Bakunin, Kropotkin, etc.

### **Modification of the initial bases**

Classical rationalism placed the source of Reason in a kind of *natural light* which falls on every ordinary person. That was quite a controversial idea, since classical German philosophy emphasized that ordinary rationality could not comprehend the paradoxical nature of scientific truths. Reason reduces the whole matter of things to formal logical correctness and consistency, in extremes – to usefulness and efficiency.

Marx emphasized the conscious control over the human activity. Lenin shifted the emphasis to mass character, universality, inclusiveness of control and the special properties of the carrier: the revolutionary masses, the working people. In other words, the whole matter must be decided by the revolutionary instinct of the masses, which is the carrier and criterion of Reason in the last instance. The Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants should only express their instincts. But the gap in the transitions

from one element to another, the lack of agreement, has already arisen. After all, according to Marx's idea, it was associated producers who should take control over uniting people into society.

But is it possible to cover all the life foundations of a human as a social being? Most likely, neither Marx nor Engels, knew for certain in what form this was possible. Lenin either did not clear out this question when he was talking about universal, all-pervading accounting and control. But the logic of the political management and political struggle required complete certainty here, which could even lead to institutionalization.

In addition, emphasizing that the mind of the masses is shaped in their revolutionary creativity, it was impossible to overlook the ability of this mind to break something (e.g. "we will destroy the whole world by force" slogan), however its abilities to create something, which was proclaimed with enthusiasm in theory, turned out to be very controversial in practice. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the boundaries of mass consciousness were complexly enough presented in social thought (e.g., Gustave Le Bon's works).

Lenin's initial inquiry for a reasonable way how to organize the life in a given society shows how difficult is to overcome the principles of Reason and rationality, which grew out from the capitalist industrial civilization. The revolutionary transformation of a society was carried out under the idea of turning a man of labor into a true master of his destiny, the subject of the historical process. However, it was a too complicated task that fell on the Bolshevik's shoulders, not just to organize accounting, and control over the largest enterprises, but also to *transform the state economy into a single mechanism when hundreds of millions of people are guided by one plan* (Lenin, 1974a, p. 7). In all this duty Lenin saw, first of all, the task of ensuring the victory of a conscious planning, due to the struggle for control and was the greatest one ever, it had world-historical significance, *it was the struggle of the socialist order against the bourgeois and anarchist individuality* (Lenin, 1974d, p. 185).

Let's pay attention to the fact that, apparently, this idea has to be *implemented* to the consciousness of masses, state control was also implied there. The mind of the masses and the will of the state were imperceptibly identified by Lenin, nevertheless they are so different in nature; all the consequences of such identification will soon manifest themselves.

In Lenin's works relating to the early years of the Soviet period, we are constantly confronted with attempts to define, formulate and develop in detail both the alleged "free association of producers" and the control mechanism over them, as accurately as possible. Initially, his idea was rather vague and presented itself in the form of some consumer-marketing communes. However, in the "Outline of the plan of scientific and technical works" Lenin considered that *rational organization of industry in Russia from the point of view of the proximity of raw materials and the possibility of the least loss of labor was possible in terms of the largest industry and especially trusts, concentration of production in a few largest enterprises* (Lenin, 1974e, p. 228).

However, we remember his idea that the capitalist organization of labor is incompatible with rationality, and there is nothing yet in these arguments that is beyond



the efficiency provided by trusts and corporations. The idea is being intensively carried out that *not a single product, not a single pound of bread should be out of account, because socialism is, first of all, accounting* (Lenin, 1974b, p. 57).

And, it is emphasized that the whole society will be *one office and one factory*, with equality of labor and equality of wages (Lenin, 1974a, p. 101) and what the Bolsheviks needed mostly was a *slender, strong organization, and probably millions of people working as accurate as the clock works* (Lenin, 1974f, p. 155).

How is that possible? It seems to be a Laplace's view of the socio-economic universe: to set the initial conditions with unambiguity and accuracy in order to calculate the future, which is pre-determined! Moreover, we note a characteristic detail here: control is thought to be direct, not mediated, say, by finances and market.

In this instance, Marx thought there can be nothing more misleading and absurd than to assume that the control of united individuals over their aggregate production could be based on the exchange value and money (Marx, 1946, pp. 101–102). The same approach can be followed in Lenin's directives, such as the one concerning *a slender, strong organization, and hundreds of millions of people working as accurate as the clock works* (Lenin, 1974f, p. 155); and that concerning *organizing the people from the first to the last person, organizing accounting over production, control over consumption* (Lenin, 1974c, p. 263).

It is quite obvious that such organization can only be based on typically rationalistic ideas of Enlightenment, where rationality is understood as universal calculability and attainability, which logically leads to universal, and therefore, formal equality (which was unacceptable in the Marxist tradition). Therefore, formal equality could not be reached by the market because *each member of the society, performing a certain part of socially necessary work, should receive a certificate from the society. According to this certificate, he should get a corresponding amount of products from public warehouses of consumer goods* (Lenin, 1974a, p. 92).

It all sounds like a quote from Thomas More's Utopia, which actually had a longer title: "A book as useful as it is funny". Later, Lenin would say, assessing this period, *that they made a mistake having decided to perform a direct transition to communist production and distribution, having believed that without a period of socialist accounting and control, it was impossible to approach even the lowest stage of communism* (Lenin, 1974g, pp. 157–158).

This claim for universality, which is typical for Laplace, considered all conditions at once, created practical difficulties at the level of public administration: Lenin, as chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, constantly complained that the supreme executive power is drowning in the ocean of minor concerns, that everyday routine prevented him from seeing the general picture. In the last years of his life, these complaints became more and more persistent, and he began to fall into rage because of official red tape, bungling, unproductive work of the bureaucracy. Nikolai Bukharin had to note that the Bolsheviks appeared to be *building control over control, control squared, control cubed, and at the end of the day, there was control everywhere*<sup>4</sup> however, *stealing all the same took its place* (Bukharin, 1988, p. 312).

All-pervading control, which does not leave any dark corner of life, became the signature of that time. Guided by rational principles, Bolsheviks strived to reorganize not only *Rabkrin* (People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection), but also matters of everyday life, nutrition, marriage, family. Moreover, they proclaimed the necessity to *breed* a new type of human being. In order to do that a new educational system had been created aimed at educating a person for the future communist society. Crowds made their pilgrimage to the colony established by F. E. Dzerzhinsky, where one of the greatest teachers, A.S. Makarenko reformed juvenile criminals and street children into citizens of the new world.

### **Educating a new person in Makarenko's perspective**

While Russian Marxists were trying to perform a scientific management of socio-economic and political processes through accounting and state regulation of public life, an outstanding Soviet teacher Anton Makarenko considered his major goal to be the education of a new person in accordance with socialist-based principles as well as Lenin's logic of building reasonable social relations. In one of his letters A. S. Makarenko mentioned that his world was exactly *the world of the organized creation of a person according to precise Leninist logic* (Makarenko, 1986, p. 30).

One of the basic principles of Makarenko's educational system was planned, state management of public education in a given socialist society. In his opinion, *there could be no socialist society without social education and it was absolutely impossible to imagine that in a plan-based state, education was beyond the remit of the state* (Makarenko, 1984a, p. 27). Considering the principles of educational work, conducted with each member of the society, Makarenko emphasized there was a direct connection with common sense and with general logic of economic activities because *in the commune, any pupil should not feel like an object of the educational system, he or she should feel the exact logic of our common economy and those requirements of common sense that are imposed on him from our life* (Makarenko, 1983, p. 48).

Another important principle of his educational system is to unite theoretical and practical knowledge of a teacher. According to Makarenko, educational theory should be based on generalization of practical experience of the educational process rather than on abstract propositions. As one of the contemporary researchers noted, *Makarenko was relying on his personal experience of working with groups consisted of disadvantaged adolescents and he proved that the effectiveness of educating a personality becomes prominent through implementation of the entire educational process as an integral system* (Malkov, 2012, p. 190). This researcher also added that *without this integral system, it is impossible to solve the task of educating a citizen, since his prospects are exceptionally wide, he is interested in everything that happens both in his country and in the rest of the world* (p. 190).

The elemental nature of Makarenko's educational system is revealed through rational organization of any collective activity which Makarenko always granted with significant social and educational value. He scrutinized in detail the principles of internal organization of any educational team, requirements imposed by them

on pupils, various methods of disciplinary actions, forms of control, self-governance. For members of his commune, Makarenko found very important to develop the feeling and understanding of commonwealth through their collective labor. So, for example, his pupils were involved all together in farming, theater, orchestra, events and hikes organization, they were producing electric drills, cameras, while receiving professional qualifications: *every complex production is all the better because it develops taste and satisfies inclinations... In the production of “feeds” we have a large drawing shop, where several dozen draftsmen are working, we also have a planning department, and a control department, and therefore, each pupil could show his personal his inclinations* (Makarenko, 1952, pp. 63–64).

According to Makarenko, each member of a labor collective could become a senior, which gave each pupil a chance to try himself as a leader. He also believed that without this educational system, the only thing people were able to fulfill was simply “growing up”, i.e. becoming adults, especially those poorly adapted to life, weak-willed, unable to overcome difficulties. Makarenko was convinced that *by providing members of his commune with qualifications related to secondary education, they at the same time acquired diverse organizing abilities*. In addition to that he remarked on the importance of them *to participate in solution of industrial, economic and social issues for members of the commune, while that was the most valuable canal for their social energy to be channeled. However, that was not about the energy of people who refused their personal lives, that was a reasonable social activity of people who understood that public interests should always predominate personal interests* (Makarenko, 1984a, p. 258).

Makarenko’s ideas concerning the issues of education are closely intertwined with Lenin’s ideas of accounting and control, due to *any normal administrative and routine work of all self-government bodies should be recorded very accurately*. In this respect he also mentioned *it is desirable for such accounting to be concentrated in one place, e.g., at the secretary of the Collective Council. Such accounting would make it possible to free self-government bodies in the sphere of education from loads of tedious paperwork* (Makarenko, 1951, p. 20).

In his educational practice, Makarenko faced some very complex problems, which were sometimes insoluble in terms of rationality. Among them he saw issues of sexual education, which, in his opinion, could only be damaged with a purely rationalistic approach, turning this education into a cynical analysis of relationships. According to Makarenko, *an open and too premature discussion of sexual issues imposes a roughly rationalistic perspective of the sexual sphere upon the child, lays the ground for cynicism with which sometimes an adult so easily shares his intimate sexual experiences with others*. Makarenko insisted on any form of sexual education to be interpreted only as *the education of love, i.e., a great and deep feeling which embraces life, aspirations and hopes* (Makarenko, 1984b, pp. 56–57).

Consequently, this well-known organizer of children’s and youth communes in the first years of Soviet power, did not limit himself with the proposed rationalistic approach concerning education of young citizens. At the same time he suggested some irrational aspects to be the part of his world-view – sublime feelings of love.

## The cult of science and the flourishing of rationalistic mythology

Scientists, politicians, poets celebrated the power of science and scientific planning. For example, Alexander Bogdanov devoted several of his works to discussing them, including his “Tectology”, where he attempted to express the idea of a national economic plan precisely: *what kind of economy can be called planned?* Bogdanov described it in terms of *everything being harmoniously coordinated on the basis of a single, methodically developed plan, while the principles for this coordination can be established only from a scientific point of view* (Bogdanov, 1989, p. 274).

The application of a scientific approach to production process, according to Bolsheviks, makes it possible to rationalize and control products flow on the part of working masses, thereby narrowing the space of spontaneous market, as well as poorly managed relations of production and exchange.

In this regard, the atmosphere of that historical period very much resembled the one of the Great French Revolution, not only because the latter was referred to, quoted, and even copied. The merciless criticism of all previous orders (the so-called *Ancien regime*) was inspired by the belief in the universal triumph of Reason, which, in particular, was expressed in the creation of a very artificial cult of the Supreme Rational Being in France at that time and the renaming of churches into *Temples of Reason* (Aulard, 1892, pp. 199–204).

Very similar things occupied the ideologists of the Russian Revolution in 1917. Outstanding minds and great abilities were put at service for transformation of Russia, which should be done by asserting rational principles to everything, with Science being the embodiment of Reason. The atmosphere in the Soviet society was rather tense, with *reasonable* (i.e. scientific, rational, conscious, planned, etc.) was opposed to *unreasonable* (i.e. spontaneous, unconscious), and both sides were characterized in absolute extremes.

In the same way as during the Great French Revolution, the cult of Reason was formed in Soviet Russia, and it was celebrated by poets, artists, writers, actors, etc. For example, in order to celebrate the three-year anniversary of the October Revolution in Petrograd a group of talented artists (Evreinov, Kugel, Petrov, Derzhavin, Annenkov, Temkin among them) staged an unprecedented open-air performance, which was called “The Capture of the Winter Palace”, with 8,000 moving extra involved, orchestra, and the Aurora having fired the cannon, as it had happened on October 25, 1917.

It seemed to Bolsheviks that the most important rationalistic ideas were reflected in this Cult: the mind of the Revolution could reproduce any historical event with confidence of presenting it in all details, exactly as it really was, and in terms of its Essence. And here there was already a possibility to recreate the events a new. An outstanding personality of this period, Aleksei Gastev, the organizer of the Institute of Labor was committed to a radical transformation of all types of human activity on the basis of their rationalization. The meaning of this rationalization was to decompose each employee’s behavior into the primary elements, and then weed out all unnecessary, useless and ineffective, recreating finally the most rational and productive action. All methods of labor activity had to be illuminated

by a reasonable and critical analysis and, as Hegel used to say, either justify their right to exist or be discarded.

As we can see, the bloom of rationalist mythology was diverse in its manifestations. The policy of War communism disturbed this mass utopian consciousness, which was preoccupied with Rationality: theoretical rationalism (i.e. rationalistic mythology of Reason) has retired to the socio-psychological shell. But such a deliberate (or not) flirt with the myth, as Thomas Mann would say later, might be very dangerous. Moreover, flirt is dangerous not only with the myth of Race, Soil and Blood, but also of Reason. Extraordinary minds were able to discern these dangers. As a reaction to rationalistic utopias, several literary dystopias appeared to depict disastrous consequences of the mythology of Reason that have been implemented into practice. Evgeniy Zamyatin was one of the first to point out them in his novel named 'We'.

### **Institutionalization of the rationality paradigm**

The history of the Soviet society demonstrated how quickly the worst fears concerning this flirt with the myth of Reason have been confirmed. Socio-political institutionalization of the Enlightenment paradigm with its claim for rational universality and direct control, led to the "eternal and all-conquering teaching" becoming the only legal theory of the time. The party "of the new type" became the one and only subject, which at the same time appeared to be *the mind, the honor and the conscience of the epoch*. The universal state based on such a theory and ruled by such a subject of power demonstrated complete political control over all life aspects of the society. Vladimir Shvyrev rightly pointed out that *prevailing ideology of scientism was very far from the true spirit of science which is always associated with critical attitude and supremacy over illusions*. However, he noticed that the ideology *tried to speak on behalf of science and proclaimed science to be officially of ideological value* (Shvyrev, 1992, p. 92). This was the key difference between the Communist ideology and totalitarian ideologies of that time, such as racism, chauvinism, religious fundamentalism, etc. They all referred to irrationality rather than science. It was fundamentally important for Shvyrev, that such metamorphosis of rationality in the Soviet state was determined not only by external, social factors, but also those inherent to the very nature of rational knowledge (p. 92).

The institutionalization of Soviet rationality resulted into both explicit and implicit disputes between Marxism and classical rationality of the Enlightenment. Marxism in its original version (Marx, Engels) explicitly declared a break with the classic tradition, which concerned the fundamental categories of consciousness, reason, and human being. Marxism in its Soviet version (i.e. Marxism-Leninism) asserted a revolutionary break with entire philosophical tradition of preceding times (rationalism, idealism, metaphysics). At the same time, Lenin, in his "Philosophical Notebooks" had to assume that there was still a huge task to be solved: to revise the content of all philosophical knowledge, to relieve it from archaisms, to reformulate philosophical categories and traditional philosophical problems.

At the same time, it is a common mistake to simplify the real complexity of both eternal philosophical problem and powerful idea of reason-based reconstruction of the society proposed by Marxism. We should admit, the idea of total calculability, which was implemented not only in the research but also in practice, was impressive. At the first glance, fantastic opportunities have been presented to the Soviet society: five-year plans for economic development of a huge country, amazing achievements of those who rationally organized the whole process, outstanding records of athletes and pilots who calculated their success in advance, alteration of the entire social structure, landscape, climate, and finally, person!

Manifestation of such universal calculability transformed mass consciousness on purely rational principles. Mass consciousness has been purified from everything dark, obscure (from everything based on unconscious impulses, feelings, intuition). From this point of view, a military campaign was launched against various kinds of prejudices, misconceptions and ignorance. However, blind faith in ultimate triumph of certain ideas, patterns, and programs has immediately become really obsessive, such as collective duty to the society has become obsessive. Any feelings and beliefs appeared to be legal only when they were matters under control.

An impressive form of calculability was all-pervasive control, which meant awareness and universality of accounting: from birth rate and food production to traffic regulation, Siberian river flow, climate, etc. From the very infancy of a person he or she became accustomed to various forms of control: economical, political, ideological, administrative, psychological. Everyone had to undertake at least a small amount of control functions. In all these accounting procedures, science was the object of official worship, which was able to calculate, justify, discover and predict everything in advance.

The rationalistic construction and alteration of the environment was also quite characteristic to this paradigm: rational nutrition, organization of labor, recreation, rationally organized life, housing, parenting. Everything that presented any value for the Soviet society was proclaimed to be reasonable, and everything that is reasonable should be implemented. However, the euphoria of waiting for rationalistic miracles resulted into indoctrination of the population, complemented by extensive punitive procedures.

One reason why reaching The Kingdom of Reason seemed to be very close was political will and political power combining with political reason. After all, since the age of Enlightenment, rationalistic thinking and theorizing has been known as something separated from practice, from real political actions. It seemed that the theoretical nature of the Enlightenment has finally been overcome and the Mind has eventually found the Body.

The rationalistic ideal of the light-bearing mind was socially and ethically attractive. The rational idea has been no longer remaining in dreams, but in fact it was formatting nature, labor, everyday life of people. And if in the early years of Soviet power, it was stated that all these working bodies (committees, councils) are only instruments of the collective mind of the masses, then soon quite certain repressive bodies began to claim the very role of the Supreme Mind.

Another reason for the proclaimed rationalization to influence social life was the combination of political reason and goodness. After all, in the European tradition the Kingdom of Reason challenged not only madness and obscurity, but also the Kingdom of Evil: the light of reason not only dispels the darkness of ignorance, but helps to defeat social evil. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, long after the age of Enlightenment, Reason was again recruited to the cause of political revolution, but it was not *natural light* anymore, it was *the collective mind of the working masses*, which inherited all the best, advanced and progressive.

Lenin's death seemed to be the final chord in this tragic symphony of Reason having been performed in that short period of utopian projects. His death resulted into apocalyptic despair experienced by the Soviet society: undoubtedly, it was perceived in the context of specifically rationalistic mythology as the death of *Reason himself*. The flavor of this mythology was successfully captured by Nikolai Valentinov in his notes where he described the autopsy on Lenin's body had been performed in Gorki, which lasted almost 5 hours. He pointed out that *the most detailed report on that matter had been given*, and it seemed to him that *never before in history and nowhere in the world had the deceased rulers of the country been represented in such a naked condition to the last, extreme anatomical degree* (Valentinov, 1991, p. 142).

Having tried to elucidate all the secret aspects of Lenin's death with the merciless light of scientific analysis, the political machine of the Soviet State, which was generated by Lenin himself, was behaving in a self-contradicting way: it immortalized the Leader and gave his remains a sacred prominence. That was the moment when a new important period started, with a new mystery of Reason, which was already passing to transcendent rationality. That was the highest of the possible rationalities, and it was revealed only to the competent authorities. Soviet society had been diving into *irrational rationality*.

## Conclusions

During the Soviet period, a real attempt had been undertaken to create a rationalistic model of the Socialist state based on the centralized system of planning, universal public administration and control in the fields of economics, science, health, art, educating a new Soviet person. Socialist system of education included models of rationally organized labor and different aimed at forming an attractive image of a person for the future. This model was successfully implemented the period of socialist modernization, the Great Patriotic War, the Cold War, with the nuclear parity having been reached and the first man having flown to the Space.

However, the classical problem concerning the relation between *rational* and *irrational* failed solution: educational rationalism remained untouched in the official Soviet philosophy and ideology, where various types of reasons continued to exist in different mystical formats. Representatives of a creative trend in Marxism have been developing the problems of *rational* and *irrational* under certain censorship, on the verge of being accused of opportunism and the threat of political repression. Critical studying of the new social reality was substituted by pseudo-rationalistic

*planning (the plans of the party are the plans of the people)*, in which utopian desires of political leadership were expressed (e.g. *catching up and overtaking, developing virgin lands, turning rivers, draining and flooding*, etc.).

The fetishization of Reason, which was characteristic of the Enlightenment, led in the Soviet years to the birth of a real cult of rationality. According to the principle *Science can do anything*, miraculous abilities were attributed to science, resulting into its mystification. Soviet type of rationality was by no means dialectical and materialistic, it was *irrational*, especially when identifying Marxist philosophy and science. The obvious expression of that was the definition given to the official ideology of the Soviet state: it was proclaimed as exclusively scientific.

The primitive understanding of rationality as a reasonable, formally logical activity was reduced in practice to efficiency (e.g. *rationalization of production*), which at the same time resulted into an equally primitive idea of *irrationality* being something illogical, absurd and, accordingly, inefficient. For example, all phenomena of everyday consciousness and religion were declared *irrational* in this sense. That is why the theory and practice of revolutionary transformations were predetermined to face their dead ends (methodological, ideological, praxiological). Many important issues remained unattainable for this theory, such as technological revolution (especially in biotechnology, social engineering); post-anthropology; post-industrial society, colonial system collapse and neocolonialism, global digital society and many others.

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