The Questionable Sustainability of "Development As Un-Freedom".

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PREFACE

This has been a painstakingly difficult study. At various stages of my writing I asked myself whether I was doing the right thing, touching upon subjects that many people whom I know hold dear. Though I have Latvian citizenship, I belong to the Russian minority that constitutes a considerable fraction of the population. The hostility between Russians and Latvians in this small Baltic state – not so long ago a part of the former Soviet Union - often gets reinforced by equating things "Russian" with "Soviet," and the negative connotations of both. Many of my compatriots still believe that Latvia was industrialized and saved from backwardness by the Soviet State, and thus its citizens ought to feel gratitude to their former rulers. Indeed, the Soviet citizens built bridges, roads, rail systems, houses, factories in all 15 republics of the former USSR. This creates grounds for thinking that the Soviet regime was on the whole a positive phenomenon which brought prosperity to poor countries. Many people still believe that life under the Soviet Union offered better opportunities for them and their families. Some of them made great personal sacrifices in the service of the Communist Party. And many deserve the utmost respect. I thus feel it necessary to explicitly state that it is not my intention to disparage the beliefs or hard work of these people, even it was necessary at times to take a critical stance toward certain aspects of the history of the Soviet Union

It was never my intention to write a dissidenting study in the tradition of Cold War literature. Nor did I intend to tell scary stories about the horrors attributed to the Bolshevik regime. Alas, the results of my research indicate that the history of repressions in the Soviet state still continues in Russia. My personal negative experiences included the constraints imposed on visitors of the archives I researched for this project: metal detectors, the police surveillance, prohibition

of photo-cameras and mobile phones, restrictions of copy services applied to the material issued before 1922 (including the original of *The Plan for Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R.*), etc. Conducting research under these circumstances was a difficult task. During my last visit to Russia I was interrogated by the FSB-officer about purpose of my study and my life in the Western countries. I was asked "to be patriotic," and I had to reply to questions like: "Are there any rumors about students at the University of Oslo being recruited by the Norwegian Secret Service?"; or "Which Non-Profit Organizations might serve as a cover-up for the Norwegian Secret Service?" Apparently, old habits of the notorious KGB die hard. Those incidents, combined with my observations of the current state of affairs in Russia – the ongoing censorship and propaganda of the ruling party resplendent in the media as well as the latest policies launched by the government in the spheres of the education and healthcare – led me to the belief that it is wrong to withhold the truth about social and economic "development" as conceived by the former Soviet commissars and now used by their successors for their own advancement. I can only hope that my people, confronted by the harsh economic conditions of our time, will think twice before again attempting development through of oppression and unfreedom[1].

[1] This term is not commonly used in English and the problems of using it are linked to multiplicity of meanings and connotations of freedom. The context of using "unfreedom" in this study has a distinctly Orwellian ring to it; as a sort of propagandistic or euphemistic way of avoiding discussing specific types of repression.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This study progressed with the support of my family and my friends who provided much encouragement. Very heartfelt thanks go to my little son Viktor, who at least occasionally could remain still giving me some time to write. His presence certainly taught me how to work under constant pressure and how to make the best use of available time resources. Especially I would like to thank my husband and my mother for believing in me, for their love and understanding.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND RUSSIAN TERMS

ETO: Electrotechnical Section of VSNKh

Glavelektro: Main Administration for Electrotechnology; replaced the ETO

GOELRO: State Commission for the Electrification of Russia

Gosplan: State Plan of the USSR (State Planning Committee of the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR)

kW: kilowatt

NEP: New Economic Policy

VSNKh: Supreme Council for the National Economy

ALCEC: All-Russian Central Executive Committee

SPC: Soviet of People's Commissars

PCF: People's Commissariat of Finances

SSNE: Supreme Council for the National Economy

Narkompros: Commissariat of Education

SLD: The Soviet of Labour and Defense

RCP (B): The Russian Communistic Party (Bolsheviks)

RSDLP: The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party

INTRODUCTION

Amartya Sen is a key figure in the discussion on “development as freedom” since the 1980s and in his work of the same name (Sen, 1999). This book focuses on international development, arguing that it amounts, simply, to the expansion of capabilities. Sen's concept of 'capabilities' is a revolutionary one, as it brings together perspectives that have been neglected in traditional economics. His ideas contribute to development economics and studies of social indicators—such as the UN's *Human Development Index*—by advancing a broader definition of development that includes, for instance, the increase in quality of life corresponding to the freedom to choose between different ways of thinking. He argues that development requires the removal of major sources of so-called *unfreedom*: “poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states” (Sen, 1999:3).

This thesis aims to take a closer look at Sen's assertion and inquire into the degree to which sustainable development (as the electrification in Russia can be conceived) was generated by unfreedom. The practical implications of this term corresponds to what Soviet leadership considered a positive and self-less sacrifice of individual freedoms for the benefit of what they proclaimed to be the recognized necessity of the Soviet state or the proletariat throughout the world. Fueled by positivist notions of industrialization and technological advancement, development in the Soviet Union began to liberate of human capabilities but not without a price. At the same time the progress involved depriving Soviet citizens of their basic freedoms. By discussing development as “a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen, 1999:3), this study attempts to cast new light on the Bolshevik Party’s electrification of Russia, with reference to its cost in human lives.

The main questions addressed in this study are the following: What was the historical and cultural context of the Soviet idea of development as unfreedom? What were the consequences of this development for the lives of the people it was designed to serve? Who were the agents of modernization, first in Russia, and later in the Soviet Union (the tsarist government, the Communist party, Lenin[i], engineers, etc.)? And finally, what is the legacy of unsustainable development in Russia, and what consequences does it have for the country's future?

Focusing on the role of electrification in the development of the Soviet state necessitates an interdisciplinary approach with a framework that can join perspectives from humanities and the social sciences. This will facilitate the tasks central to the discussion.

The thesis has the following structure: Chapter I, *The GOELRO-Plan*[2], describes Lenin's ambitious electrification initiative, which is interpreted in light of "unfree" development and economic change. The review of social, cultural, political and economic development provides a broader approach, filling the gap left by the previous studies on Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP), or NEP-period and the GOELRO-Plan. This helps lay the groundwork for an alternative account of the electrification project in Russia. Chapter II, *The Historical Background of NEP*, is devoted to a brief outline of the sequence of events which transformed the economic policies implemented by the Bolshevik Party. Chapter III, *The Authors of the Revolution*, provides a short description of the policies that, together with the industrialization of the country, were central not just to the foundation of the Soviet state but also to its subsequent development. These policies, as discussed in this chapter, were the bi-product of the state of mind of the intelligentsia of the Russian Empire long before the onset of the Revolution.

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[2] GOELRO is the transliteration of the Russian abbreviation for "State Commission for Electrification of Russia"

Chapter IV, *Modernization and the Banishment of Nature: Russian and Soviet Visual Art*, argues that a normative erasure of nature in the Russian psyche occurred, as seen in the gradual disappearance of the images of nature in the works of Russian artists. Finally, the meaning of "cultural development" in the Soviet state is the subject of discussion of Chapter V, *From Culture to Industry*, demonstrating how a secularized form of belief—the Soviet ideology—aimed to transform not only society but the very nature of man.

Re-reading Amartya Sen

Amartya Sen, who inspired the title of this study, is considered a sensation among late-twentieth-century economists for his insistence on discussing issues deemed marginal by most economists. He was praised by the Nobel Committee for bringing an "ethical dimension" to a field previously dominated by technical specialists. For him, freedom is central to the process of development in general, and is particularly applicable in analysis of the effectiveness of development strategies. Based on the example of the former Soviet Union, Sen argued that political liberties are necessary for sustainable development. He argued that governments should be measured against the concrete capabilities of their citizens for evaluative reason, and that the "assessment of progress has to be done primarily in terms of whether the freedoms that people have are enhanced" (Sen ,1999:4). Whether or not Sen's approach to economic growth holds any explanatory power in relation to Soviet Russia, or indeed for modern China as well, should be explored.

Sen's approach is closely related to Mary Therese Winifred Robinson's[ii] newest project *Realizing Rights: the Ethical Globalization Initiative*. Her goals are to foster equitable trade and decent working conditions, to promote the right to health care and more humane immigration policies, to strengthen women's leadership and encourage corporate responsibility. In a recent speech, she made a

connection between the tools civil societies can use under the human rights treaties to hold governments accountable, and the need to make the law work for everyone. As a priority for the 21st century she called for the expansion of the human rights agenda. She claims that this idea is a direct continuation of Sen's, attempting to build a corresponding legal framework. This thesis will further build on these ideas and promote studies of ethical development, which requires taking human rights beyond their more traditional political and legal realms and applying them to other fields.

Notes on Theory and Method

The historical approach is the angle of choice in this thesis, but I also combine the methods of the textual analysis, the study of the primary sources[iii], and field work. Juri Lotman's[iv] semiotic approach to culture and his concept of the semiosphere[v] provide the theoretical framework of this study, because they are helpful in reconstructing the system of signs and signs relations in Soviet Russia from 1917 to 1927. Semiotics allows a broad spectrum of sources to be studied holistically. For our purpose here "text" is any message preserved and enduring in a form whose existence is independent of both sender and receiver. Here the material under scrutiny includes such diverse "texts" as Russian clichés originating from the period of the Soviet Union formation, literary and non-literary works, posters, children books, the visual media, the mass media, advertising, etc. Samples of this wide variety of texts were collected in the *Moscow State Library* and the *St.-Petersburg National Library* archives.

Apart from archival materials, extensive secondary sources were utilized including mainstream literature about the NEP-period in the West. Works by Pipes, Conquest, Service, Coopersmith, H.G. Wells and several other authors give attention to the philosophical, historical, social and cultural backdrop of early Soviet electrification, which inform the present study.

To discover the processes through which meaning is produced and reproduced within a culture, I have used Michael Foucault's[vi] examination of power structures. His narrative approach to ways people imagine knowledge and knowing, as presented in *The Order of Things*, can help answer the question of how the new socio-political order was built and a new identity constructed in the early Soviet state. In this context, Antonio Gramsci's notes[vii] on international politics and economics are enlightening, especially his concept of hegemonic formations as a complex dynamic system comprising overlapping and interpenetrating subsystems. Gramsci's concept of Cultural hegemony explains how a complex culture can be ruled or dominated by one class in part through common sense, and those every-day practices and shared beliefs that provide the foundation for complex systems of domination. Although the analysis of cultural domination was first advanced in terms of economic classes, it can be applied more broadly. Gramsci's "state theory" envisions "historic blocs"[viii] or dominant configurations of material capabilities, ideologies and institutions as determining frames for individual and collective action. Elites, furthermore, are seen to act as "organic intellectuals" forging historic blocs. Neo-Gramscianism[ix] is a relatively new approach to the study of International Relations (IR) and the Global Political Economy (GPE). This movement analyzes how the particular constellation of social forces, the state, and dominant ideation define and sustain world orders.

Note on Western Sources

Robert Gellately began his book *Lenin, Stalin and Hitler*: *The Age of Social Catastrophe* without initially including Lenin as a major figure. But, as he tried to reconstruct the events leading to the Second World War, much of what he wanted to say lead him back to Lenin and the beginning of the Soviet dictatorship. I encountered the same trend while exploring the process of electrification in Soviet Russia. The emergence of the planning economy in the Soviet Union is rarely explained, but, when it is, studies about the country's

economic development and industrialization tend to concentrate on the period following the first Five-Years Plan, hardly without mention of NEP or The GOELRO-Plan, introduced and espoused by Lenin. Moreover, what is often missing in this perspective is a better understanding of Lenin's personal character and his motives for supporting NEP. This study, thus, diverges from the standard approach described above by giving attention to the social events which lead the Bolsheviks to build Communism by means of industrialization. Further focus is given to why specific institutional arrangements restricted the people's freedom.

The effect that the NEP-period had on economic development in Russia (and the Soviet Union subsequently) requires an inquiry into how it transformed the pre-conditions for the social and cultural development of the country, with particular emphasis on the psychology of so-called *Homo sovieticus*. This term was introduced by dissident writer Alexander Zinoviev[x], expelled from the former USSR for his views. The concept of *Homo sovieticus* refers to a new type of human being with behavioral qualities molded by the changed social conditions of Soviet Russia, representing the end product of the Soviet regime's efforts to transform the population into embodiments of the values of communism (Kelly, 2007).

CHAPTER I: THE GOELRO-PLAN

The main objective of this chapter is to offer a cultural and historical interpretation of the electrification of Soviet Russia by highlighting the Soviet development plans resulted in restrictions to freedom in the state.

The GOELRO-Plan was received as the first plan in the world for complex development of the national economy. This electrification project demanded highly-developed industrial centers, skilled personnel, and the availability of the resources to generate electric power. At the time, proposals for centralized, regional electrification of such large scale were only in development in Holland, and their benefits had only been discussed in England as part of a technocratic movement by engineers. Lenin, on the other hand, was throwing all his weight behind a scheme for the development of great power stations in Russia to serve all provinces with lighting, with transport, and industrial power.

> Can one imagine a more courageous project in a vast flat land of forests and illiterate peasants, with no water power, with no technical skill available, and with trade and industry at the last gasp? (Wells ,1920:29)

This question altogether bridges the bright idea of the sustainable development, which *The GOELRO-Plan* could have been, with the idea of "development as unfreedom" which disempowered citizens of the Soviet state for many years to come.

1.1. The Pre-Revolution Electrification

The energetic historiography of the Soviet state counts adoption of *The GOELRO-Plan* as the beginning of the electrification of Russia. The first practical results of *The GOELRO-Plan* implementation were obtained in the Soviet state in the late 1920s. A reasonable question, however, is whether the

rapid economic and industrial growth in the tsarist Russia in the late third of the XIXth century had not touched upon electrification?

Figure 1. Poster announcing that "30 November 1902 will be the concert-ball of the electricians," and indicates the development of the electrical engineering community in the Pre-Revolutionary Russia.

Extraction and mining of fuels (wood, coal, peat, oil, black mineral oil, kerosene) in Russia at the end of the XIXth century were mainly used as an energy source for generating "steam power" (i.e., individual boilers and steam-engines). Eighty percent of this power was used in the widely-developed manufacturing, metal-working, and food industries. Those three branches dominated the economy of Russia (85%). The remaining resources were used on the railroads and by river- and sea-fleets. When it comes to electricity, which is a product of more complicated technologies, Russia was economically not ready for its usage. This delay was related to the late abolishment of serfdom in 1861, as one of the indicators of socio-economic development.

In 1886, the *Society of the electrical lightening 1886* (*Society 1886*) was registered in Petrograd, founded by a group of industrial enterprises and banks. This society had several chapters in different cities and it promoted the development of electrification in Russia.

The first contract of the *Society 1886* in Moscow from 31 July 1887 was about the inclusion of the locomobil block-station in the electrification of the market

rows and rental rooms of the Passazhe-house, belonging to the merchant Postnikov. Later, in 1888 on George's Lane, a small locomobil electro-station was installed. In 1897, on the Riga's Quay the first steam-turbine electro-station was set in motion, with a 2000 horse power capacity (equals 1470 kilo watt). At first, this station used oil, but starting in 1915 it was fueled with peat, extracted from the Moscow area. The first electrical train was installed in Moscow in 1899. This is how *the electrical business* (as referred to in many books originating at the beginning of the XXth century) began in Russia.

An important historico-technological fact is that despite decades-long delays of the capitalistic development in Russia, delays in the commercial usage of the world's achievements in science and technology by the Russian market capital were minimal.

At the initial stages, the cheap labour and the absence of infrastructure based on electric power were opening the possibilities to raise money mainly in the sphere of the electrical lightening, which demanded comparably low capital investments. Gradually, *electric business* was getting involved in more capital-intensive services as the electric supply of the phone and telegraph networks, electro-medical equipment, fire- and railroad alarms, and city transportation systems. Demand for electric motors, wires, cables, etc. stimulated further development of the electro-technical industry, which in turn spurred usage of electricity for railroad electrification, and finally began the substitution of steam-power by electric power. The development of electric energy created demand for planning and construction of the different electro-stations, using different types of fuels. Pre-revolutionary Russia had already successfully passed those natural economic stages .

The pre-war years witnessed the increase of enterprises connected to the electro-technical industry from 12 to 22, with increases in their capital during the period

of 1910 to 1914 of 71%. In electro-energetic industry, the number of enterprises increased in those 4 years from 13 to 24, and their capital increased by 100%. The development rate of the electro-technical and electro-energetic branches in this short period were faster than the average capital increase in Russian industry. In 1915, during WWI, construction was finished on the electro-station on the Raushen Quay in Moscow, with a 21 thousand kilowatt capacity.

The most backward was the production of incandescent-light lamps. Import of the lamps prevailed. During the war, the incandescent-light lamps factory of the Society *Svetlana* was built in Moscow with electrified production.

In 1910 *The Petersburg Society of the Electric Transmission of the Waterfalls Power* was founded. With the participation of banks, financial groups were established for the realization of this power in the area close to Petersburg, then in Karelia. Later, and for the same purpose, the society *Imatra* was established. In 1913 and 1914 *The Petersburg Society of the Electric Transmission of the Waterfalls Power* introduced construction proposals of several electric stations, one of those with a capacity of 250 thousand kilowatts in Finland, which at that point in time was a part of the Russian Empire.

The rapids of the Dnepr-river also attracted attention. In 1912 a consortium of societies and banks was created to study possibilities of the creation the Volga-Don canal and the construction of the hydro-station on the Dnepr-river. Expertise for the powerful hydro-stations project was provided by German engineers.

1.2. Fuel Crisis

Today we are facing fuel crisis which has been perceived in peacetime. Nowadays it has become even more intense. The main reason of the current situation originated in the following: from one side discrepancy between

> fuel consumption and resource output, from other side – resource gluttony (Bukhgeym 1915: 1, my translation).

In several of his articles the head of the State Commission for Electrification of Russia, Gleb Krzhizanovsky, referred to the plan of the electrification of the country, proposed by Ernest Ottovich Bukhgeym, a Russian of German descent. It suggested electrification of an entire region with electric motors to replace imported coal and steam engines. In Coopersmith's book, E.O. Bukhgeym is mentioned, referring to opposition to foreign concessions (page 93-94) and the technical electrification proposal (used by Krzhizanovsky) from 1915 (page 116). A brochure from 1915, written by Bukhgeym and later used by Krzhizanovsky for references, contains an interesting calculation, based on comparison of the caloric effect of burning wood and coal:

> In order to achieve calorific effect by wood burning equal to definite amount of 7,000 caloric coal-burning fuels on which all the calculations of heat budget are made [fuel consumption of Petrograd industrial district in 1915 comprised about one billion pud[3] of 7.000 caloric fuels a year], three to four times the amount of dry wood should be burnt (Bukhgeym 1915:5-6, my translation).

His further calculations demonstrated that to deliver one million carriages of coal to a certain district a total of 3,5 million carriages of wood would need to be delivered to reach an equivalent caloric effect by wood burning. Another abnormality was that for lifting and delivering of 3,5 million pud of firewood[4] from the cutting place to the railway station using a one-horse cart of 25-pud lifting capacity it would be necessary to perform 140.000.000 horse trips plus almost the same amount of trips from the place of delivery to the plant itself. It is

[3] Russian old measure of weight, one pud equals to 16 kg

[4] According to Bukhgeym, in peace-time in 1914, annual industrial fuel consumption consisted of 4 billion pud. It was equal to 4 million carriages with one thousand pud capacity

clear that, within certain limits, wood heating instead of handling the problem of the fuel crisis only limited the fuel supply to Russian industry and hindered development of towns. Bukhgeym also made a point that it was much more reasonable and profitable to utilize forest resources for the production of furniture, paper, paper pulp, resin, vinegar essence, and other chemical substances instead of as wood for heating, which was extremely unprofitable. Having said that, it is understandable why the only solution to the fuel crisis at the beginning of the XXth century by many was seen as large-scale electrification:

> Electrification of our industry might help to increase heat recuperation for the production of driving force on 5 – 8 and even to 10 per cent. Consequently, if we suppose that calculations made by engineer Yasinski are correct and apply them all over the industry, we can get the following: instead of 4 billion pud of fuel we would need 1 - 1.5 billion pud only, besides half of the amount might be substituted by water power. At the same time we would perform the rail shipment of fuel necessary to supply industrial needs in casting, drafting, swaging, etc. (Bukhgeym 1915:7, my translation).

Bukhgeym largely promoted usage of water power resources, as the cult of hydropower was deeply entrenched in the mythos of electrification. He exemplified Sweden and Norway and compared those countries with the Petrograd industrial district in Russia:

> Sweden and Norway, countries which possess large-scale water power sources, in the supply of their industrial enterprises by driving force were fully dependent on Britain and, consequentially, on political collisions the country had been involved. But in the due time Sweden and Norway appreciated this fact and started to implement wide deployment of their

> waterfall energy for the aim of electrification. (…) Petrograd industrial district is also far from being poor in water resources and peat lands. Imatra, Kivach and Narva waterfalls, as well as Volhov, Ladoga, Luginsk and other rapids are located in this district (Bukhgeym 1914:2, my translation).

He also argued that if a project to supply the energy needs of Petrograd through electric power had been fulfilled—namely through use of the Imatra and Narva waterfalls, as proposed by engineer Dobrotvotski in 1896—the Petrograd district would not have experienced a series of crises based on insufficient equipment involved in fuel delivery. In 1920, his idea about the possibility of building hydro-stations near Petrograd was repeated in *The Plan of Electrification,* prepared for the VIII All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It was justified by the presence of factories, seaport, railroads, and a large population in Petrograd. As such, the Volkhov became a symbol of the electrified future as much as Petrograd's main power source.

Despite the great possibilities of hydropower, the opening part of *The Plan of Electrification* contained skeptical remarks about the construction possibilities of the hydro-stations in Russia and the costs it would cause. The skepticism was based on Western experience, which had shown that the construction of a hydro-station demanded six to ten years and cost three to five times more than thermal stations:

> Trend of the last years to use water power has quite strengthened its positions not only abroad, but also in our state; expressions such as "cheap hydro power", "falling waters free power", etc., are in a common and frequent use. They are the evidence of an extreme optimism among technicians and in the large population circles when it comes to the subject of the aforementioned question. However, we have to admit the fact, that even in the leading economical countries this matter hasn't received such a

> great development as it could be expected on the grounds of the recent judgments; and, in any case, the thermal power plants still don't give the first place to the water, except in such countries as Sweden, Italy, Switzerland, where the abundance of water resources is combined with fuel shortages (Krzhizanovsky et al., 1920:65-66, my translation).

The major problem was that Russia's hydro-power possibilities were (and remain) located mainly on the peripheries of the state. When it comes to country's interior, only the Ural region provides adequate sites for the utilization of the "white coal" energy. As the State Plan Commission has viewed it, the plains of European Russia and large plains of Siberia could use the hydro power only in the form of small plants, which could not exceed 1-2 thousands horse power, and in the majority of the cases these plants were limited to hundreds or even just dozens of horse power. As a result, those plants were seen as, to use the French term, *la houille verte*—the "green coal". At the beginning of the XXth century the "green coal" played a major role in France in the agriculture and small enterprises related to it. The qualifying adjective *verte*, as opposed to the "white" one, *blanche*, indicates that the sources of the energy are the rivers and watercourses, with the exclusion of snow- and glacial-fed torrents. Conversion of a mill or building a small hydroelectric station in the rural areas of Russia had proven to be cheap both in building and operation. Those "green coal" stations were based on existing equipment and peasant services while operating on local fuels.

1.3. The Future State

During his exile in Finland, Lenin worked on his last major tract, which permanently changed the discourse of left-wing politics. In *The State and Revolution* he outlined his vision of Russia's future. Citing the passages from the influential works of Marx and Engels that he considered suitable, "Lenin

postulated that two historical stages had to be traversed after the overthrow of capitalist rule" (Service, 2007:63). The new order would begin as an iron-fisted "dictatorship of the proletariat," expropriating the former exploiting classes and implementing the principal that "from each according to his capacity, to each according to his work[5]". It would soon mature, however, into a "commune state" in which ordinary citizens would manage all society's affairs through a direct democracy. Then the operational principal would at last be from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs. (Service, 2007)

The State and Revolution proposals, of course, were never applied; but it created the illusion of a "*radiant future*" and generated belief in the prophetic vision of Marx and Engels which kept Lenin's successors in power for seventy-four years.

> I cannot see anything of the sort happening in this dark crystal of Russia, but this little man at the Kremlin [Lenin] can; he sees the decaying railways replaced by a new electric transport, sees new roadways spreading throughout the land, sees a new and happier Communist industrialism arising again. (Wells, 1920:29).

Those views were even "scientifically" supported. In his book, *The USSR after 15 Years: Hypothesis of General Plan as a Plan for Building Socialism in the USSR*, L. M. Sabsovich states:

> The working class should know that socialism is a practical task to be performed within the next one and half of dozen of years and not only an ideal of distant future. The working class should understand why under the direction of the party it is able to build socialism after about 15 years, how it will be able and how it will build socialism (Sabsovich, 1929:14, my translation).

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[5] This statement was often featuring in the propaganda posters in the Soviet State.

Sabsovich's view of the project of building socialism called upon the need for a cultural revolution involving the complete changing of human nature. Changes in the mode of life and forms of existence of mankind were viewed as necessary. They included abolishment of individual households and liberation of women by means of increased use of public services, development of a complicated and mechanized system for cooking and having meals, expansion and improvement of the canning industry, public mechanized laundries, public bathhouses, factory-produced textiles, and mechanized home cleaning. Sabsovich viewed the need to raise children individually in each family as one of the reasons for maintaining the otherwise 'obsolete' individual household**.** According to him, they were too time-consuming and limited the possibility of educating professionals or public servants. In order to change this system he proposed "entrusting children to the state with their physical training and education…[in order to] organize such processes in a more rational and efficient way for children and society in general" (Sabsovich 1929: 130, my translation). Organization of new housing conditions demanded creation of "mechanic slaves" with substitution of the labour force with

> …a huge network of power plants that will cover the whole country and will supply power at largest distances, railway network extended several times, considerably improved water transport and intensive network of local roads suitable for freight traffic – all such factors will deprive modern cities of their advantages as industrial centers, allowing to distribute industrial factories in the whole territory of the Union, sometimes in combination with the largest state or with collective agricultural enterprises. (Sabsovich ,1929: 132, my translation).

Sabsovich's views were in line with the VIII Congress of the Soviets' adoption of the long-term (i.e. 10 years) plan for electrification of Russia "as the first step

of the great economic development." In general, the main scientific concept was redefinition of the national economy as an integral system. The key element in the development of such a system was electrification of the country. The energy sector was classified as a unified dynamic system, uniting generation, transmission, distribution, and utilization of electric and energy supply resources.

Figure 2. Poster "Victory of the Revolution lies within the cooperation of workers and peasants. Labours of the cities and villages shall keep abreast shoulder to shoulder against iron chains of landlords and factory owners of the world". On the background are seen buildings with the denotations "Izba-Chitalnja (House of Reading)", "School", "Library", "Quack's Point" , "Veterinary Point", "Rental Store", "Cooperation – able to obtain in credit". The queues are heading to the "Congress of the Soviets"-building. Apparently, in the left corner of the poster, a peasant is tilling land with the help of a tractor. In the right corner is smoke from the pipes. People are reading the newspaper, with the headline "One newspaper for every 25 households," and as a source of light they use an electric bulb. It is important to note the absence of intellectuals in the picture.

It is often said that *The GOELRO-Plan* was based on the idea of a rationing system developed by Carl Ballod (the Commission for the Electrification of Russia referred to him in the opening chapter of its electrification proposal). This reference makes *The GOELRO-Plan* the first-ever Soviet plan for national

economic recovery and development, and the prototype for subsequent Five-Year Plans drafted by Gosplan[xi] (the State Plan).

Carl Ballod was born in 1864 in Koknese (Latvia). After being a Lutheran minister in Russia, and from 1900 to 1902 a journalist in Latvia, he gained widespread reputation as an economist. During the First World War, while working at the University of Berlin, he developed the first comprehensive structure for equitable food distribution in an emergency. His most influential works are *Der Bankerott der freien Wirtschaft*, *Der Zukunftsstaat*, *Quel maximum de population notre terre est-elle en etat d'alimenter*, and *Garden Cities or Agricultural Cities? Der Zukunftstaat*. These works described how to organize a centrally planned socialist economy, and influenced the vision of Lenin and the Communist party on the feasibility of a planned economy (Coopersmith, 1994). The weak response of Western economists to his proposals was explained with the theory that Germany was not a socialist state; it only had socialistic premises.

1.4. "Wide-Ranging Ideas"

The Soviet state was getting ready for more wars. While fearful of its capitalist neighbors, it was also preparing to bring the socialist revolution to the world. At the same time, it had to count on its own resources. It is no wonder, as G.M. Krzhizanovsky[xii] recollects in *Lenin and Equipment*, that Lenin was so interested in the advance of technology (for example, he is known for recording eight of his speeches on gramophone records in 1919).

As Krzhizanovsky acknowledged, he knew Lenin for thirty years and their acquaintance was mainly based on Lenin's need for technical advice. On page 6 in *Lenin and Equipment* Krzhizanovsky recalls that one of the personal characteristics of the "leader of proletariat" was a great credulity in questions related to technical equipment and compulsion to implement new technology

without long considerations or theoretical calculations. Apparently, many knew of this obsession and tried to use it for their own advancement or economic benefit. Additionally, Krzhizanovsky recalls that among the "innovations," which were of particularly special interest for Lenin, X-rays were believed to be capable of long distance trajectory that would forever change manners of warfare. Those "magic rays" were the innovation of one fortunate adventurer, who for the advancement of his experiments brought a large colony of his kinfolk from the South to the electric station where he was placed with beneficial conditions given luxuries not allowed to the rest of society.

At the end of January 1919, Krzhizanovsky sent an article to Lenin on tasks related to electrification of industry, and on January 23 he received a reply letter with a request to write more such articles for a further publication as a brochure. In this letter Lenin complained about the lack of professionals with "wide-ranging enterprise" or "wide-ranging ideas" and asked if it would be possible to speak of the economic or state plan (i.e., task to the proletariat), rather than of the technical plan which would not concern as many people and not appear as urgent:

> Within about 10 (5?) years, we will build 20-30 (30-50?) stations all over the country within the radius of 400 versts (if not more); they will operate on the basis of peat, firewood, slate stone, coal, oil (it is necessary to make approximate evaluation of all resources of Russia). We will start purchasing necessary equipment and models right now. After 10 (20?) years, Russia will become "electric". (…) I believe that you could develop such plan – I repeat the state draft plan and not the technical plan. (Krzizhanovsky 1924:17, my translation)

The ideological reason behind *The GOELRO-Plan* was to distinguish Soviet Russia from the Russian Empire, where electrification received less attention

than construction of the rail-road because it did not appear as economically important. This attitude lasted until the Russo-Japanese War. The large loss of ships in the battle at Tsushima in 1905 created a demand for newly built ships in the West. Those ships were equipped with electrically-powered machinery for the systems operating the armament. As a result, new ships built on Russian shipyards after 1905 were equipped with mechanisms based on an electro engine. Furthermore, World War I was perhaps the single most important factor which forced the tsarist government to recognize the economic importance of electrification. A sharp increase in electricity demand for military needs brought electric power to the attention of state officials and industrialists. While the response to this demand came too late, and in a much disorganized manner, the rise in the economic importance of electric power stimulated a parallel political rise of Russian electrical engineers. Years of wars and revolutions created a political situation where electrification became the new state technology. Moreover, the slow pre-war diffusion of electrification and its weak introduction in rural areas made it possible for the Soviet government to claim sole responsibility for electrification of the country.

One of the major problems of the Soviet state starting from its foundation was the gap between reality and the idealized picture, as depicted in propaganda. However, the electrification project of the country was not the Soviet government's only ambition. The authorities had eagerly embraced other unrealistic plans to control all planning of the country, which first appeared in the adoption of *The GOELRO-Plan*. However, the timing for the great building projects was wrong. It was neither a "technology transfer,"[xiii] as the technique of zoning had never been implemented before on a large scale, nor was it a "technology advancement," as the country simply did not possess the resources for the groundbreaking solutions in the field of electrification.

It is often cited that the concepts of the centrally planned economy, *The GOELRO-Plan* and, subsequently, the Five Year Plan, can be traced directly to the influence of Taylorism[xiv] on Soviet thinking. Taylorism in the Soviet Union was advocated by Aleksei Gastev[xv] and 'the movement for the scientific organization of labour' (SOL). Building on those ideas, the Soviet state implemented a system where economic planning, a political bureaucracy, and technical elite divided control over the economy through institutions like the Gosplan or *The GOELRO-Plan*. While political concerns influenced Soviet planning, and engineers were politically persecuted, the political bureaucracy designed plans to achieve technical development, and used production price accounting as a technical, rather than economic measure. The Soviet planners used the gross output (valovaya produktsiya) to set their targets and measure their progress:

> Without a market mechanism to determine the value of credit, goods and services, [the Soviet planners] assigned arbitrary costs and prices to capital, labour, raw material and equipment. Most damaging of all to nature, the planning system treated all natural resources - land, water, mineral deposits and forests, for example - as state property, virtually as a free good the cost of which to the user was either minimal or nil (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:40).

Taking into consideration that mainly engineers were trained—people with a non-economic education but who could yet run an enterprise—their technically-focused thinking created a divide between manufacturers and consumers and their preferences. “In one infamous example, a nail factory was given a production target measuring the total weight of nails to produce. The factory’s managers found that the easiest way to meet the target was to produce exceedingly large nails, which were of no use to consumers” (Weil, 2005:276).

Post revolutionary planners had three technological choices, each with a different set of political, economic, and social assumptions and priorities. The possible paths were a conservative approach, desired by cities, of supporting their existing utilities; a radical approach of rapid rural electrification, supported by political and engineering advocates of social transformation; and a centralized approach of regional stations for Moscow and Petrograd, and later for other industrial centers, promoted by engineers, planners, and Communists with a technocratic leaning. The Communist party chose the third and most technically demanding approach, despite opposition from advocates of radical and rapid decentralized rural electrification and proponents of existing medium-scale urban utilities. Although justified on the technical criteria of maximizing economic rationalization and industrial development, the decision was inherently political. The importance of electrification ensured that authority over its development rested not in the leadership of the electrical engineering community but in the Communist party (Coopersmith, 1992).

1.5. From Bright Vision to Bitter Reality

The implementation of *The GOELRO-Plan* differed greatly from its creation; possibly, it absorbed resources better used in other spheres, hindering economic growth. Kzhyzanovsky was not hiding the fact that enounced attempts left actual construction behind, justifying those enunciations with the needs of propaganda. Referring to Sen, the role of transparency freedom—or rather its absence—was significant in creating the pattern of risk and improper investments. The Soviet state was never characterized as democratic (except in the official rhetoric), and the absence of the instrumental freedoms, such as the freedom of open discussion, public scrutiny, electoral politics, and uncensored media, made it impossible to call for reassessment of resources from outside the government.

Instead of generating a well-funded, well-organized, and centralized program to build regional stations, the drive to electrify split into competing factions which vied for the resources, especially in the slow economic recovery of 1921-1922. Bad planning resulted in a thin spread of limited resources, as partially constructed stations contributed nothing to economic growth. In June 1921 the government was forced to stop construction of all regional stations except for projects promising short-term results.

The GOELRO-Plan postponed the date of Volkhov station's opening to 1924-1925. Nonetheless, July 1925 found construction only partially finished. Swiss engineers only began installing the turbines in August 1925 and workers didn't complete the transmission line to Leningrad until November 1926. The hydro-station officially opened on 19 December 1926. Costs had also significantly exceeded the original estimates; the capital-intensive Volkhov project consumed 93 million rubles of the 229 million directly invested in regional stations from 1920 to 1926. The view of "development as unfreedom" is reinforced by these empirical connections. The heavy investment in the Volkhov raises the question of whether the capital-short country should have focused its resources elsewhere.

> In February 1922 Krzhizanovsky pessimistically forecast that the construction of the twenty-seven regional stations would demand ten to twenty years, which would be potentially more than twice of the original goal. In May, a major article claimed ongoing construction on thirteen of the twenty-seven stations. Half a year later, only ten stations were so described, work on two had stopped, and two other stations remained in the planning stage. The NEP shift of the political and economic environment toward decentralization and short-term, profitable operations was the major causative factor (Coopersmith 1992:201).

In 1926 Krzhizanovsky called the delay in hydro-station construction electrification's major problem. The situation of overpaying tens of millions of rubles only to speed-up construction process was weighed against the vision of massive dams feeding the country's vibrant industries tomorrow. The return to the pre-war dependence on British coal for the Soviet Russia was a politically impossible decision. Shipping southern oil and coal would strain the transportation system and contradict the concept of regional autarchy. Besides, oil was supposed to become a "valuta fuel" for export, and Gosplan urged the conversion of oil-fired stations to local fuels. However, as the economy and railroads recovered, utilities turned their interest to the Donets coal and Baku oil. The state has worked against itself by structuring prices in a way that the attraction of low-quality fuels was lower, instead of providing skilled staff, improving the quality of local fuels and availability of equipment.

> Local fuels suffered from unfamiliarity, variable quality, inadequate specialized equipment and trained personnel, unattractive costs, and no established organizational framework (Coopersmith, 1992:234).

An interesting comparison can be made with the construction process of the Hoover Dam in the Black Canyon of the Colorado River, on the border between the U.S. states of Arizona and Nevada. When completed, it was largest electro station in the world. Construction began in 1931, and was completed in 1936, more than two years ahead of schedule. The acceleration of the construction was a response to the Great Depression, to create more available jobs. During 5 years of construction, there were 112 deaths associated with the construction of the dam (96 of the deaths occurred during construction at the site). There are no records available to see how many people have died realizing the project of the electrification in the Soviet state.

1.6. The Great Bluff?

There is one disturbing question—what if *The GOELRO-Plan*, the great project of the rebuilding country based on its complete electrification, was never meant to be an enterprise of such proportions by the engineers who participated in its drafting?

Although electrical engineers occupied important government positions, they discovered that their monopoly of technical expertise did not give them a monopoly on decision making and resource allocation.

It took less than a year for the Commission for the Electrification of Russia to come up with the proposal. In the opening paragraph of their work there is the following amendment:

> We are deeply grateful for everyone who has helped to accomplish this extremely difficult task of the composition of the general plan of the electrification. The Commission is very clear about this work's drawbacks. The majority of the Commissions members were unable to devote themselves entirely to that scientific work which was stipulated by the very tasks given to the GOELRO. All members of the Commission work in the state establishments of the RSFSR and had to simultaneously participate in a current routine of those establishments. Maybe it is for the best. There will be others after us, who in more peaceful time with greater reserves of powers and means will continue our scientific analysis, correct our mistakes and develop greater perspectives (Krzhizanovsky et al., 1920:5, my translation).

Further reading of the proposal reveals that the Commission has regarded their work merely as a beginning, which could serve only as a material for the further development of the national economy plan.

Despite the decree issued by the VII All-Russian Congress of Soviets to create plan of building the network of the electric station within 2 months by the GOELRO Commission, the Commission's members described this task impossible to fulfill because:

> To create a plan for the national economy of Russia based on electrification is impossible without an understanding (…) of the perspectives of the national economy in general. (…) What does the national economy plan mean in its broad form? Can we give a prescription of such a plan for all countries and nationalities disregarding conditions of concrete place and time? Of course, not. Otherwise we would receive an empty, abstract formula, which lacks any real content (Krzhizanovsky et al. 1920:8, my translation).

Many participants of the Commission, while not being against *The GOELRO-Plan* in general, were considering its realization a matter of the future. Their main argument was that the most favorable conditions would allow finishing the construction of even the prioritized stations not faster than ten years. The time and resources were precious; the main task was to rebuild devastated country after the seven-year-long period of wars. The objecting voices were silenced with a counterargument that rebuilding the country, even without including the electrification program, was a long process anyway. The idea was to concentrate on the most important and sufficient directions of development, particularly electrification, and move that way without being distracted with the roughness of the other contours of the plan.

Another aspect which was used against the immediate implementation of *The GOELRO-Plan* was the lack of realism of this program. The reliable functioning of the electric stations was possible only if the accompanying electro-technical industry was in order. At that period of time the trust (a business entity) of the

Soviet electro-technical factories was devastated, with large damages to the factories resulting from the Revolution and the Civil War. Besides, all the key factories were built by the foreign companies, mainly German, and their continued operation was dependent on the support of plants abroad. The staff in those factories was comparably better qualified, which was important since the labour force crisis of that period was especially felt in the area of the highly qualified professions. This area previously was filled with a large percentage of foreigners who left the turbulent Russia as soon as they got a chance. Besides, even the full occupation of the factories in the pre-war period was not enough to satisfy the demand for the electro-technical equipment. The rest in the period from 1904 to 1913 was imported from Germany (86,6%), the U.K. (6%), and the U.S. (1,8%). Considering the state of the Soviet electro-technical factories and the occupation of the factories abroad with the inlands orders and the difficulties to import, the tasks of the electrification of Russia looked to many prominent electro-engineers very gloomy.

Despite that, The GOELRO-Plan, incomplete, full of drawbacks, lacking any exact numbers and calculations, was praised as a new state policy, as a future of the state. The reason for that could reside in the authority of Lenin, who stood behind the idea of the development of this plan.

Krzhizanovsky wrote in *Lenin and Equipment* that at the initial stage Lenin merely asked to develop special article on “the state plan” for the network of electric power stations with map attached thereto:

> Such plan should be developed now for the people to see and be captivated by clear and bright (rather scientific) prospects: let’s start working and within 10 – 20 years we will transform industrial and agricultural Russia into electric Russia. Let’s reach the certain number (maybe thousand or

> million horse powers or k.u.?? damn how the hell if I know) of "equipment-type slaves", etc. (Krzhizanovsky, 1924:8, my translation).

Vladimir Lenin's further initiative was the creation of the State Commission for Electrification. The Commission started working in February 1920. The more tasks were accomplished by the Commission, the greater it stirred the interest of Vladimir Ilyich. He got acquainted with several members of the Commission in person and with Krzhizanovsky's help became aware of all main aspects of their work. Lenin did not support the first draft proposals on activities related to electrification considering them too bare. In a letter to Krzhizanovsky from March 14, 1920 he specified what he wanted to see in The GOELRO-Plan. He wanted an article to prove or even to illustrate great benefits and necessity of electrification, which would compare the abilities to repair transport system, steam power, and agriculture based on old methods (i.e. based on human labour) and on the basis of electrification. For example,

> to restore transport using old methods – α million (according to pre-war prices), or α fuel +β working days are required.
>
> To restore on the basis of electrification
>
> -α-χ million roubles
>
> α-y fuel +(β-z) working days
>
> for the same $\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+\beta}$, but with effect exceeding the previous ….. times (Krzhizanovsky 1924:20, my translation).

Lenin needed the approximate figures to illustrate electrification-based cost for this article. He believed that a real professional will do such work within two days (if he will work qualitatively), taking either figures of pre-war statistics

(few—really few final figures) or approximations (approximation of first approximation[6]). Then he would get a storyline for propaganda. It was essential for him, and he insisted on popularization of electricity by all means—"By an example and not only by words," as he wrote in another letter to Krzhizanovsky:

> For such purpose, it is necessary to develop a plan for electricity supply for each house in the RSFSR.
>
> It will be a long period, since there will not be enough wires and other facilities required for 20.000.000 (40.000.000?) lamps.
>
> [I]t is necessary to arrange competition and activities of the people so that they would be ready to take actions immediately.
>
> Isn't it possible to develop the plan as given below immediately (approximate plan) ? (Krzhizanovsky 1924:23, my translation)

As it is seen from the letter, Lenin needed to create an illusion of the existence of some sort of plan of what to do next. His desperate actions inevitably had the unintended but predictable consequence of poor planning, reflected in the final form of the electrification proposal known as The GOELRO-Plan. He anticipated supplying all municipalities (10 – 15 thousand) with electricity within 1 year; all villages within 2 years.[7]

Russia in the Shadows by H.G.Wells contains a description of a meeting of the Petersburg Soviet in October 1920:

> The presidential bench, the rostrum, and the reporters remained, but instead of an atmosphere of weary parliamentarianism, we found ourselves in the

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[6] "Statistics," Lenin directed in 1921, "must be our practical *assistant*, and not scholastic." Scholars who would not assist, he said in 1922, were "patent counterrevolutionaries ... spies and corrupters of the student youth." (Feshbach and Friendly 1991:31)

[7] Number of villages, estimated by Lenin in the letter was " 1/2 – 1 million, probably, not more than ¾ million" (Krzhizanovsky 1924:23, my translation)

> crowding, the noise, and the peculiar thrill of a mass meeting. There were, I should think, some two hundred people or more packed upon the semi-circular benches round about us on the platform behind the president, comrades in naval uniforms and in middle-class and working-class costume, numerous intelligent-looking women, one or two Asiatics and a few unclassifiable visitors, and the body of the hall beyond the presidential bench was densely packed with people who filled not only the seats but the gangways and the spaces under the galleries. There may have been two or three thousand people down there, men and women. They were all members of the Petersburg Soviet, which is really a sort of conjoint meeting of its constituent Soviets (Wells, 1920:25).

Figure 3. Painting by L.Shmatko: *V.I.Lenin by the GOELRO-Map. The VIII All-Russian Congress of Soviets. December 1920.* 1957.

In December 1920 Gleb Maksimovich Krzhizanovsky presented an illuminated map of a future electrified Russia to the VIII All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Assuming that his audience was not significantly different from what H.G.Wells

saw in Petrograd—with shouts and interruptions and a debate “much more like a big labour mass meeting in the Queen's Hall than anything that a Western European would recognise as a legislature” (ibid.)—then, manipulating the language, Krzhizanovsky persuaded the Congress to approve The GOELRO-Plan with all its flaws and without long considerations. Its official title was *The Plan of Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R.*; to any Russian language speaker it can sound both as ‘plan’ and as ‘proposal’—a meaningful distinction between those words is very weak. Presenting the GOELRO-Commissions work as a ready-made plan for national economic recovery and development, not as a merely proposal, Krzhizanovsky could get his way quite easily, especially being supported by Lenin:

> We must show the peasants that the organization of industry on the basis of modern, advanced technology, on electrification which will provide a link between town and country, will put an end to the division between town and country, will make it possible to raise the level of culture in the countryside and to overcome, even in the most remote corners of land, backwardness, ignorance, poverty, disease, and barbarism (Lenin, "*Collected Works*", vol. 30, p. 335).

“…the above notes entitle us to call the lamps that will give electric light to our peasant Russia as the lamps of Ilyich” (Krzhyzhanovsky 1924:23-24, my translation).

I do not take stand that my interpretation of events, which draws on some letters, policy statements, memos originating the beginning of 1920s (see the Reference list) and *Recollections of the Veteran-Electrical Engineers*, published in 1984, is ultimately correct. After all, Coopersmith could be right suggesting that electrification together with planning became the way to reconstruct economy and modernize the country because of the entrepreneurial drive of several

electrical engineers. In December 1917 two prominent members of the yet existing Petersburg chapter of T*he Society of the Electrical Lightening 1886*, I. Radchenko and A. Winter, managed to meet Lenin in spite of great difficulty. They both knew well the history and the margin of the electrification of Russia and could help Lenin to understand the importance of the electrification as the basic branch of economy. No doubt, it was a first stimulus for the GOELRO-Plan development, though postponed when the Civil War broke out.

Considering the low attention the tsarist government paid to the problems of electrification, the engineers might as well be willing to seize the moment to expand their mandate to propose a state network of regional power stations claiming that they created the first comprehensive industrial plan. It is even easy to tell who those engineers could be—initially the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia consisted of eight members. Those engineers were Gleb Krzhizanovsky, who, presumably, was the one forging an actor-network that created allies and promised resources for state electrification, as he personally knew Lenin (he sat in Butyrka prison in 1897 together with Lenin because of his participation in *The Emancipation of Labour Group*) and was considered to be one of Lenin's personal friends; professor Genrikh O. Graftio, who had formulated tsarist hydropower proposals; professor Karl A. Krug who before the WWI wrote the monograph *Electrification of the Central-Industrial Area*, published in 1918 (this monograph later on became a part of The GOELRO-Plan); professors G. D. Dubellir and B.I. Ugrimov; and engineers A.G. Kogan, M. A. Lapirov-Skoblo, B.E. Styunkel. "A vacuum about the country's future course existed, and this group of electrification advocates, fashioning a political alliance with the Communist party, filled it" (Coopersmith, 1992:151). In other words, as Bolsheviks could not produce any real plan for economic and social reconstruction, they joined their hopes to create communist society in Russia with the electrical engineers' utopian vision.

> When Lenin endorsed the original hundred-power-station version[8] [reduced a year later to twenty-seven power plants] "as our second Party program" - following the promises of bread, land, peace and power to the Soviets - he asserted, in effect, the primacy of Communists as economic, not just political, decision makers. That extension of authority accelerated the transformation of revolutionaries into monopolists, with the secret police as their economic overseers (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:39).

After the adoption of *The GOELRO-Plan* as a state plan of the national economy's development, it apparently did not matter for the policy-making what the intentions were behind the creation of the country's electrification proposal. It had several serious implications, however, in terms of "un-free" development. There is a direct link to what Amartya Sen is critical of, as the denial of certain behavioral rules (such as basic business ethic) and their role: "[W]hen these values are not yet developed, their general presence or absence can make a crucial difference. In the analysis of development, the role of elementary business ethics thus has to be moved out of its obscure presence to a manifest recognition" (Sen, 1999:113).

[8] Feshbach and Friendly call The GOELRO-Plan for "the first, abortive effort at planning" (Feshbach and Friendly 1991:39)

CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NEP

Treating history, culture, and politics as the pieces of one larger picture allows to apply holistically semiotics, Gramsci's notes and Foucault's concept of power while providing an overview of the historical trajectory of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in Soviet Russia. Taking into consideration the uneven and fragmented nature of the plan for rebuilding Russia, NEP's implementation can be viewed as the outcome of a process of bargaining, compromise, and alliance formation.

2.1. The Alternative Cost of Electrification in Terms of Warfare

From the assassination of heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne (the proximate catalyst for World War I), the Russian Empire, then under the rule of the Provisional Government[xvi], was involved in war for three years on the side of the Entente[xvii]. The Provisional Government did not offer much motivation for victory outside of continuing Russia's obligations towards its allies. Thus instead of ending Russia's involvement in WWI, it launched a new offensive against the German and Austro-Hungarian army in July 1917, thereby weakening its popularity among Russia's war-weary people. The army was disintegrating due to a lack of discipline, which fostered desertion in large numbers. Meanwhile, Lenin and his Bolshevik party were promising "peace, land, and bread" under the Communist system. Regardless, the Provisional Government was deposed as a result of the October Revolution, handing power to the Soviets dominated by Bolsheviks.

The October Revolution was followed by the multi-sided Russian Civil War (1917–1921), with the Bolshevik Red Army and the loosely-allied anti-Bolshevik forces of the White Army as the main actors[9]. With the end of World War I, the Allies, fearful of Bolshevism, openly intervened in the Russian Civil

[9] Other nationalist and regional political groups also participated in the war.

War giving support to the pro-tsarist, anti-Bolshevik forces of the White Army, causing the Soviets to accuse their opponents of representing the interests of foreign powers.

Troops from the U.S., France, Great Britain[xviii], and Japan landed in Vladivostok in late June 1918 (only in 1923 did Chukhotka and Yakutia become Communist). The intervention in Ukraine and Southern Russia involved French, Polish and Greek troops. A limited participation by the contingent of U.S. Army soldiers took place in The North Russia Campaign at the Russian ports of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk[xix.] The Allied troops were soon combined with Poles and White Army forces. But they failed to unite or to co-operate effectively amongst themselves. Divided objectives and a lack of an overarching strategy also hampered the effort. Opposition for an ongoing campaign in the West became widespread, due to a combination of a lack of public support and war weariness, eventually resulting in the end of allied intervention. With the end of allied support, the Red Army was able to inflict defeats on the remaining White government forces, leading to their eventual collapse.

WWI slowed the electrification of the Russian Empire, but even so some development programs were fulfilled during the fighting, such as the electrification of the railroad, and construction of several electro-stations. The trench war with Germany did not directly impact Russian electro-technical and electro-energetic industries. Rather, losses were indirect, due to the diversion of specialists and finance. This stage of economic development was interrupted by the October Revolution. The subsequent Bolshevik electrification of the country was politically without due ceremony or sincerity in true Soviet fashion. They simply took credit for the work of their predecessors, claiming it as the grand achievement of the Soviet power on its march toward Communism.

The Brest-Litovsk treaty represents a huge set-back for the electro-technical development of Russia. One of the major achievements of the October Revolution was Russia's final withdrawal from the war. Bolshevik Russia made its exit from World War I by signing the treaty between the Bolshevik Russia and the Central Powers[xx] on unexpectedly humiliating terms that "cost Russia (...) the territory where nearly one-fifth of its industrial output was produced" (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:30), took away a third of Russia's population and nine-tenths of its coal mines[xxi]. The Bolsheviks initially demanded a settlement under which the revolutionary government that succeeded the Russian Empire would give neither territory nor money, while Germany demanded the "independence" of Poland and Lithuania, which it already occupied. The German army did not destroy industrial infrastructure though since most of it belonged citizens of Germany.

The process of electrification was stifled even more during the Civil War, although the industrial sector wasn't seriously damaged. This war was in general without long and devastating sieges or battles in the large cities were industry was concentrated.

Coincidentally before the October Revolution the government concentrated the national economy's key industries in its hands. The railroad belonged essentially to the treasury, while the energy and electro-technical industries were heavily monopolized by the state. Many entertained the thought of manipulating the influential position of the state-monopoly on industry for the development and implementation of post-war electrification in Russia.

Professor Krug, who participated in the GOELRO Commission, mentions in his memoirs the fundamental role of Georg Klingenberg in the development of electrification in Russia. Klingenberg was head of the large electro-technical industry, Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (A.E.G.) and professor at the

Polythechnic School in Berlin. The principal ideas of this work were later used by Krzhizanovsky to lay the groundwork of The GOELRO-Plan. Professor Klingenberg was not among the Commission's members. The power, rather, lay in hands of people, who were absolutely ignorant of either management of the economy or of technical progress. Lenin in one of his letters to Krzhizanovsky in 1920 stated: "Krasin says that railroad electrification is impossible for us. Is that true?" Obviously, he wasn't aware of the fact that the technical project of the Petersburg's railroads stations had been under development since the end of 1909.

The first large electro-energetic projects, considered the great achievements of Soviet power undertaken at the time, were achieved much later than planned, with construction having begun long before the October Revolution. The plans to build the Volkhov-station became official in 1910 and if realized in time, would have already begun generating electricity in 1915. Instead, electrical output did not start until 1926. The same fate befell the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station, the Volga-Don Canal, and the Moscow Metro with the same protracted sequence of delays. Such was the historic price Russia and its economy had to pay for the protracted conflicts between the Bolsheviks and their opponents.

2.2. What Was New about NEP? The Historical Context of the Concept of Development as Unfreedom

Only after the long and bloody Russian Civil War of 1917–1921 was the new Soviet power base secure. The country was still in crisis after military clashes, and Soviet power did not have any experience of peaceful development. Food and transport were a policy priority, leaving other issues without proper attention. And if the situation on the domestic front was turbulent, the international position of Soviet Russia was very uncertain. Russia was a backward society compared

with its great Western rivals in 1914, and World War I, the Revolution, and the Civil War only made things worse.

> Russia's gross industrial output in 1921 was 69 percent lower than in 1913. Agricultural production was down as much more, and the country faced famine. The utopian dreamers were professional revolutionaries but were almost completely without any relevant practical experience in governing (Gellately, 2007:141).

Figure 4. The anti-Bolshevik poster "The happy worker in Sovdepia". The derogatory term Sovdepia was often used by the Bolsheviks' opponents. It is a contraction of the Russian expression, "Sovet Deputatov"

Compared with the previous policy of military communism[xxii], compromises and concessions to independent peasantry and private capital (before the year of 1925) were new. That's why the subsequent economic policy was called as the New Economic Policy (NEP). This name was tentative and even misleading. It did not take into account that the "new" aspect of NEP was actually old. In November 1917 the decree of workers' control over the production, was called "the Red Guard's Attack on the Capital" with all factories, plants, manufacturing workshops, ateliers, bakeries and all other centers of production were confiscated. However, money was needed to pay for raw materials, energy, transport, salaries to pay to workers themselves. But the bank system had collapsed, and all investments made in enterprises and banks were gone (while gold and valuables were

confiscated by the new power for their own means). Factories and factories had stopped, prices had sky racketed, salaries remained unpaid, and money lost its value.

> The credit and industrial system that produced commodities has broken down, and so far the attempts to replace it by some other form of production have been ineffective. So that nowhere are there any new things (Wells, 1920:4).

As a result, the class supposed to be the main supporter of the revolution—workers, begun to hesitate. On July 20-21 the All-Russia congress of workers has signed the resolution: "The experiments of the socialization and nationalization of factories and manufactories must be stopped. (…) [Proletariat] can and ought to square its activity with the efforts of other progressive classes, interested in development of the means of production. (...) From now on, the main political goal of the working class—struggle against the Soviet power and restoration of the democratic regime." (*Independent labour movement in 1918*. Paris, 1981. page 285-286). Delegates to the congress were arrested at once by the Red Latvian Riflemen[xxiii].

The intellectual elites (intelligentsia) were also shocked over how its dreams about *the radiant future* had turned out. In 1918 in Moscow, Petersburg and other cities, the bureaucrats, doctors, and the All-Russia union of the engineers were on strike. Transport, electro-stations and schools had stopped.

> Communism was pressing too hard and too fast, and destroying before it was ready to rebuild. They had broken down trading before they were ready to ration; the co-operative organisation had been smashed up instead of being utilised (Wells 1920:30).

Then Bolsheviks made a decision to change course from the failed ”control over means of production” to the enforcement of work on everyone. That is how the military communism had begun. The denial of basic civil and political rights for alleged advantage in promoting economic development (Amartya Sen refers to this thesis as “the Lee thesis”, attributed in some form to the former prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew) certainly couldn’t rebuild the shattered economy. Rather it had an opposite effect, proving that “economic growth is more a matter of a friendlier economic climate than of harsher political system” (Sen 1999:16). “The amount of the industrial production was only falling drastically; in 1920 it was about 4-20% from the level of 1913 (or, respectively, 3,3-16,5% from the level of 1916)” (*БСЭ. 3-е изд. Т. 7*. page 234, my translation). Production of cotton, for example, fell to 5 percent, and iron to 2 percent, of the prewar level. The reserves of bread in the central areas of the Soviet Russia were running short, causing hunger among the urban population, where support for the Bolshevik government was strongest. To supply the Red Army, urban population and provide raw material for different industries, a governmental program was introduced which obliged peasantry to surrender the surpluses[xxiv] of almost any kind of agricultural produce for a fixed price. This Soviet state’s policy became one of the most important elements of the system of the military communism. Bolsheviks denied the ability of the market mechanisms to contribute to the economic growth and rejected the freedom to participate in the transactions (the authorities had prohibited selling of bread and grain). The denial of the economic opportunities and favorable consequences that markets offer and support resulted in deprivations, damage to the agricultural sector and caused the peasant's growing discontent. Further it negatively influenced many, if not all aspects of relations between the city and the village in the early Soviet state. The peasants responded to the requisitioning of their crops by refusing to till their land. By 1921 cultivated land had shrunk to some 62

percent of the prewar area, and the harvest yield was only 37 percent of normal. The number of horses declined from 35 million in 1916 to 24 million in 1920, and cattle fell from 58 to 37 million during the same span. The exchange rate of the US dollar, which had been two rubles in 1914, rose to 1,200 in 1920. It is a remarkable fact that economic unfreedom of the rural households, as the absolute limit of a given product for personal or household needs, was pre-determined by the state and bred social unfreedom of the urban areas, in the forms of poverty, hunger, and illness.

Lenin summed up these three and a half years in the following way: "…For the working class, for proletariat meant such afflictions, such deprivation, such sacrifices, such exacerbation of the lack of necessities as never before in the world" (Ленин В.И. *Полн. собр. соч. Т. 43.* page 132, my translation).

Figure 5. "Kronshtadt's card is bitten". The sailor holds in his hand a black flag with the notation СР (for Social Revolutionaries). The second figure reminds of the last Tsar of the Russian Empire Nikolai II.

This situation led to strikes and violent unrest in the factories on the one hand; on another, it lead to uprisings in the countryside, because many peasants were extremely unhappy with foodstuffs requisitioning policy and tried to resist it. The Tambov rebellion was one of the greatest uprisings of people against the Soviet power and the Communist party that was organized in the region of Tambov in 1918 – 1921.

The last major revolt against Communist rule occurred in 1921, when a group of sailors and soldiers and their civilian supporters rebelled against the Bolshevik regime in Soviet Kronshtadt, which had previously been a center of

major support for the Bolsheviks. Their demands (the Petropavlovsk resolution[10]) included freedom of speech, a stop to the deportations to concentration camps, a change of Soviet war politics and the liberation of the soviets (workers' councils) from Party control. The Government asserted that the revolt had "undoubtedly been prepared by French counterintelligence" and that the Petropavlovsk resolution was a "SR-Black Hundred"[11] resolution. Although Red Army units ruthlessly suppressed the uprising after brief negotiations, the general dissatisfaction with the state of affairs could not have been more forcefully expressed. This made Lenin realize that the time for the "world revolution" wasn't imminent. In the spring of 1921 the Bolsheviks replaced the military communism with NEP.

2.3. Resolutions of the VIII Congress of the Soviets

NEP began with the VIII All-Russian Congress of Soviets that ended in the last days of 1920. Resolutions of the Congress, although very contradictory, called upon working people of cities and villages for making the greatest effort to recover economy and rebuild the country. On the one hand, the Congress passed a resolution to organize crop-committees in villages – special organizations whose purpose was to develop plans for spring crops[xxv] and control peasants' compliance. On the other hand, long-term (i.e. 10 years) plan for the material and technical modernization of the national economy on the basis of electrification was adopted (Resolution *On Electrification of the Republic* approved the program developed by the State Commission for Electrification of Russia formed in 1920). The unfavorable preconditions for the realization of The GOELRO-Plan were overlooked. Instead, the Communist party embraced it as the means to transform society not only economically, but, first and most important of all,

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[10] The crews of the battleships Petropavlovsk and Sevastopol approved a resolution raising fifteen demands.

[11] SR (CP in Russian) stood for Social Revolutionaries, a democratic socialist party that had been dominant in the soviets before the return of Lenin, whose right-wing had refused to support the Bolsheviks. The Black Hundreds were a reactionary proto-fascist force dating back to before the revolution which attacked Jews, labour militants and radicals, among others.

socially and politically. The electrifications' meaning during the emergence of the central planning economy and in early Soviet industrialization became so great, that Lenin defined communism as "Soviets plus electrification"." Posters, from the early twenties, concentrated strongly on bright workers, men and women, standing in front of towering machinery" (Conquest, 2000:92).

Figure 6. This poster belongs to the period of the Volkhov Hydro-Station construction, as the caption reads "Volkhovstroi gives the electricity!". The heading contains "Lenin and electrification", while footer is a famous Lenin's quotation "The Communism is Soviets plus electrification".

NEP was a period when *The Plan for Electrification of RSFSR* was intensively promoted. There were preparations to the VIII All-Russian Electrical Congress that was planned to be held in spring 1921 on the basis of the Decree passed by Soviet of People's Commissars (SPC)[xxvi] on February 22, 1921. The Soviet of Labour and Defense (SLD)[xxvii] formed the general commission—Gosplan. The Commission was chaired by G.M. Krzhizanovsky responsible for development of *The Plan for Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R.*

The new economic policy was strengthened by resolutions of the X Congress of the RCP (B). They were based on the main principle – to preserve and strengthen results of the main revolutionary changes. All resolutions of the Congress approved the nationalization, centralized methods of administration, and implemented managerial methods within the state sector. The Congress

passed the resolution *On Unity of the Party*, prohibiting existence of oppositional groups among the members of the RCP(B) on the threat of expulsion from the party. Such strict measures enabled strengthening of ideological and organizational unity of the party, its leading role in the society and forming single-mindedness among its members. Those general restrictions were swiping away more freedoms from the Soviet state—including that of public discussion and participatory political decisions. From the middle of 1920s, the Communist Party was the only party in the country. Despite the fact that the party did not formally form the party government, its actual status as the leading force of the Soviet society and one-party system in the USSR was legally included in the Constitution of the USSR.

Figure 7. "From NEP-Russia will arise socialistic Russia (Lenin)". The background of this poster contains a construction site of a hydro-station. Presumably it is the Volkhovstroi.

Amartya Sen's approach to the prevention of devastating crisis which involves a sudden eruption of severe deprivation for a considerable section of population can be applied with some reservations to the situation in the Soviet state in the beginning of 1920s. The connection between political and civil rights and the prevention of major disasters is vividly seen in the adoption of political decisions, directed to ease the situation of the people in the suffering country. If the decisions passed by the X Congress of the RCP (B) came without delay, Kronshtadt presumably could have been prevented, and other mass anti-Bolshevism uprisings of the end of 1920 and beginning of 1921

could have been stopped and many lives could have been spared. The government, however, failed to undertake timely action by responding to the pressure and critique from the opposition. Another tragic aspect in such a delay was that it prevented the expected political compromise between Bolsheviks and revolutionary-democratic parties of Russia (Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries) based on recognition of the urgency of measures for the termination of the Civil War and commencement of peaceful restoration of the national economy. The rejection of democratic methods of fighting for political power in the state, and the growing urge to find solutions mainly through terror, certainly revealed the darker side of the Bolshevik Party, also showing its internal weakness. The establishment of a one-party, one-ideology state would not by itself have solved the problems. The absence of political rights (to vote, criticize, protest, and so on) resulted in the disregard for general needs, and the government's lack of response to the acute suffering of the people.

2.4. Legitimizing and the New Course

Synchronizing of decisions passed by the X Congress of the RCP (B) on the abolition of surplus-appropriation system and free trade barter, with objective needs of agriculture, does not alter the fact that it was mainly Bolsheviks who were most active in preventing the abolition of food dictatorship. They accepted it as a true method for implementation of their program of revolutionary transition to the socialist forms of production and distribution. "It is not acceptable to the labour power and we will not be threatened in fighting against it", Lenin said in March 1920.

Regarding the proposals on approval of tax in kind and legalization of free trade, the X Congress of RCP (B), speaking in the same way as Lenin did, called previous prevention of those proposals "mistaken" and contrasted it with the idea of gradual transformation of agriculture into a socialist system, in the way

"material base, equipment, mass use of tractors and machines, mass electrification" were to be ensured. Huge collective farms were the closest the Communists would go to replicating the highly productive great estates of the pre-revolutionary era without compromising their ideology. Peasants, including the rich ones, stigmatized as 'kulaks' (fists), who held the rest of the peasantry tight in their last grasp - would no doubt object, but they would have to be suppressed. Soviet communism was never going to be implanted in the minds of the peasantry without providing the better yields under the Bolshevik rule. The wealth of peasants in the USSR by the yardstick of the rich capitalist countries was no wealth at all. Indeed, in some parts of the country there was no chance to profit from agriculture. The Russian north was poor in soil and harsh in climate. Small fields, wooden ploughs and horses had been used for centuries. The Bolsheviks thought they had an answer to this. They had always believed that the future lay with the 'industrialization' of Soviet agriculture. Collectives, with their economies of scale, would release a mass of surplus rural labour for industry, especially if industry could equip them with tractors and other farming machinery. Tractors were almost unknown to inhabitants of the rural area, including to those designated as kulaks. In a conversation with H.G. Wells, Lenin, apparently exaggerating, said:

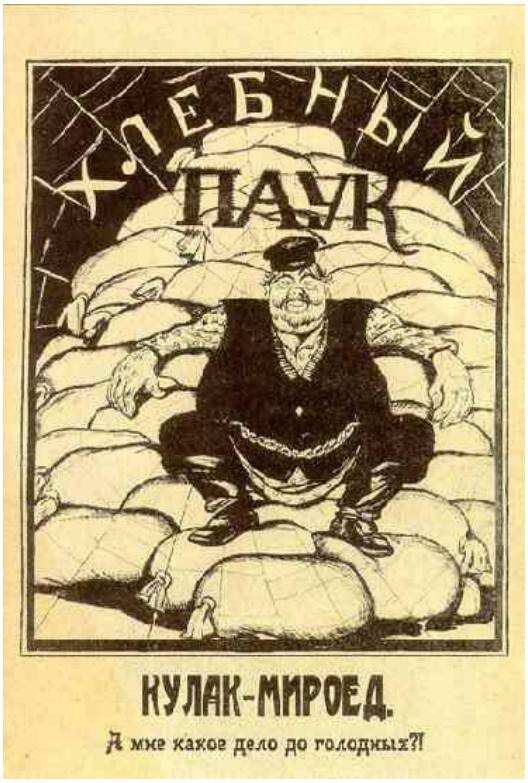

Figure 8. "Kulak-The World Eater"- this poster became a classics of the Soviet propaganda. It's narration "What business do I have to the hungry ones?", is contrasted with the image of wealthy peasant "kulak", who is sitting on grain.

> "Even now all the agricultural production of Russia is not peasant production. We have, in places, large scale agriculture. The Government is already running big estates with workers instead of peasants, where conditions are favourable. That can spread. It can be extended first to one province, then another. The peasants in the other provinces, selfish and illiterate, will not know what is happening until their turn comes...." (Wells 1920:29).

Leaders of the RCP (B) had to make lots of efforts to convince other members of the party about the reasonableness of the new economic course, and faced opposition at the local level. Some district political organizations perceived activated private trade and talks with foreign capitalists on concessions as "capitulation to the bourgeoisie". There were cases of leaving the RCP (B) "for non-acceptance of NEP" practically in all political organizations. The common opinion on the tactical approach of the X Congress, allegedly aiming at stabilization of political situation in the country, was rather wide-spread as well. Representatives of the People's Commissariat on Food Matters[12] saw little difference between forced requisition of food and the compulsory barter. Due to increasing dissatisfaction of "lower classes", the Central Committee of RCP (B) decided to convene extraordinary All-Russian Party Conference in May 1921. V.I. Lenin, speaking at this Conference tried to prove inevitability of the new economic policy, confirming that it was to be introduced "seriously" and would take "a long time", probably 5 - 10 years.

Before the X All-Russian Party Conference, Lenin used the concept of "retreat" by referring to "state capitalism". Such a concept implied concessions, trade barter with peasants through the bodies of cooperation, commission-based private

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12 People's Commissariat on Food Aspects of RSFSR was a central state body of RSFSR.

trade, and lease of small state enterprises. Affirming the need to protect capitalism, Lenin explained this in terms of the Marxists economics. Bolsheviks recognized that many sectors of the Russian Imperial economy were 'backward' and needed to undergo capitalist development so as to attain a concentration of production. Once this has taken place, it would supposedly be easy for the party to expropriate and switch them to producing goods for the benefits of the entire society (Service 2007).

Paradoxically, the desire to learn from the capitalists was accompanied by fear of capitalism. Capitalism was perceived as a threat by both common and responsible members of the party. V.I. Lenin was no exception. His plan - supported by L.D. Trotsky and L.B. Krasin - to prevent de-monopolization of foreign trade despite the fact that activities of People's Commissariat Foreign Trade Organization were too wasteful, was accompanied by anxiety and fear. Unlike pre-revolutionary cooperation, cooperation at the beginning of the 20s was developed mainly by using assets and finances borrowed from the state under strict control of People's Commissariat of Finances (PCF)[xxviii], the Supreme Soviet of the National Economy (SSNE)[xxix], the State Plan and other central and local economic bodies. Communist factions were formed in all sectors and territorial Unions of Cooperation that had considerable impact on the process of appointment and transfer of the managerial staff.

Declaring that NEP is introduced "in a serious manner and as a long term project", leaders of Bolshevism did not miss the opportunity to stress that all such measures were not instituted "forever." Not without reason, at the beginning of the 20s, the Political Bureau of the CC[xxx] drew special attention to legal regulation of private economic relations to have relevant legal basis against them. Lenin wrote in March 1922: "It is a serious mistake to think that NEP put an end to terror. We will face terror, economic terror, once again"(my translation).

2.5. International Reception of the Revolution

The Bolshevik comrades' optimism and hopes for further 'export of communism' to the West were increased by the ease of their intermittent political advance after the February Revolution. If this could happen in Russia, it surely made sense to predict revolutionary successes in Germany, Austria, Britain and France.

> Worries about a "Red scare" did not go away in Germany, and even if popular support for far-left radicals was minimal, that did not mean there was no basis for concern. After all, the Bolsheviks had little backing in Russia and never intended to wait for a majority to claim all power (Gellately, 2007:85).

The frame of Lenin's geopolitical perspective was constituted of the certitude about the condition of the world. War in Europe had discredited the entire international capitalist system. Millions of people had been killed or were suffering in the trenches. Profiteering by financiers and arms manufacturers was notorious. Nationalism was exploited by all governments. Churches had become megaphones for the military cause of the countries. The rhetoric about 'the war to end war' failed to convince many far-left socialists in Europe and North America. To them it was unlikely that the current war would be the last world war (Service, 2007).

> He [Lenin] had to argue (…) that modern Capitalism is incurably predatory, wasteful, and unteachable, and that until it is destroyed it will continue to exploit the human heritage stupidly and aimlessly, that it will fight against and prevent any administration of natural resources for the general good, and that, because essentially it is a scramble, it will inevitably make wars (Wells, 1920:30).

The conclusion seemed to be self-evident—capitalism was the disease and had to be cured by the surgery of revolution[xxxi]. Bolsheviks claimed there was no alternative. Lenin was aware that France and Britain were far stronger in military sense than the Soviet state, but considered that this physical superiority was now eroded by worker's revolutionary movements in those countries, thus envisaging an English revolution among other things.

In late 1919 Lenin, inspired by the Red Army's victories over White Russian anti-communist forces and their Western allies, began to see the future of the revolution with greater optimism. The Bolsheviks proclaimed the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and agitated for a worldwide Communist community. Their avowed intent was to link the revolution in Russia with an expected revolution in Germany and to assist other Communist movements in Western Europe[xxxii]. However, all attempts at starting a communist revolution in Europe ended in a fiasco - but NEP as followed by RCP (B) was received around the world as offering certain hope for liberalization of the Soviet regime. Such hope was actively, though misleadingly, supported by the emigration circles from Russia which included Cadets[xxxiii], Mensheviks[xxxiv], and Socialist Revolutionaries (SR). For example, in opinion of the editorial staff of the Mensheviks *Socialist Bulletin* issued in Berlin:

> …those who said A, should say B. New rational economic policy aimed at development of productive forces cannot be pursued by the state machine and methods adapted to economic utopia and led to economic catastrophe (my translation).

In their opinion, the aspect "of democratic liquidation of Bolshevism period of the Russian revolution" became of high importance in Soviet Russia.

However, having said A, i.e. allowing certain economic freedom, RCP (B) did not plan to say B, i.e. to limit its claims on monopoly of power, information, etc. Taking into account that administration of the parties of Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had priority in development of economic principles of NEP; the Bolsheviks had actual reasons for being afraid of attempts at political and military counter-revolution. It should also be mentioned that Russia's most talented Marxists–theoreticians, such as Plekhanov, Trotsky (initially), and Yuli Martov, were to be found among Mensheviks.

Western attitudes to the Russian Revolution and to the new government of the state could be summarized with words of Sir Winston Churchill, by that time Secretary of State for War and Secretary of State for Air. Churchill was a staunch advocate of the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War, declaring that Bolshevik regime must be "strangled in its cradle". This statement was largely addressed to the general lack of any idea what the Bolsheviks and their ideal of communism were. In the Soviet propaganda in many years to come such skepticism was defined as ruthless attempts of the foreign "invaders" to destroy the country. Most commentators abroad rejected the view of Bolshevism as the proletariat rule. Occasionally, Lenin and other party leaders had to concede that the working class was not really running the Soviet state. They blamed this mainly on Russia's cultural backwardness. In fact, at the early stages of the Bolshevik rule, anybody living abroad had tremendous difficulties obtaining any accurate information about the current state of affairs in the Soviet state. But by the end of 1920es, reports on the Soviet state greatly improved. "The structures, practices and policies of communism were becoming better known through the work of diplomats, newspaper correspondents and intelligence agents" (Service 2007: 141).

2.6. Some Conclusions Regarding the Conception and Implementation of NEP

Slogans of the unlucky Kronshtadt's rebels[13]—"All power to soviets and not to parties", "abolition of surplus-appropriation system and freedom of trade"—repeated the provisions set out in the main program documents of the revolutionary democracy parties at the end of the Civil War, which the Bolsheviks did not accept although they more or less tolerated so as not to lose allies in the fight against White Army and foreign invaders. The Kronshtadt events put an end to such tolerance, granting social democrats and socialists-revolutionaries the doubtful "privilege" of political leadership of the anti-Bolshevism struggle, which many of them did not want at all.

As a weak excuse for Lenin's diminishing understanding of freedom, it is fair to say that the traumatic geopolitics of that time was at least partially responsible for the actions and decisions he made. For example, occupation of Siberia by Japan, which lasted until 1922, worried not only Lenin, but made the Allies wary of Japanese intentions too. Japanese army general staff viewed the situation in Russia as an opportunity of securing Japan's northern border, with a desire to establish a buffer state in Siberia. The presence of the foreign troops within borders of Russia was not contributing to the development of the peace-oriented policies of the Bolsheviks, as fear of losing power never could serve as the ground for the good intentions.

It is also important to note that the preconditions for Soviet Russia's continued tradition of "unfreedom" were to be found in the history of the country long before Lenin and his supporters seized power. For example, the food appointment program, largely associated with the military communism policy,

[13] Most of people fighting for the fortress died, some – left for Finland (8 thousand), others gave up (of whom 2103 people were executed by shooting according to the revolutionary tribunal sentences). Participants of Kronshtadt events who survived were later repressed. In the 1990s they were rehabilitated.

was actually first introduced in the Russian Empire during World War I, in 1916. The serfdom, abolished in tsarist Russia only in 1861 out of fear that peasants would rise up to win their freedom, in the Soviet state soon found its renascence in kolkhozes and sovkhozes. The basic principle of voluntary membership in the agricultural commune was violated by the very process of forced collectivization; peasants were tied to the collective farms through a system of internal passports and household registration. They had to plant crops according to instructions from the central authorities, especially if they were on state-run farms. These authorities would then "buy" their agricultural produce at vastly reduced prices and use the surplus to invest in heavy industry.

The period of NEP became for the course of the economic and social development of the Soviet Russia the crucial turning point. Until the appearance of The GOELRO-Plan, the Bolsheviks lacked any real development program—or indeed, any clear idea how to rule the country. On the one hand, the decision to industrialize the country with electrification as the key momentum was at least setting some clear goals. This idea was even to some extent underpinning Lenin's assumption (as discussed in Chapter I), that incandescent lightening, machinery and other attributes of the technological civilization would free the people and allow creation of the perfect society. On another hand, the new leaders of the country were unable to predict the costs involved in the implementation of the program. This inability was because of many different reasons, including ideological factors such as motivating the masses and internal structural issues involving the vacuum of scientific knowledge after the revolution and many other scientists trying to please Lenin for their own benefit.

The Bolsheviks used human resources as a building material for the technological base. Almost with bare hands people were building hundreds of power-plants, factories, mines, etc. Those mines and factories had to be filled

with the workers afterwards, sometimes for three shifts. Not to mention the buildings of canals, railroads, metro, and, never before implemented on this large scale, the expansion of armaments.

A crucial aspect of the path suggested by Bolsheviks was changing the proportion of the population living in urban and rural areas. At the wake of the Soviet states' industrializations process the majority of the working population was the agrarian work-force, with 82% living in villages. As a result of the collectivization, relocations, organizational recruiting, and—most important—hunger[14] , a large portion of the population came to the cities searching for jobs, took part in large and small building projects, and joined the working class.

Another major problem which the Soviet Russia had faced at the initial stages of its industrialization was the need to create the internal market for the high-tech (by the standards of that time) production—electrical equipment, tractors, mechanical plugs, etc. Peasants were not used to consuming the external resources; and that subsequently meant for the country rulers a challenging project of the complete rebuilding of the peasant's psychology (more about the social engineering it the following chapter). For that purpose the collectivization was imposed, as the collective farms became the main consumers of the industrial production. This, in effect, was an artificial concentration of the capital through very harsh means. It is hard to say to what extent people had any other choice but to comply with the Soviet program of development which, as I have shown, oppressed them greatly.

[14] The first famine in the Soviet state happened in 1921-1923 most probably due to the Soviet government's policies of the forceful foodstuffs requisitioning

CHAPTER III: THE AUTHORS OF THE REVOLUTION

The mysterious "Russian soul"[15] has supposedly never sought order, technological advancement, or a trust in rational thought. Despite that, the program of rebuilding of the country and its economy after the wars and revolutions was based on industrialization and modernization, which were not appealing to the majority of the population. Wells provided a possible reason:

> And so when the crash came in Russia, when there remained no other solidarity of men who could work together upon any but immediate selfish ends, there came flowing back from America and the West to rejoin their comrades a considerable number of keen and enthusiastic young and youngish men, who had in that more bracing Western world lost something of the habitual impracticability of the Russian and acquired a certain habit of getting things done, who all thought in the same phrases and had the courage of the same ideas, and who were all inspired by the dream of a revolution that should bring human life to a new level of justice and happiness (Wells 1920:16).

However, the social development in Russia has a much longer history of the foreign influence than Wells suggested. The relationship between Russians and Germans[16] in the former Russian Empire was seen in the Ivan Goncharov novel, *Oblomov*. Philip Longworth in *Russia's Empires: Their Rise and Fall: From Prehistory to Putin* refers to this work comparing the general state of the Russia's Empire in the nineteenth century with the main hero—Oblomov, who cannot find the will to transform intention into action. His friend, a German who embodies

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[15] The term Russian Soul has been used in literature to describe Russian spirituality.

[16] According to the first Census of the Russian Empire in 1897, there were about 1.8 million respondents who reported German as their mother tongue. German-Russians were disproportionately represented among Russia's engineers, technical tradesmen, industrialists, financiers and large land owners.

the dynamism that Oblomov lacks, tells him what he needs to do, encouraging and cajoling him, but in vain. "Oblomov is, of course, a metaphor for Russia at a point of crisis, facing—or rather avoiding—the challenges of the modern world" (Longworth, 2006:212). Rulers of Tsarist Russia held the generally shared belief that Russia's established Germans could be the driving force which would transform Russia into a more modern European state. For example, an aspect of Russian electrification (and industrialization in general) which should not be underestimated was the large foreign influence to which it was subject. Nemtsy[17], which meant either German or Western foreigner, played an important role in the process of electrification of Russia and in the forging a new socio-economic system[18]. Influences ranged from the obvious financial and material transfers to the less overt but very important flows of ideas and people.

The early foreign influence on the social and cultural life in the Russian Empire represented by Germans and German which was the language of the businessman, created and underpinned the "foreign is better" bias (Coopersmith, 1994:36), which at large extend still exists in the consciousness of the Russian population. This bias could serve as a ground for the political rise of the non-Russian nationalities in the governance apparatus in the early Soviet state. The presence of the foreign influence in the cultural development of the country poses a different set of questions, which have immediate bearing for today's Russia. To what extent the Russian people were responsible for current state of affairs, whether the end of the old regime was brought about by peasants' ostensible 'love for freedom' or was imposed by foreign influences; and to whom the country's future belonged. The questions I wish to ask are: Who, apart from Lenin, were the ideologues of NEP? What was their concept of freedom? And

[17] In modern Russian, this term refers to German nationality.

[18] Several lines of Western involvement ran deeply throughout the GOELRO-Plan and the accompanying discussion. Some 200 scientists and engineers took part in the GOELRO-Plan, more than a half of whom were presumably of German origin (according to their surnames).

what was the relationship of the "development as unfreedom" and the fact that this development was designed by the members of non-Russian nationalities and "outsider" groups?

3.1. From Marxism to Leninism

As the country modernized and drew closer to the rest of Europe, it became increasingly clear that the autocracy would have to share power with the landed gentry, professionals, businessmen, and other members of emerging civil society. Even liberals committed to the rule of law believed that such a change would probably require a revolutionary break (Malia, 2001). Since the Great Reforms of the mid-century, university students had increasingly demanded changes to a repressive and hostile system. Those demands stemmed from a fundamentally middle-class intellectual tradition and from a pervasive, though far from universal, sense of guilt about the peasantry. In this environment Marxism soon gained appeal. “Its ideas—purveyed by educated, idealistic, sometimes resentful young people—came to be interpreted at pie stalls and factory gates, and were debated enthusiastically in bookshops.” (Longworth, 2006:228). The drift to violence, such as bomb throwing or assassinations, stemmed in the first place, as Longworth puts it, from the intellectuals’ tendency to differ in the analyses of conditions and the interpretation of the revolutionary literature, such as Marx’s ideas. This, in turn, gave rise to divergences and splits. Repression and hence further radicalization followed. Revolution was the general expectation of the Russian intelligentsia after 1900, with Lenin advancing the most radical program.

> Marx and Engels had not really had a fixed standpoint on violent revolution and proletarian dictatorship. But they had written frequently about violence, and it would seem that Marx used phrases like ‘the dictatorship of proletariat’ about a dozen times. Lenin scoured their writing for reference like an intellectual detective. His analysis, while having degree of

> justification, therefore rested on the props of a highly selective treatment of the inconsistent writings by his intellectual heroes (Service, 2007:62).

The problem also resides in that Lenin's reading of Marx, and his projection of the intelligentsia's attitudes toward the workers, had proven to be drastically problematic. Until the early 1880s the revolutionaries of the Russian Empire, notably *People's Will* fraction, upheld the axiom that their socialism should take account of the predominantly agrarian and backward nature of the economy. Britain, France, and Germany had accomplished a vast industrial and cultural advance. Russia and its borderlands had lagged behind. The revolutionary thinkers started from proposition to put peasants at the core of ideas. Inspiration for the future socialist society was drawn from the Russian village commune. The peasantry's tradition of periodic redistribution of the land could serve as the basis of an egalitarian transformation. Such thinking, however, started to lose its grip. Peasants themselves were persistently indifferent to calls for revolution.

Lenin made his name among young Russian radicals as one of the founding members of *Iskra* (*Spark*) in 1900. The émigré newspaper was published in Germany and favored underground activity that would "spark" the fires of revolution ("Iz iskri vozgoritsja plamja!"). Lenin became far better known for the pamphlet *What is to be Done?* from 1902, which urged the need for the severe rules in the party to guarantee centralism, discipline, and the vetting of the recruits. It won over people like Stalin[xxxv], who were excited by the idea that a small band of revolutionaries could bring fundamental change (Gellately, 2007). Investigating Lenin's *What is to be Done?*, in which he sets goal to change all Russia with "a party of a new type," Service argues that Lenin substituted an intelligentsia faction for the real proletariat; and this is not Marxism but the specter of the *People's Will* (Service refers to the *People's Will* as to "*narodniki*", like in most historical Russian books).

Marx emphasized that social development sprang from the inherent contradictions within material life and the social superstructure. This notion is often understood as a simple historical narrative: primitive communism had developed into slave states. Slave-based states had developed into feudal societies. Those societies in turn became capitalist states, and those states would be overthrown by the self-conscious portion of their working-class, or proletariat, creating the conditions for socialism and, ultimately, a higher form of communism than that with which the whole process began. Marx illustrated his ideas most prominently by the development of capitalism from feudalism, and by the prediction of the development of socialism from capitalism. But, in the process of mass translation, Marx's ideas were sometimes oversimplified and often misunderstood. The vocabulary of Marxism conjured up believable icons of oppressed workers and an exploitative, unproductive bourgeoisie, together with the promise of an inevitable 'crisis of capitalism' and the ultimate triumph of communism. Marxism iconography presented a congruent parallel of Christian iconography, and, in the absence of Christian inspiration, many of the young immigrants in the cities took to the new ideology as to religious belief. Organizations, whether in unions or movements, also offered a sense of purpose and comradeship (Longworth, 2006).

3.2. Korenizatsiya and Razmezhevanie

One of the greatest paradoxes of the new, Soviet state was that the stewards of *imperium*[19] in the Soviet state were not the Russian people per se, but the members of the Communist Party, as the following passage suggests:

> [N]ot only could you lose your class background on becoming a Bolshevik, you could lose your ethnic background too. Trotsky said early in the century that he was neither a Jew nor a Russian but a Social Democrat. The

[19] Imperium in a broad sense translates as 'power'. In ancient Rome the concept applied to people and meant something like 'power status' or 'authority'.

> Communist Ukraine was ruled at various times by a Bulgarian and a Pole. A Latvian commanded the Red Army in 1918. The first head of the secret police, Felix Dzerzhinsky, was of course Polish, as was his immediate successor (Conquest, 1997:6) .

The project of the Soviet state as a multi-national culture for the Soviet nation was initially based on a contradiction between the proclaimed "stronghold of the friendship of peoples [nationalities]"—a line from the Soviet national anthem from 1944—and the formation of the ideologically-based nation of Soviet mono-culture. Citizens were encouraged to reject their homelands and only recognize the *otechestvo*—literally *fatherland.* This word represents the notion of power and statehood, and as thus was enthusiastically used by Soviet nationalist propagandists.

Lenin's Bolshevik government, being strongly hostile to Russian nationalism in particular, introduced *korenizatsiya*. The idea was formulated by Joseph Stalin as means to appeal to the many non-Russian residents of the former tsarist empire populating the Soviet regime. It arguably helped the government exert its influence on the many ethnic minorities throughout the country.

Korenizatsiya implied the widest possible introduction of local languages into all spheres of public life, particularly in education, publishing, culture, and most importantly government and the Communist Party. This was intended to counter the historical practice of Russification. Several of the ethnic groups in Russia that had no literary language created alphabets to teach their national languages in schools and to increase literacy for the people in their native languages. Minorities would thereby be brought out of their backwardness into the modern world. Not only was the local cadre of titular nations promoted at all levels but ethnic Russians who served in local governments were encouraged (or required) to learn the local culture; and local languages were to be used in official affairs.

In the early Soviet period, even voluntary assimilation was actively discouraged, and national self-consciousness of the non-Russian populations was promoted.

The initial period of *korenizatsiya* followed in tandem with the development of the national-territorial administrative units and national cultures. The policy of *razmezhevanie* lasted through the 1920s and most of the 1930s.

> Lenin sought a more open-ended federation that might soon include the Soviet republics of Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Finland. (…) Lenin wanted to create a new level of federation and to appeal to the sense that nations wanted self-determination and should be able to have it inside an ever-expanding USSR (Gellately, 2007:149).

The Soviet Union that took over from the Russian Empire in 1917 was not a nation-state, nor was the Soviet leadership committed to turning their country into such a state. Each officially recognized ethnic minority, however small, was granted its own national territory where it enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy, national schools, and national elites. The process relied on *The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia*, adopted by the Bolshevik government on 15 November 1917, immediately after the October Revolution. The Declaration recognized equality and sovereignty of all the peoples of Russia, and their right for free self-determination, up to and including secession and creation of an independent state. The system aimed to accommodate the aspirations of the 'nationalities,' and to a large extent it succeeded. It ensured that a larger proportion of each group would get official jobs and that most of the subject population would be administrated by people of their own kind.

In the short term the policy enjoyed some success, but it was military power rather than political ideology that often decided outcomes on the ground. National sovereignty was used by the new regime as a means to pay non-Russian

nationalities for the momentary alliances in Communist Party's struggle against the anti-Communist White Forces. For example, as Longworth explains, the Terek Cossacks were ejected from their farms and their land handed over to the Chechens, whose Sufi leader, Ali Mitaev, made a deal to ally with the Bolsheviks. It was therefore thanks to the Soviet regime that Chechens were able to claim a moment of sovereignty in 1921, though Mitaev met his death at Soviet hands only a few years later (Longworth, 2006). By the same means, 8 million other Russians were trans-located to other states. According to a 1920s population census, 5.250.000 Russians were registered in Poland (in Malorussian (Ukraine) and Belorussian lands specifically), 742.000 in Bessarabia in Romania, 231.000 in Latvia, 91.000 in Estonia, and 55.000 in Lithuania. The People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs G. V. Chicherin[xxxvi] explained these events as follows:

> We gave to Estonia a truly Russian piece of land, and the same to Finland Pechanga, despite reluctance of its population; we did not consult Latgalia when we gave it to Latvia, and we gave truly Belarussian territories to Poland. This is all connected to the current situation in which the Soviet Republic fights against capitalistic beseigement; the leading principle of the Soviet Republic is to survive as a citadel of the revolution… We are lead not by nationalism, but the interests of the world revolution (*Archive of the Foreign Affairs Politics of the Russian Federation*. Ф.4. Оп.51. №321а. Д.54877. Л.21., my translation) .

In 1924 a constitution for the Union of Soviets was promulgated. The Union was to be a 'federal multinational socialist federation' based on the principle of self-determination. It consisted of three Republics of the Union – Russia, Ukraine and Belarus – and eleven Autonomous Republics – including Kazakhstan, Karelia and Crimea, and others for Buriat-Mongols, Volga Germans, Tatars and others.

There were also thirteen Autonomous Provinces designed to accommodate the Udmurts of western Siberia, the Komi, the Chechens and the Maris. The Jews were allotted Birobijan in the Amur region of the Far East as a national home, and the Ulch and other small ethnic groups were given ‘national districts’ in other areas.

The Russian Empire was a nation-state unified by the Russian Orthodox Church under an Orthodox tsar. The Bolsheviks declared a separation of church and state, though they tried to form the so-called “Living Church” that was loyal to the Soviet power almost in all aspects. Originally begun as a "grass-roots" movement among the Russian clergy for the reformation of the Church, it quickly discredited itself by supporting the secret service. One of the first decrees of the new Communist government (issued in January 1918) declared freedom of "religious and anti-religious propaganda". In February 1922 the decree of confiscation of all ecclesiastic values was implemented. Such actions caused waves of indignation among supporters of the Orthodox Church. As a result of the anti-religious policies of Bolsheviks, thousands of priests were put to death.

3.3. The Role of The "Freedom Loving" Intelligentsia

Before Bolsheviks came to power, the most well-known attempt in Russian history to lead the country into the modern era came from Peter I “The Great.” Obviously, he sincerely wished to make Russia a modern, European state; but the chosen methods of “europization” were based on violence and the blind copying of new political forms without changing the old customs. However, his activity brought the image of “the new Russia” and “the new people,” which became a special kind of myth. This myth was passed on to the later attempts to create cultural consciousness and national identification. It can be evaluated in the light of the subsequent Russian history, both positively and negatively, depending on whether to regard it as ensuring rapid cultural progress or as entailing the loss of

national character and the establishment of a new order under the influence of Western revolutionary thought. It was central to a tradition of introspection and moral self-perfection that arose in the early nineteenth century as a response to the dilemma of the Russian in the gloomy, backward, generally illiterate country.

Examination of Russia's cultural history corroborates Robert Conquest's explanation of the emergence of an ideology-prone intelligentsia. From Enlightenment rationalism, German romantic philosophy, and French utopian socialism, many educated Russians absorbed a vision of history as a collective process leading to the fullest self-realization of man through the healing of all painful divisions between individuals and the social whole, a vision of *the radiant future*. This ideological cliché, widely used in the Soviet propaganda, had as strong a psychological impact as the *American dream*. Radical critics urged writers to speed up the advance to this goal by creating images of "new men," integrated personalities whose personal fulfillment was achieved through heroic labours for the good of society. Conquest, Fitzpatrick, and many others who studied Lenin's life and work closely agree that Lenin was greatly influenced by Chernyshevsky's novel of 1863 *What is to be Done?*:"Chernyshevsky envisaged a 'new man' of the intelligentsia who would 'destroy' the old order and, ruling from above, would institute a social utopia" (Conquest ,1995). In Conquest's study *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*, he views intelligentsia as one of determinants of Russia's general acceptance of the idea of "the total destruction of the existing order and its replacement by a perfect society run by none other than the intelligentsia[20]":

> …as Pasternak put it (Paris Review, no. 24, 1960), in the 1840s, though serfdom was obviously obsolete, no tangible hope was to be seen; in the

[20] The condition of being an intelligent was defined not by intelligence but by acceptance of the Idea. (…) None of the great writers, or other effective figures in Russia, qualified as "intelligentsia". The bulk of the educated classes were not revolutionaries (Conquest 2000:86-87).

> 1860s "liberal landowners have appeared, and the best among the Russian aristocrats begin to be deeply influenced by Western ideas"; and in the 1880s came "the birth of an enlightened and affluent middle class, open to Occidental influences, progressive, intelligent, artistic." The Russian Enlightenment, not yet sufficiently translated into political action, had emerged (Conquest, 2000:87).

Similar reflections can be found in the final chapter of *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary Under Stalin* by Jochen Hellbeck:

> Bolshevik's activities were successful in propagating the urgency of individual growth through adherence to the revolution because such thinking was rooted in Russia's historical past. The moral duties of self-improvement, social activism, and self-expression in concert with history were a staple of Russian intellectual and political life for almost a century before the revolution of 1917. As Stalin-era diarists worked to align themselves with history and to achieve a historically grounded notion of self-hood, they acted in striking consistency with generations of educated Russians since the early nineteenth century. To behave in such ways was what distinguished a member of the Russian intelligentsia (Hellbeck, 2007:432).

Speaking, though, about an overwhelming effect of Western revolutionary thoughts combined with "the physical and mental effects of the railway or of Darwin" had striking consequences. In Russia—a country "that had no real previous experience of assimilating novelty, acute mental indigestion ensued, as with starving man suddenly given too much food" (Conquest, 2000:87)—the Western analytical free-thinking has resulted in the conditions of the emergence of the totalitarian ideology.

The interpretation of the "new-man"-myth as an ideal of freedom as self-realization has the implications for the further discussion of the meaning of freedom in Russia. The spiritual freedom, often connected with the notion of the "Russian Soul", found reflection in many writings of the Russian authors. One of the later views of the "Russian soul" was articulated by Alexander Benois[xxxvii] in 1917:

> …I am convinced that Russian people in their soul and in the scope of their existence are freer than anyone else. Even under the tsarist regime there was nowhere that freedom (extended to the degree of permissiveness) in customs, in speeches, in thoughts than in Russia. Even our notorious "right for ignominy" is just an expression of that inner, immanent to any human freedom, based on racial peculiarities, but also nourished by the Christian idea of "the Lord's Kingdom inside us" (Benois, 2005:508, my translation).

The obvious state of "un-freedom" in Tsarist Russia, which was partially based on slavery and partially on a feudal system, contradicts this description and thus raises a question who represented this great spirit of freedom. The answer might be found in the descriptions of the "Russian Soul" offered by Leo Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Pushkin and Gogol among many others. Their writings often were inspired by and addressed to Decembrists (members of the Decembrist revolt which took place on 14 December 1825). The dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in the Russian Empire the Decembrists expressed, in the aftermath of their defeat, brought some significant changes in the Tsarist Russia eventually resulting in the abolishment of serfdom. The Decembrists and their sympathizers were the elite of the Russian society in the beginning of the XIXth century. The views and perceptions of freedom in Russia they inspired—embracement of the peasant (as a truly Russian) way of life combined with the revolutionary and reformative ideas brought from abroad—clearly cannot be extended to the whole

population of Russia. The perception of freedom which became common for the majority of the Soviet citizens has been far from the Decembrist's ideal.

There was a long period after the October Revolution when the word "freedom" was practically absent in its philosophical transcription in the social lexicon. Freedom as the paradigm after the bloody Civil War was no longer the same in the Soviet state as for the rest of humanity. For almost thirty years after 1917, until the death of Stalin, freedom was considered as something harmful, reactionary, a relict of the petit bourgeois concepts. The very word "freedom" in the Soviet state was almost unprintable, because the possible enemy from without was denoting freedom as a different kind of value than it was described in the "scientific communism" manual. The solely correct definition of freedom for the Soviet citizen was suggested by Marx "*freedom as recognized necessity*" (*svoboda - eto osoznanaja neobhodimost'*). This quotation was used promptly, without citing the source or references to the context. Translated in the Russian language, it implied sacrifices of individual freedoms for the needs and goods of the society. Possibly, it was not just because of propaganda or inertia of the revolutionary romanticism, which brought the notion of freedom as the forthcoming happiness that could be reached only by rejecting small and unimportant individual freedoms. Freedom as the social ideal was never praised in Russia as much as equality or fellowship. The notion of freedom was absent in the Russian folktales, songs, sayings, or proverbs. The narrow perspective of what life can offer, combined with indoctrination, made many citizens of the Soviet state to believe that they live in the most open and free country in the world. A popular song from 1936[21] contains the following line in chorus: "I don't know any other country, where a man can breathe so *freely*" ("Ja drugoi takoi strani ne znaju, gde tak vol'no dishit chelovek"). This translation is quite

[21] *The Song About Motherland* was created by Lebedev-Kumachev and Dunaevskim for the movie *The Circus.*

tentative, as for the native Russian speaker use of adjective *vol'no* (*adrift*) instead of *svobodno* (*freely*) on the emotional level means longing for freedom, rather than freedom itself. This choice of adjective in the hymn of Stalinism[22] looks either as a blooper or a deliberate substitution.

The claims that the country needs to be brought from the backwardness justified oppressive measures (if needed, by sacrificing the present generation for the sake of the future), prior to the enhancement of constitutive freedoms. The liberal conception of freedom, stressing the importance of natural rights[23], was incompatible with the idea of personal growth imposed from without. The social progress in the liberal sense was supposed to flow from the absence of state constraints; in Soviet Russia the notion of governance as a facilitator of optimum development of individual capacities was closely connected to the state dream of the grand goal.

3.4. The "Judeo-Bolsheviks" as Designers of Soviet Development

In *Lenin: A New Biography*, Dmitri Volkogonov[xxxviii] analyzes Lenin's origins and states that his paternal grandfather was Russian, his paternal grandmother Kalmyk, and his maternal grandmother German. He also speculates that Lenin's maternal grandfather, Dr. Alexander Blank, was Jewish. The Ulyanov family, though thoroughly Russified, was of mixed origin, and possibly without one Russian among them. Origins of other members of the Bolshevik party even resulted in a sort of conspiracy theory in the West at the time of the allied intervention in the Russian Civil War—indeed, many leading Soviet statesmen were Jews.

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[22] The version of "The Song About Motherland" from 1936 contains the line "With the golden letters are we writing the All-National Law of Stalin" (Золотыми буквами мы пишем Всенародный Сталинский закон).

[23] There are different perspectives on what constitutes the natural rights, but as the highest priorities are usually viewed the right to life and liberty.

Alexander II, known as the "Tsar liberator" for his 1861 abolition of serfdom in Russia, was also known for his suppression of national minorities. Under his rule Jews could not commission Christian servants, could not own land, and were restricted to where they could and couldn't travel. The systematic policy of discrimination banned Jews from rural areas and towns. They had endured a form of physical segregation in the Pale of Settlement[xxxix], as well as sporadic persecutions supported by Tsarist governments. The reasons for those actions were primarily economic and nationalist. While Russian society had traditionally been divided into nobles, serfs, and clergy, industrial progress led to the emergence of a middle class, which was rapidly filled by Jews, who did not belong to any sector. By limiting places where Jews could reside, the imperial powers attempted to ensure the growth of a non-Jewish middle class. Strict restrictions prohibited Jews from practicing many professions. The idea of overthrowing the Tsarist regime was attractive to many members of the Jewish intelligentsia because of the oppression of non-Russian nations and non-Orthodox Christians within the Russian Empire. For much the same reason, many non-Russians, notably Latvians and Poles, were disproportionately represented in the Bolshevik party leadership, while revolutionary movements and parties were not popular among Russians. Lenin mentioned that “Jews are of the especially large percentage (compared with the Jews’ population density)[xl] among the leaders of the revolutionary movement” (Ленин В.И. *Полн собр. соч. Т. 30.* С. 324, my translation).

> He [Hitler] painted Lenin as a failure who had surrendered the Russian people to the dictatorship of the Jews. Exaggerating the extent of Jewish influence, he said that they constituted 430 out of 478 people’s commissars. (…) He dwelled on the point, that the victory of Marxism in Russia was the triumph of the Jews (Gellately, 2007:100).

The label "Judeo-Bolshevism" became popular after the October Revolution (1917), featuring prominently in the propaganda of anti-communist forces during the Russian Civil War. Partially it has to do with the fact that after the Revolution a large number of Jews were employed in the bread- offices (of a high importance for survival in that period), trade, media, cinema, science, literature, and diplomacy (including foreign affairs). Among Russians this built a basis for anti- Semitic attitudes, which last even today. The White Army's propaganda posters literally 'demonized' the founder of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky (see Figure 9), who with his pince-nez and shock of auburn, curly hair, became one of the most readily recognized of the Bolsheviks.

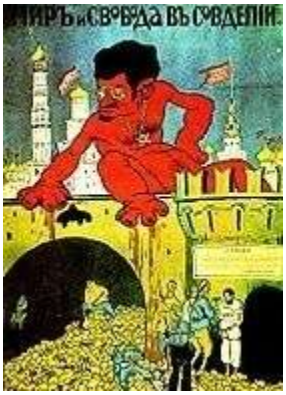

Figure 9. The caption reads: "Peace and Liberty in Sovdepia"

"Judeo-Bolshevism" was used by many enemies of Bolshevism, as well as contemporary anti-Semites, accusing Jews of pursuing Bolshevism to benefit Jewish interests. Notably, Hitler played on the theme that Russia suffered "hunger and misery" and that "the guilt for this development" was attributable to "none other than the Jews" (Gellately, 2007). During the Civil War tales linking the Jews to Bolshevism and its terror had become a reason for the pogroms of Jews in Ukraine. Many peasant revolts had an anti-Semite character, because bread-brigades and anti-church commissions were often lead by Jews. Anti-Jewish sentiment was aggravated by the fact that after the beginning of the NEP-policy, the majority of the "new bourgeoisie" were Jews:

> In sales business in Moscow they owned 75,4 % of all apothecaries, 54,6 % of perfumery shops, 48,6 % of textile shops, and 39,4 % of luxury-clothing shops. Of 2469 large entrepreneurs in the capital during the NEP, 810 were Jews. In the western part of the country the proportion of Jewish

> entrepreneurs with private businesses was even larger: 66% in Ukraine, [and] 90% in Belarus (…). Negative reaction in the society also provoked a comparably high level of representation of Jews in establishments of higher education. In the RSFSR at the beginning of 1927, the Jewish student contingent in pedagogical high educational establishments was 11,3%, in technical [schools] 14,7%, [and] in art schools 21,3% (Larin, 1929:97-99, my translation).

Figure 10. Soviet caricature originating the period of NEP: "Nepman"

Anti-Semitic attitudes, initially emerging from the stereotypes of Jews, were easily linked to the negative images of the '*Nepman*'—the quintessential entrepreneur who made his money by getting hold of products in scarce supply—in his luxurious fur coat, smoking his expensive cigar. The usual hostility toward the 'Nepman' was caused by the notion that the USSR was meant to be a 'proletarian state' and not a 'breeding bowel for parasites' (Service, 2007).

At the same time, the vast majority of Russia's Jews, much like their non-Jewish Russian neighbors, were not in any political party. The attempts of the socialist Jewish Labour Bund[xli] to be the sole representative of the Jewish workers in Russia had always conflicted with Lenin's idea of a universal coalition of workers of all nationalities. Soon after seizing power, the Bolsheviks established the Jewish section of the Communist party in order to destroy the rival Bund and Zionist[xlii] parties, suppress Judaism[xliii] and replace traditional Jewish culture with atheistic and internationalistic "proletarian culture". The teaching of Hebrew at primary and secondary schools was officially banned by the Narkompros

(Commissariat of Education) as early as 1919, as part of an overall agenda aiming to secularize education. The anti-religious laws against all expressions of religion and religious education were being taken out on the Jewish population, just like on other religious groups.

3.5. Concluding Remarks

There are several connections to make between the intelligentsia, Jews and unfreedom. The intellectuals' tendency to differ in the analyses of conditions for the social change and the interpretation of the revolutionary literature led to violence, such as bomb throwing or assassinations, that "reflected a romantic compulsion to act, and frustration with an exclusionary and seemingly unresponsive autocratic governmental system" (Longworth, 2006:228). The passiveness of intelligentsia after the October Revolution was the result of the uncertainty what to do next, as the overthrow of the tsar's rule was giving after all some hope for the possibility of the democratic and free development, the glimpses of the *radiant future*. Lenin was one of the best examples of the Russian intelligentsia at the breach of the centuries, the product of an elite educational system that brought the fruits of "enlightenment" to the European backwater. But, unlike Decembrists, he wasn't dreamer and idealist; he had a very practical ideas concerning the future of the state. However, the implementation of those ideas was apparently incompatible with democratic methods and peaceful development. Despite Lenin and the Bolshevik's enlightened dedication to industrialization and urbanization, and eagerness to promote education, they were the agents of "development as unfreedom", who suppressed the capabilities of the population of Russia and their free will. Instead of creating the most progressive country on Earth, with popular participation in government and unprecedented social guaranties, the Bolsheviks were building a new empire.

Regardless these explanations, we cannot forget the mass that bore - and accepted - the inhuman costs of the revolution. Russians often lived in worse conditions than other nations, and as part of Empire, even less so. They tended to be less literate and culturally and economically developed than the Balts, Estonians, Finns, Poles, or indeed even the German and Jewish minorities inside the country. The general passiveness of the titular nation led Bolsheviks (with Jews heavily overrepresented in the ranks of party and state officials) to seek the alliances with the other nations inhabiting the vast territories of Russia, thus implementing the policies of korenizatsiya and razmezhevanie in 1920s. One can say that members of the Bolshevik party who were Jewish initially affected the concept of development in Soviet Russia. Most vividly it is seen in the suggestions for more rapid development and greater state control provided by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev during the period of NEP ("Trotsky's alternative"). This group believed that profits should be shared among all people implying the narrowing of the NEP in the countryside in favor of the technical reconstruction of the industry (the higher tempo of the development of the state industry was supposed to happen at the expense of the heavy centralization of the amortization funds and minimizations of the non-state reserves). Thus, before 1927-1928 working year, the Trotsky's oppositional group suggested the requisition of no less than 150 million pud of grain as an additional tax imposed on the most well-off peasants ('kulaks'). Stalin, who initially didn't support idea of the greater state control, adapted it in 1927, with the same turning the "Trotsky's alternative" into "Stalin's alternative". "Stalin's alternative" lacked, however, the democratic rejuvenation of the party's regime suggested by Trotsky and applied extraordinary administrative measures, which became the source of peasants' oppression during the process of the collectivization in agriculture and wasteful hyper-industrialization.

CHAPTER IV: MODERNIZATION AND THE BANISHMENT OF NATURE: RUSSIAN AND SOVIET VISUAL ARTS

Development in the Soviet state cost not just human lives but, as I shall show later, involved an unprecedented ecocide. This term originates the book by Murray Feshbach and Alfred Friendly, jr. *Ecocide in The USSR: Health and Nature Under Siege:*

> Like other assaults on human dignity and hope - mass arrests and deportations, man-made famine - the indifference to pollution and human health is a consequence of the Revolution. Ecocide in the USSR stems from the force, not the failure, of utopian ambitions (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:28)

It is interesting to ask how the change of nature perception was reflected in the Russian and Soviet visual arts. The visual representation of nature plays a central role in the dichotomy of "human being vs. nature", namely as a shaping cultural force towards society's attitude toward nature. What were the dominant representations of nature before the Soviet time, and how they were changed by the Bolshevik propaganda?

The challenges of reviewing trends in the arts are similar to the problems of conducting a qualitative study, namely the issues of reliability and imprecise modes of data analysis. Investigating the presence of images of nature or an absence of those has drawbacks in terms of the interpretation of the focused samples and personal subjectivity of the researcher in data collection.

The methodology used to collect data on art included observation of various images and research into their related subjects. In this particular case the focused samples are landscape paintings and posters from Russian artists who produced

works from the second half of the XIXth century till the beginning of the 1930s. Some of these works are placed in other chapters as the illustrations.

A qualitative research approach was applied to this subject in order to gather an in-depth understanding of the connections between socio-historic events, cultural orientations of Russian artists as representatives of the intellectual groups, and the general attitude toward nature reflected in visual art in a given period.

To facilitate data collection, the research concentrated on a holistic and contextual review of the significant and prominent images of nature (or its absence) in visual arts within two periods. The first period is characterized by the peculiar attention that painters gave to Russian nature—either by directly depicting it (as by members of the *Peredvizhniki*-society), or making implicit relations between "Russian soil" and "Russian soul" (as by many Symbolists who strengthened *World of Art*-movement). The second period's characteristics imply a general interest of painters to symbols of modern life, including the urban style of life in case of the avant-garde artists, and images of new technologies and mechanization included in the composition of the early Social Realists' paintings.

4.1. Russian Landscapes-Painting before NEP

It is hard to imagine the fine art in Russia at the end of the XIXth to the beginning of the XXth century without considering works of members of the *Peredvizhniki* movement. Like Lenin, influenced by the public views of Chernyshevsky, *Peredvizhniki* envisaged the creation of the "new man" in a backward—compared to its neighbors—Russia. They were a group of Russian realist artists who in protest at academic restrictions (and tsarist officials' censorship) formed an artists' cooperative which evolved into the *Society for Traveling Art Exhibitions* in 1870. They proclaimed the realization of Chernyshevsky's work in practice by "bringing art to people" and facilitating

their cultural education. The *Peredvizhniki*'s society, during their blossoming (1870-1890), developed an increasingly wider scope, expressed as an increasing naturalness and freedom of the images. In spite of multi-talented artists that worked in many genres, subjects, and heroes, the images of Russian nature and human destiny remained the main themes of their creativity.

Russian landscape painters were part of a movement towards realism in art which arose in the context of the dominant Romantic Movement of the time; their works were characterized by strong expressiveness and deeply national sound. The core of the aesthetic program of the landscape painters in 1860-1870 was a search for an inspiration in the Russian landscape, in its wide and often direct connections with the life of people. This has distinguished the *Peredvizhniki* landscapes from the previous works of Russian painters (representatives of the Russian Academy of Arts), who mainly depicted nature as seen in Italy. Studying the Russian countryside and landscapes, the future *Peredvizhniki* used as much true passion as the genre painters used to study the many-sided characters of social life, strength of characters, and the beauty of the traditional ways of life. The range of themes represented in these works was broad, embracing studio works depicting everyday life in the city and peasant life in the country. For the landscape painters it was equally important to not only accurately depict a specific landscape, but also to see the peculiarity of Russian nature.

Works by Alexey Savrasov, Ivan Shishkin, Vasiliy Polenov, Arkhip Kuinji, and Isaak Levitan were well received by the public. These masters showed the highest importance of ordinary motifs, scenes, and seasons of the year. Country scenes were approached by artists much more often than urban motifs, thus emphasizing peasant themes. But it was not based purely on social problems. The whole gamut was captured on canvas. Plain green expanses, fallowed fields in

the rain, endless travel-worn roads, narrow paths that stretched from different parts of the vast land, dense forests, impassable thickets, small lakes like blue saucers, hidden copses, and the beauty of the big Russian river Volga were all acceptable subjects for *Peredvizhniki*.

Figure 11. I.Levitan: *Above Eternal Peace* (1894)

The concept of nature, for *Peredvizhniki* movement artists and since, has always been closely connected with a man being painted in his natural environment. Concerns about people and their thoughts and the Russian character were very much affected by landscape. Indeed, the narrations about Russian nature involved the telling of the life story of human beings living in nature. In particular Isaak Levitan's landscapes contained a reflection on people's destiny and the meaning of their life, having at the same time a profound understanding of nature. His paintings, such as *Over Eternal Peace* and *Eternal Chime,* are full of literary associations and philosophical ideas. His last painting, *Russia,* was not finished. He dreamed of creating the common artistic image of his homeland in this painting. Levitan fell deeply in love with the Motherland, as did all of the *Peredvizhniki*. They dreamed and believed that their art would give people happiness and hope and recognition of the need to develop a high moral ideal in Russia.

In the period 1903-1906 Nikolai Dubovskij created a series of works, the most prominent of which is *Motherland* (1905). The idea of this painting was close to the lines of the great Russian poet Nikolai Nekrasov: "You are so miserable, you are so abundant, You are so powerful, you are so weak, Mother Russia." The

composition of this painting has collected everything found by Dubovskij's predecessors in the creation of large, plain areas, so characteristic of the Russian landscape. The whole composition of the painting is simple, strict, and exhibits a sense of grandeur. The beautiful land is segregated in small areas; separate shreds are covering hills and plains which stretch to the horizon.

Figure 12. N.Dubovskij: *Motherland* (1905)

The revolutionary movement of the proletariat influenced the art society as well, causing a sharply idealistic differentiation. The differences could be felt during the last decade of the XIXth century. Though the *Peredvizhniki* held sway over Russian art for the first ten years of the XXth century, in 1898 their influence was superseded by *Mir Iskusstva* (*World of Art*), a movement which idealized the XVIIIth century as the "age of elegance," which strived to conserve the art of previous epochs, particularly traditional folk art, and yet also advanced modern trends in Russian art. *World of Art* activists aimed at assailing low artistic standards of the obsolete *Peredvizhniki* school and promoting artistic individualism and other principles of Art Nouveau. Benois and his friends were disgusted with anti-aesthetic nature of modern industrial society and sought to consolidate all Neo-Romantic Russian artists under the banner of fighting Positivism in art. In Benois' *Diary from 1916-1918* there is a special amendment to the possible reasons of WWI linked to the usage by officials of a "national idea" in arts:

> The old-men [members of the *Peredvizhniki*-society], in all the ways desiring the national art, were convincing each other that the period of slavish imitation of the foreign dominance was over, that they from now on

> will “freely create in their own fashion”, and that in front of them a large field of tremendous success was opening both at home and abroad. The facts proved these ideas to be illusions. Every society in each state tended to forget about village and remembered this genre of art and paid attention to it only to support the national whimsies and nationalism (…) And that already was a war (Benois 2006:460, my translation).

For him, the attempts of the nations to find their own path seemed horrible and dangerous, something he called a “development of the national egos.” Furthermore, implemented in arts and religion, he saw it as the heresies, which corrupted the grounding principles of those spiritual spheres.

> The admiration-worth became not that was per se a creation of an artistic inspiration, not the prompting of freedom—but what was striving-fictional in the name of the narrow, cruel theories of insulation and even secession (…) The victory in the spheres of art belonged to the imperial customs, that is to say the backward movement from freedom to the casemates, to the squalor (ibid.)

If there were critical observers in Russia, who perceived the monstrosity of Lenin’s (and tsarist’ before him) idea of development, no doubt Alexander Benois was one of them. In fact, the notion of "development as unfreedom" for the first time was articulated almost one hundred years ago by Benois in his *Diary.* Notably, the artist came up with comparison of the Soviet state to the existence and activity of an anthill ("an ant-slavery is the bitterst to accept" (Benois, 2006:508)) —which is not the way of saying a "free society"—only a month after the October Revolution.

World of Art members were not interested in depicting nature, per se; their works should be understood in light of a spiritual search, characteristic of Symbolism.

Probably the best example of this artistic approach might be viewed in works of the prominent Russian Symbolist painter Mikhail Vrubel, who achieved fame with the decorative panels he painted for the 1896 All-Russia Artistic and Industrial Exhibition in Nizhny Novgorod. The first alluded to a medieval source, Edmond Rostan's *Princess of Dreams* and was meant to embody the Art Nouveau ideal of beauty. Another, *Mikula Selyaninovich,* was dedicated to the heroes of ancient Russian tales, the heroes who personified the power of the Russian soil. Vrubel arrived at a complex artistic hyperbole in his attempt to communicate the specifics of the mythic mindset. His Russian heroes of choice are not those who gained fame on the battlefield, but the farmer Mikula Selyaninovich and a Varagian tribute collector, the wizard Volga. The composition was based on the dialogue of the heroes in a fantastic landscape decorated with Russian motifs. The robust figures of the Bogatyrs, which seem to grow from the Russian soil, are perceived as the personifications of the spiritual power and the irrational natural strength coming from the true Russian soil in the image of Mikula, and the supernatural powers that come from the rational Nordic West in the image of Volga. In the context of symbolism, this diametrical opposition can be seen as a reflection on the priority of spiritual values embodied by each of the heroes.

Russian Symbolism's representation of nature was deeply rooted in Russian folk tales, where the notions of spiritual kinship between man and nature belonged to the images of Russia as space—*matushka-zemlja* (mother-soil), *zemlica rodnaja* (earth from the home-place). As such, Russian soil, soul, and spirit are interconnected; for example, the image of the vast Russian field (*shirokoe pole*) finds the reflection in the perception of the big-hearted Russian man, ready to share the last he has with a stranger (*shirokaja dusha*).

Figure 13. M. Dobuzhinsky: *From Petrograd's Life in 1920* (1920). Besides obvious images of devastation, hunger, and cold winter, this painting features the theatrical posters and announcements of ball and dancing. It is hard to understand – are those posters left from the pre-revolutionary time as a reminder of a better life, or is it an amendment to the famous mini-tragedy by Pushkin's *Feast during the Plague.*

Another aspect of the social activities of the *World of Art* group is the critical stand to the events of the Revolution they witnessed as, for example, an urbanistic phantasm *From Petrograd's Life in 1920* (1920) by Mstislav Dobuzhinsky. Dobuzhinsky was distinguished from other *World of Art* activists by his expressionist manner and keen interest in the modern industrial cityscape. He often painted seedy or tragic scenes from urban life which expressed the nightmarish bleakness and loneliness of modern times. Among his works were also humorous vignettes and sketches with demon-like creatures which seemed to embody the monstrosities of urbanization.

4.2. From Depiction of the Urban Life to "Industrial Art"

Russian Symbolism had begun to lose its momentum by the second decade of the twentieth century. Many joined the ranks of the Futurists, an iconoclastic group which sought to recreate art entirely, eschewing all aesthetic conventions. Russian futurism is said to have been born in December 1912, when the Moscow-based group Hylaea issued a manifesto entitled *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste.*

The Russian Futurists were fascinated with the dynamism, speed, and restlessness of modern urban life. Even the established artists Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova, and Kazimir Malevich found inspiration in the refreshing imagery of Futurism.

The 1910s saw striking experiments by Russian masters in all spheres of the fine arts—a total destruction of the plastic laws inherent in the figurative art of the previous age was under way. Suprematist canvases by Kazimir Malevich, including the famous *Black Square* (1913), became one of the most impressive manifestos testifying to a crisis of a narrative trend in art. Non-objective paintings by Olga Rozanova and Ivan Klyun, "painterly counter-reliefs" by Vladimir Tatlin, "plastic painting" by Liubov Popova, "painterly sculpturing" by Ivan Pougny, "made-up pictures" by Pavel Filonov, "spatial painting" by Peter Miturich, and "painterly treatment of materials" by Lev Bruni were all based on a tendency to make easel art closer to material objects and technology. It was not a mere coincidence that the newspaper *Iskusstvo Kommuni* (*Art of The Commune*) (December 1918 – April 1919), an organ of the "leftist" artists who enthusiastically met the Revolution of 1917, presumed "an attitude to the picture as a goal in itself as a constructive system of forms-colors."

Figure 14. "Hail the Genious of the World's Wanders – the Mighty Artistic Labour" An abstract figure of a man presumably depicts a painter, who holds an easel. The caption on one of figures on a background reads "Art"

Russian Futurism gave growth to the Russian Constructivism. This movement of the 1920s and early 1930s not only asserted itself in painting, graphic art, architecture, cinema and design, but also vividly reflected the specific features of the October Revolution. There was a great deal of overlap in this period between Constructivism and Proletkult[24], the ideas of which concerning the need to create an entirely new culture struck a chord with the Constructivists. This movement emerged on the basis of the ideas of "industrial art."

The enthusiasm of industrial progress and a growing urbanization forced artists to explore how they could mix the technical and aesthetic, the utilitarian and beautiful. The canonical work of Constructivism was Vladimir Tatlin's proposal for the *Monument to the Third International* (1919) which combined a machine aesthetic with dynamic components celebrating technology, such as searchlights and projection screens. The ideas of "industrial art" received a theoretical development in a number of essays by Osip Brik, Boris Kushner, and Nikolai Chuzhak. They asserted the priority of engineering devices in creative work and opposed the rational necessity of the everyday objects to the "useless" beauty of easel works. The theorists of the "industrial art" aesthetic program, universal for all kinds of artistic activity, resolutely denied the "pure" art of the past based on the creator's imagination and intuition. Instead the ideal was to create real objects necessary for daily life—furniture, clothes, shop-signs, tableware and crockery—by means of exact calculation and machine activity. Several artists tried to work in clothes design with varying levels of success. In these works Constructivists showed a willingness to involve themselves in fashion and the mass market, which they tried to balance with their Communist beliefs.

Believing that only the Revolution of 1917 gave an opportunity to the proletariat to master technology, the adherents of production supposed that only with its

[24] Proletkult ("proletarian culture") was a movement active in the Soviet state from 1917 to 1925 to provide the foundations for what was intended to be a truly proletarian art devoid of bourgeois influence.

help the problem of harmonizing the entire sphere of material objects in new society could be solved. The emphasis on a technical aspect was explained not only by its practical reasons but also by its wide possibilities for the social transformation of the country.

Leading Constructivists were heavily involved in film, with Mayakovsky starring in *The Young Lady and the Hooligan* (1919), Rodchenko's designs for the inter-titles and animated sequences of Dziga Vertov's *Kino Eye* (1924), and Aleksandra Ekster designing the sets and costumes for the science fiction film *Aelita* (1924).

The "industrial art" theorists Osip Brik and Sergei Tretyakov[xliv] also wrote screenplays and intertitles for films such as Vsevolod Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia* (1928) or Victor Turin's *Turksib* (1929). The filmmakers and *LEF*[xlv] contributors Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein, as well as the documentary filmmaker Esfir Shub also regarded their fast-cut, montage style of film making as Constructivist.

Many posters created during late 1910s and 1920s have bared a specific feature of the period connected with technical progress in the Soviet state. The cult of machinery was an important aesthetic principle for adherents to "industrial art." From the first days of the Soviet state, posters became a favorite tool of many ideologists. Posters were viewed as street-art: large-scale and accessible to many. Many posters included elements of the technological progress—industrial objects, machine-tools, mechanisms, etc.—even if they were devoted to other subjects. The Constructivists actively included those details into posters combining them with photographic and type-face details. The poster was quickly becoming the most relevant genre of graphical art in the Soviet country, as is evidenced by the first retrospective in Soviet Russia *The Poster in Six Years*, held in February 1924 in the Historical Museum in Moscow. The exhibition laid the

beginning of the assertion of "revolutionary," politically engaged posters as principal accomplishments of the contemporary graphic art.

The Constructivists were the first to turn not only to posters, but also sweet wrappers, trademarks and packages as a means to educate and enlighten working people. This education soon was corrupted by the efforts of the state "to make more Soviet," or make popular products synonymous with the identity of the country. These efforts pervaded the country, including renaming of the tobacco brands *Thais* and *Allegro* to be more understandable to the "working smoker" *Dneprostroi*[xlvi], *Industrialization* and *State Loan.*

4.3. The Fiction of Freedom in Soviet Realism

According to the authorities, the task of the Soviet painters in the first years after the October Revolution was to distinguish Soviet art from the works created under the previous regime. It was important to show the new realities brought by the Soviets and with the same to promote an idea of the changing character of labour and hard work. In *Labour in the Works of the Soviet Painters* from 1971 it is stated, that:

> Russian Realistic paintings of the XIXth century, by showing the inner contradictions that existed in the exploitative society, were depicting the slavery-labour, depressive, impenetrable, degrading and killing. (…) Sympathizing the bitter destiny of the dejected Russian people, [*Peredvizhniki*] could only express the protest against the right-less position of workers in the tsarist Russia. After the October Revolution work ceased to be a matter of exploitation. New relations appeared between people in the process of working, a new attitude appeared to the labour itself. In front of the painters stood a totally different task – to show the labour of the freed person, who won it in the revolutionary battles, became the master of his homeland; to hail labour as the basis of the country's rejuvenation, building

> of the new, radiant life (*Советский художник [Sovietskii Chudozhnik]* 1971:1, my translation)

In reality the situation was quite the opposite. The attempt to turn an illiterate peasant society into an advanced industrial economy in a single decade brought intense suffering upon those who were building this new state. This, of course, was never depicted by the Soviet painters. Instead, by the 1920s critiques saw a turn in the Russian visual art to Realism, which was meant to depict rather than to abstract, and was a continuation of the traditions of the classical painting school. Turn to classics was also explained in terms of ideology: the Soviet state's art was supposed to adopt the best achievements of the world's culture. Lenin believed that art should belong to the people and should stand on the side of the proletariat and be easily accessible for the masses of illiterate people of Russia.

Figure 15. Zolotarev: *Development of the Agriculture*. (1930). This postcard depicts industrial progress (represented by airplane and heavy machinery), high yield, an electrified village, as suggested by the electric lines, and Soviet power (represented by the red flag over the roof).

The 48th exhibition of *Peredvizhniki* in 1923 was the last one. Out went the Romantic snowy landscapes with winter palaces gleaming in the distance, and in came Socialist Realism: tractors, smoking chimneys, and "happy workers striving for radiant future." Most members of *Peredvizhniki* joined the

Association of Artists in Revolutionary Russia (*AKhRR*[xlvii]), whose members leaned on the traditions of *Peredvizhniki* and aspired to create works of art understandable by people and faithfully reflecting the Soviet validity. They gained favor as the legitimate bearers of the Communist ideal into the world of art and formulated a framework for the Socialist Realism style. The ideology behind Socialist Realism stood for depicting the heroism of the working class. It was to promote and spark revolutionary actions and to spread the image of optimism and the importance of productiveness.

It is interesting to study the themes of the postcards released by *AKhRR* in the 1920s to the beginning of the 1930s. Those postcards demonstrate the sphere of interest of the Soviet state: industrialization and industrial labour, new buildings, and mechanization of the agriculture. The majority of those postcards were dedicated to children. They depicted serious kids who were trying to choose their future profession while playing, and pioneers who not only rested, but worked as well. Much attention was devoted to the image of the "new man," and in particular the new Soviet woman. This image carried a message of an "engineer," "prominent worker," or "sports-woman." The ideal postcard was supposed to use its theme to agitate the further development of the new socialistic culture.

Figure 16. Yakovlev: *Transport is Tuning* (1923)

The period of NEP had established new genres in Russian visual art, particularly industrial landscape. The industrial landscape painting allowed an artistic expression without contradicting the official ideology. To the industrial

landscape in those years had turned among others A.B. Kuprin, P.I. Kotov, P.V. Kuznetsov, Ju.I. Pimenov, I.I. Mashkov, A.N. Samohvalov, and V.V. Rozhdestvenskii. The industrial landscape was devoted to honoring the period of rebuilding of the country. It reflected an industrial growth, building projects of factories, and hydro-stations. The creation of this genre was marked with Yakovlev's *Transport is Tuning* (1923). This painting was praised both as enouncing the ideas of the socialistic re-organization of the Soviet country and as permissive for the landscape paintings in Soviet art. Yakovlev achieved a feeling of space in his work by depicting railroads, stretching to the horizon and flanked by power lines. The smoking trains symbolized labour activities after a long period of decline.

Figure 17. Brodskij: *Dneprostroi.* (????)

Isaak Izrailevich Brodskij used to work in the landscape painting style in the first years of Soviet power. Starting from the period of NEP he became an "official" painter of the new authorities. He depicted the official events and painted portraits of the Soviet state's leaders. In the 1920s, based on sketches and photo-documentary, he created *Lenin at the Volkovstroi*[25], contributing to the myth of the direct involvement of Lenin in the process of the country's electrification. To his later works belongs *Dneprostroi*. In particular, the construction site of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station became the source of inspiration for the Soviet painters, reflecting the Soviet authority's

[25] Volkhov hydroelectric plant under construction.

demand for the popularization of electrification. More accurately, the painters received orders from authorities to depict this project of the First Five-Year Plan. The initial five-year plans were created to serve in the rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union, and thus placed a major focus on heavy industry. Arguably, it was the initial proposal of The GOELRO-Plan that served as the prototype and the probe for nation-wide centralized exercises in rapid economic development further developed by Gosplan.

Figure 18. Bogaevskii: *Dneprostroi.* (1930)

One of the founders of the industrial landscape was Bogaevskii, who in the 1930s went to the Dneprostroi. The scale of the building site and the human-labour struggle against the forces of nature amazed him. Being a master of the historic-romantic, heroic landscape, he, as many other Soviet painters, turned to depicting large construction sites. Bogaevskii created more than 30 painting devoted to the Dneprostroi. His industrial landscapes carried a sort of meditative social-utopist character, with clouds of soot and dust filling the horizon as emblems of hope, rather than as portents of environmental degradation. "Until environmental consciousness genuinely began to enter Soviet thinking in the late 1980s, factory smokestacks stood as symbols of the country's might, progress and, by extension, beauty" (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:91).

Labour in the Works of the Soviet Painters contains the following description of one of the gravures devoted to the Dneprostroi:

> Pathos and romantic of the creative labour are filling the graphical works of A. Kravchenko. In 1930 he was sent [rather detached, as many other painters] to make sketches of the Dneprostroi. This travel facilitated the creation of six large gravures, one of those is *Dneprostroi. The Dam.* In those works one can feel the intensive rhythm of labour. The large masses of the dam stand out grandiosely—a creation by the hands of the Soviet workers. The clear-cut compositional structure is emphasized by the diagonally way-going dynamic of the growing construction. Painter-romantic Kravchenko saw the beauty of the new Soviet industry in his way and handled it in heroic, elated images (*Советский художник [Sovietskii Chudozhnik],* 1971:2, my translation).

Another industrial landscape, presented in *Labour in the Works of the Soviet Painters* is an etching by N. Nivinskii *Azneftstroi* (construction site of the oil recovery in Azerbaijan): "The multifaceted ebullient life of the Soviet industry: not only oil extraction, but also fleet, tractors, trains, airplanes, houses under construction. And above all that is seen an image of V. I. Lenin" (ibid., my translation). The idea was to create a view of the new Soviet industry that follows the path, envisaged by its leader:

> Combining in a difficult composition the images of the surrounding reality with the certain symbolic, Nivinskii was able to show in the figurative way the connection of all exploits and mighty enterprises of the Soviet people, its inspirational labour with the grandeur of the thoughts of the leader of the Revolution, the embodiments of his great visions (ibid., my translation)

4.4. The Soviet Silent Spring. From Nature to Machine

Taking into account that the aim of the Socialist realism was to present life and work of the common worker or peasant, nature played a role of decoration and backdrop for the heroic labour, a challenge to be conquered and satisfy human needs.

> Stalinist planning justified itself with a forthright slogan: "We cannot expect charity from nature. We must tear it from her". Nature existed to be exploited, to be wrestled into submission. To defend it was sabotage, a hostile act against the builders of the socialist paradise (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:43)

The planning became an instrument "that fit all the requirements of ambition and ideology, of central authority and gargantuan challenge" (ibid.). The Five-year plans were approved by the council of ministers and the Politburo. Nobody on a lower level would dare to say a word contradicting those plans, even if the negative consequences for the natural environment were obvious. The views of nature presented in works of the Futurists, Constructivists, and later the Socialist realists reflected—and in some ways constituted—a general neglect of nature in policies and projects of the Soviet state. Any intrinsic or spiritual value of a non-human nature was reduced to merely instrumental terms (same is true to say about individuals and the mass of people, treated by the state "with the same indifference to their innate human value and well-being" (Feshbach and Friendly 1991:40)).

The concept of sustainability is no longer a new one, but in many aspects it remains rather controversial and unclearly defined. The Report of the Brundtland Commission[26], *Our Common Future*, recognizing the needs of political and

[26] The Brundtland Commission, formally the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), known by the name of its Chair Gro Harlem Brundtland, was convened by the United Nations in 1983. In

social change in order to find balance between human environment and natural resources, defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm). The "sustainable" in this definition is merely a qualifying adjective, characterizing living systems as limited, while development is a goal to achieve taking in consideration the limitations of resources. However, the development pursued in the Soviet state can't be described as sustainable even in those limited terms. The unsustainable development, aimed to meet the unrealistic industrialization targets of the Soviet planners, not surprisingly resulted in environmental degradation as a menace to human health and wrecking of human livelihoods not only for the future generations, but also for the present ones. Along with the culture of development and technical progress, the Soviet authorities promoted technical solutions for policy-making, whose implementation often resulted in degradation of the natural environment. One of the most prominent examples of this policy is the diversion of the rivers Amu Darya and Syr Darya that fed the Aral Sea by Soviet Union irrigation projects for promoting the cotton growth in the southern Republics of the USSR (Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan). Due to redirection of the Sea's sources, the Aral Sea has been steadily shrinking since the 1960s.

The possibility of facing a spring season without bird songs has inspired the title of Rachel Louise Carson's book *Silent Spring* (1962). In this book Carson argued that effects of pesticides usage are rarely limited to the target pests and stated that uncontrolled pesticide use leads to the deaths of animals, especially birds, and humans. *Silent Spring* became one of the most influential books of the XXth century, launching the global environmental movement. In the Soviet state the

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establishing the commission, the UN General Assembly recognized that environmental problems were global in nature and determined that it was in the common interest of all nations to establish policies for sustainable development.

silent spring in many places became the reality as a result of the massive but untutored use of toxic agricultural chemicals.

> 25 million of acres of cropland are still overloaded with the poison [DDT[27]]. In some areas marked by pesticide abuse, the infant mortality rate runs twice as high as in cleaner, nearby regions. (...) As [the Aral Sea's] volume shrank by two-thirds, storms carried the toxic salts from its exposed bed to fertile fields more than one thousand miles away (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:2).

Not only the destruction of ecosystems in the Soviet state went silent, unnoticed by the large audience and for a long time unattended. For many decades the cases of mismanagement and failures to measure the social costs of exploiting limited natural resources were sealed and kept secret by the regime. "The self-defeating logic of utopian totalitarianism could tolerate only facts that served and bolstered the myth. Any others were not truths but heresies to be suppressed along with anyone incautious enough to defend them" (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:31). The current environmental crisis in all the former republics of the USSR is the offspring of this silence and indirectly the effect of the upbringing, education and "Soviet religion" imposed on the people by the Bolsheviks. Ukraine and Belorussia have to deal with the problems originating the catastrophe in Chernobyl as the abnormally radioactive soil and contaminated waters of the Dnieper. The Central Asian republics are facing consequences of the destruction of the Aral Sea. One of the largest environmental issues for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is the contamination of the coastline and waters of the Baltic Sea (the chemical and other industries established in those republics during the Soviet-period polluted the air and emptied wastes into rivers and lakes). The states in the Caucasus, where population density is high, are now challenged with the issues

[27] Dichloro-Diphenyl-Trichloroethane (DDT) is one of the best known synthetic pesticides. In the USSR tons of DDT were spread long after other nations banned it.

of the inadequate water treatment systems and impure waters. Despite the great ecological importance of the Caucasus area, waste management in the region is underdeveloped. All major rivers in the Russian Federation, which historically been the nation's lifelines, had been poisoned by chemical production, metallurgy, forestry, agriculture and energy producers by the early 1990s, thus becoming dangerous to ecosystems that depend on them.

> Industrial growth, pursued at a reckless speed, without effective measures of economic or social costs, has put 70 million out of 190 million Soviet living in 103 cities in danger of respiratory and other life-shortening diseases from air that carries five and more times the allowed limit of pollutants. Almost three-fourths of the nation's surface water is polluted; one-fourth is completely untreated. By themselves, the two giant ministries of energy and metallurgy account for half the air pollution. Untreated, waterborne agricultural, industrial and human wastes together threaten to kill the Sea of Azov, the Black Sea and the Caspian and have turned giant rivers, including the Volga, the Dniepr and the Don, into open sewers (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:2-3)

4.5. Concluding Remarks.

The semiotic analysis of Russian visual arts from the end of the XIXth century to the beginning of the XXth goes some way to give a general impression of the cultural transformations society was undergoing during this period, particularly the changes of the ways nature was represented. There are several conclusions to draw from this review applying the larger context of the study, namely "development as unfreedom."

First, the interest in the "peasant Russia" expressed in realistic and romantic landscapes by the members of the *Peredvizhniki* society overlapped with the

revolutionary thinking before the 1880s, notably the ideas of the *People's Will* fraction and, arguably, served as the basis for the nationalistic inclines.

Second, the adoption of The GOELRO-Plan in 1920 by Bolsheviks was culturally underpinned by the avant-garde artists. They created preconditions for the technically-based plan of the country's reconstruction by setting certain expectations, such as amendments to the proletariat culture, free from bourgeois influence and "unnecessary" beauty of the artistic works.

Third, the freedom of the agency of the Socialist realism painters depicting and praising the Soviet reality is questionable. Their works, glorifying the modernization, electrification and technological advance, were biased by the fact that only one institution, the Soviet state itself, was able to patronize the arts. The absence of free markets and lack of ability to sell the objects of arts freely eventually resulted in the deprivation of artists' ability to remain freely employed and hence the deprivation of the freedom of expression—artists essentially became state employees. As such the authorities set the parameters for what it employed them to do.

Fourth, the ways different artists presented nature in their works reflected the ethical values associated with human's attitudes to nature. While the natural landscapes, created by the members of the *Peredvizhniki*-society, largely correspond to the "*Arcadianism*," as romantic symbiosis between man and nature, which is an ultimate symbol of innocence and harmony, the general neglect of nature in works of Futurists and Constructivists bear a certain concept of nature as *blind necessity*, corresponding to the logic of the traditional Western ethics with regard to the nature as a fundamental resource:

> Other nations that the USSR saw as its competitors, the United States not least among them, long geared their development to the same dynamic as the

> Soviets, to the ancient biblical injunction to Adam to "subdue" the earth and assert "dominion" over it and "every living thing" (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:40).

The representatives of the Symbolism apparently viewed nature as *mysterium tremendum*[28], which is a religious constitutive value. This concept implies the overwhelming immensity of scale and force in nature. The works of the Soviet realists, filled with towering concrete cliffs of dams, giant excavations of open-pit mines and the ordered march of high-voltage power lines, praised the industrial progress also as the *mysterium tremendum.* This account allowed the Socialist realism artists to prescribe nature another constitutive value as *untamed wilderness,* while the Soviet workers and peasants were viewed as romantic heroes, who were taming it. This image, planted in minds of the Soviet citizens by means of education and cultural upbringing, was for long time used to distance the glorified work with the environmental crisis provoking activities, raising identification difficulties. ”For modern urban man the friendship with a natural environment is reduced to fragmentary relations. Instead he has to identify with man-made things, such as streets and houses” (Schulz, 2007:107). The transformation of the virgin lands into industrial sites while sacrificing vast human and natural resources was embraced whole-heartedly by the Soviet state.

[28] *Mysterium Tremendum* (Fearful and fascinating mystery) is the description of object common to all forms of religious experience, referring to the power or presence of a divinity.

CHAPTER V: THE CREATION OF HOMO SOVIETICUS: FROM CULTURE TO INDUSTRY

In the 1920s-30s, the transformation of ideas of the society took place around the world under the influence of political and economic crises and new needs stipulated by the industrial epoch. Herbert Wells supported the Soviet experiment related to managing and developing the economy and social sphere under the direction of the state. During his third visit to Russia in 1934 he, in a conversation with Joseph Stalin said: "It would be reasonable to develop a five-year plan for the reconstruction of [the] human brain lacking many particles so necessary for perfect social order." This concept was embraced by Stalin, who called writers the "engineers of human souls" in preparation for the first Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers on October 26, 1932. Questioning Wells, he asked, "Do you plan to visit the Congress of the Association of Soviet Writers?" By this, Stalin hinted unambiguously that Western and Soviet practices could be combined in the process of so-called socialism construction.

In this chapter I want to explore the practical implementation of the social engineering practices, as proposed by Soviet psychologists, with particular regard to the creation of Soviet literature, which eventually resulted in Stalin's perception of the writer's role in society. I am interested in finding out how the new ideology of the Soviet state as expressed in schools and cultural programs created the basis and justification for "development as unfreedom."

P. J. de la F. Wiles pointed out that that considering the fair level of literacy in Russia (67% of men and 37% of women over age 9 in 1926), only a few had a higher education, and the vast majority of those with a pre-war commercial or economic education were dead or in exile. The stock of professionals and semi-professionals was about 200,000 in 1913 and presumably similar to this in October 1917. From then until January 1928 about 300,000 graduated, yet the

stock of educated people rose only to 233,000 because many died during years of wars and revolutions. Of the post-revolutionary graduates, adjusting the death-rates of 1926 upwards, no more than 15,000 could have died. From this data 252,000 pre-war professionals must have died or emigrated, which is more than the total number of graduates. Backwardness, the petty bourgeois nature of its population, and the lack of professionalism[29] among the members of the administration were factors postponing Lenin's hopes that during the historically short period the eradication of illiteracy would create the moral and psychic pre-conditions for transfer to the new system, which he saw Communism to be. However, the process of education of the entire country was not an easy task to accomplish. One of the main NEP-policies—the move towards modernization—rested on the transformation of the preexisting class structure. This created the connection between NEP and a massive education project, *likbez*.

5.1. Likbez

The premise that the Russian Revolution would set off a European one, turned out to be false, and the world's first proletarian dictatorship found itself barely afloat in a sea of peasants. Consequentially, cultural development during the NEP epoch was practically a mirror reflection of the situation in economic and social spheres. Those were the same external signs of liberalization, the same hesitation of the Communist party between strict control, dogmatism, and repression fast becoming entrenched in its culture and intentions to enter an agreement with some representatives of the intelligentsia. After the revolution of 1917 leaders of the newly formed communist party were encouraging experimentation of different types of art. Not having had time to raise a young generation of writers, painters, thinkers, technologists and scientists of its own, the party settled for reaching out to sympathizers of the Soviet regime. In return for limited freedom

[29] Wells described it as "Russia to-day stands more in need of men of the foremen and works-manager class than she does of medicaments and food" (Wells 1920:20

of expression and a comfortable lifestyle, individuals had to avoid criticizing Bolshevik policies. A classical orchestra was formed which denied the need for a conductor. This was approved as an attempt to align musical performance with an orientation towards 'collectivism' and 'mass activity'. Mayakovski[xlviii] produced his 'futurist' poetry with the party's approval (even though Trotsky had to have its principals explained to him and Lenin simply hated it). In the cultural climate of the early Soviet Union, his popularity grew rapidly. Marc Chagall[xlix] set up a painting school in Vitebsk. The writer Maxim Gorky[l] and the composer Sergei Prokofiev[li] were also among those who strengthened culture in the young Soviet state.

Figure 19. "The illiterate man is as a blind one – everywhere failures and adversities await him."

Besides, the Bolsheviks had actually been constrained to co-opt proponents of the progressive agenda. Many intellectuals in fact developed a degree of sympathy with Communism, especially because it advocated education, science, industry, and progress. Hence the government's enlightened attitudes toward women and minorities, its enthusiasm for literacy and education, and, in part, its campaigns against the obscurantism of the Church and all religions (Longworth, 2007). Their desire to cleanse society of elitism, however, often led to contradictions on the road to development:

> Lenin and [the] Bolsheviks despised the "bourgeois" specialists in the civil service and elsewhere in the economy but had to rely on them. (…) The hope was to educate the masses quickly and thus relieve the Communist state from its regrettable reliance on the bourgeoisie. (Gellately, 2007:142)

The party used the powers of government to educate the people, so as to remove the various modes of false (according to the ideology of Bolsheviks) consciousness, such as religion and nationalism. Illiteracy of people was explained as "negative heritage of the Tsarist regime" and was opposed to the task of the Soviet government "to liquidate illiteracy, making education, culture, and art into the ownership of the people" (Kon, 1960:8, my translation). Wells described the population in Russia in the time of Lenin in a following way:

> The great mass of the Russian population is an entirely illiterate peasantry, grossly materialistic and politically indifferent. They are superstitious, they are for ever crossing themselves and kissing images—in Moscow particularly they were at it—but they are not religious. They have no will in things political and social beyond their immediate satisfactions. They are roughly content with Bolshevik rule (Wells, 1920:19).

All decrees passed by the Soviet government in the sphere of culture and education of the period of 1917-1919 were oriented to enlighten and to educate in accordance with the ideals of the Communism. In accordance with the Sovnarkom Decree "On eradication of illiteracy among the population of RSFSR" of December 26, 1919, signed by Vladimir Lenin, the new system of universal compulsory education was established for children. Millions of illiterate adult people all over the country, including residents of small towns and villages, were enrolled in special literacy schools. Actual results were seen by the end of the 1920/21 school year – a number of city schools in RSFSR, despite all difficulties of that period, improved considerably against the 1914/15 school

year, and a number of schools in villages progressed almost thirty-fold. The reform of education had worked against all odds:

> Namely during that period, when the state mechanism and the social system of old Russia in general were modified, the country in embrace of the Civil War and fighting against numerous invaders experienced the process of cultural development that was not observed before (Kon, 1960:7, my translation).

The People's Commissariat for Education directed its attention solely towards introducing political propaganda into the schools and forbidding religious teaching. Some teachers "were unable to realize the party's policy in the sphere of people's education" (Kon 1960:11, my translation), believing that education, school, science, and art were not related to the political struggle between classes. They wanted to believe that everything remained unchanged in the sphere of culture. The concern was to distribute "old culture" among the people rather than selecting only some elements of this as defined by the party for the creation of a new culture. *The All-Russian Union of Teachers* sent the *Draft Tactical Measures* to local organizations of teachers, which recommended non-compliance with the orders of the Soviet government, organizing instead oral or written propaganda and strikes against it. Biology teachers, in particular those who supported "pure science" raised their voices, refusing to use their teaching subject neither as anti-religious propaganda nor solely for agricultural practice. At the Congress for Natural History Education, they decided to not include the theory of evolution in the curriculum for natural sciences, justifying this decision with the lack of professionals in this area. It was not only the scholarly intelligentsia which objected to the Communist eagerness to rule on what type of art and science should and could exist. Engineers, librarians, and doctors hated the intrusion of the state into their professional business (Service, 2007).

This period was also characterized by the development of a new system of grammar for the Russian language. This, according to Ludmila Kon, originated "the greatest drawback of the period" (Kon, 1960:35, my translation), as the adherents of the new regime were ready to destroy everything reminding about the countries non-Bolshevist past without questioning if it was really necessary. I found a description of the shift to the new system in a 1976 book called *Votkinsk*, by V.N. Stupishin. In the work, a librarian, Z.D. Nekrasova, recalls:

> I stood there (…) in a house filled with many books tossed into piles. A stove was glowing. On fire were many fine published works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Leo Tolstoy and other classics. "Burn, burn everything!" A strange man was screaming. "There are going to be many new books, and there is going to be a new grammar…" (Stupishin, 1976:82-83, my translation).

Many books collected from different libraries and houses of the exiled bourgeoisie and aristocracy were burned and otherwise destroyed.

5.2. Literature for Children and "Industrial Books"

The leaders of the USSR had good reason to consider children's literature an efficient method of indoctrination of the new generation during the industrial epoch. Literature for children is didactic, and can easily communicate in favor of a certain mode of life and thinking. Due to the fact that children and teenagers are predisposed to look for an ideal to imitate, bright artistic images leave unforgettable pictures in their souls. Considering that up until the end of the 1930s young people made up the majority of the population, literature for children prove a method of disseminating ideology to the masses. Representatives of older generation were also fond of such literature. Since there were few people with a 4-year education, many found children's books to be an

accessible and interesting form of literature, which discussed social problems and referred to ways of implementing decisions taken by the party.

The book *Soviet Literature for Children (1917-1929),* written in 1952 by the literary theorist Ludmila Kon, discusses the problems faced with this new state-sponsored literary genre. It emphasizes the drawbacks of literature during the Civil War and NEP, specifying that the years immediately after the October Revolution were a period of extreme importance for the history of all Soviet culture of Soviet literature for children in particular. The later analysis of Soviet literature for children of the period in question is given in the monograph by A.V. Fateev called *Stalinism and Literature for Children in the Policy of the Nomenclature of the USSR (1930 – 1950s)* published in 2007. As the task of the Soviet writers, the Bolsheviks viewed the study, design, depiction and acceptation of the new reality. The desire to implement such a task was one of the characteristic features of Soviet literature of the 1920s. A resolution called *The Main Tasks of the Party in the Sphere of Publications* was passed by the CC of RCP (B) on February 6, 1924, and it contained instructions that "measures should be taken for the creation of literature for children".

The party classified literature for children created during the pre-revolutionary period according to literary trends and social contents. The novels by L. Charskaya[lii], depicting historical worship of Tsarist figures and full of secrets and mystical allure, were included in the list of the "Black Hundred", the name given to those praising the Tsarist throne and the Orthodox Church. The novels and stories by Klaudia Lukashevich are an example, describing poor people who found help from the benevolence of the ruling class, whose humility and humanity were reminiscent of Jesus Christ. These stories were accused of propagating bourgeois ideology by the Soviet government. Works by poets of the "Silver Century" that were published before the Revolution were recognized as

neglecting social functions and literature for children (meaning lacking any pedagogical element). Sometimes, absurd situations were observed. Books such as "The Adventures of Nat Pinkerton", "Nick Carter" and "Jack the Ripper" were put by censors on the list of "undesirable" literature and were sharply criticized. The Soviet government criticized the magazine for children, *Pathway*, which was published before the Revolution, as detached from reality and life in general. The reason for such a strong opinion was the 1908 piece by Alexander Benois in the newspaper, *Speech*, where he called for the censure of butchers, sick mothers, rags, stench, and filth in children's books and to stop "teaching our children to feel sorrow or to cry". In the context of the time, such calls were viewed as attempts to protect children from the revolutionary influence. On the contrary, according to the article by the editorial staff of the magazine *Red Dawn*, published in 1919 in Petrograd, "this was the first attempt to open access to children for clear understanding of the greatest events of the present epoch and the first attempt to free children from harmful influence of the old books for children that leads a child's soul into darkness and slavery" (Kon, 1960:57).

New writers returned from the Civil War and created new novels, romances, plays, songs, poems about the October Revolution and the Civil War[30]. A central place in literature belonged to the new Soviet patriots, the Bolsheviks, fighters for the future of the Communist state. They were characterized by spontaneity, integrity, passion, immediacy, brutal honesty, conviviality, naivety, curiosity, collectivity, and hostility towards the intelligentsia and pre-revolutionary values. The period of the Civil War also generated a new type of leader among workers and peasants who had the "psychology of direct action" characterized by the

[30] Among these are *Chapaev* and *Insurrection* by D. Furmanov, *Iron Flow* by A. Seraphimovich, the first part of a trilogy *Road to Canvary* by A. Tolstoy, *Cement* by F. Gladkov, *Armored Train 14-69* by Vs. Ivanov, and *Don Stories* by M. Sholohov. The most intensive development of Soviet literature occurred in the second half of the 1920s (*Life of Klim Samgin*, essays *Around the Union of Soviets* by M. Gorky, *Destruction* by A. Fadeev, *Quiet Flows the Don* by M. Sholohov, *Good!*, *Bug*, *Bath-House* by V. Mayakovski, *Spring Love* by K. Trenev, and the second part of the trilogy by A. Tolstoy).

confidence in unlimited possibilities of "revolutionary measures" for the solution of any problem.

The intelligentsia had different opinions with respect to the process of the creation of the new socialist identity. Bolsheviks came to power with next to no party members who were active in the arts, or who taught in universities or conducted scientific research. Many writers emigrated. Those who stayed in the country, either openly or secretly, stood against the Soviet power. Some of them preferred a "neutral" position, using the slogan *"pure art"*, which developed out of romanticism as a form of anti-artistic emancipation, occupying a higher level than political spheres. This neutral position was not appreciated by the government, since it secretly called for the opposition of the dictated tradition of the revolution, the Communist Party, and Soviet society. The *"Pure art"* movement gradually became the path of passive resistance of artists, writers, and painters against the rules imposed on them by the Soviet state. Many fought under this slogan simply and solely for the freedom of art from utilitarian goals.

The resolution of the XV Congress of the party called for "relating the plan for cultural construction with industrialization of the country as an integral part of the general plan for the socialist construction in the USSR". Ludmila Kon was mentioning the article *Evaluation of Books for Children*, written by N.K. Krupskaya where she stated:

> It is necessary to give to teenagers the "romance" of equipment, to show achievements in various spheres, future prospects. In addition to the same, it is necessary to publish "industrial" books, giving instructions on "how to do something individually" (Kon, 1960: 157, my translation).

The example of the "industrial book" was a creative work of Zhytkov[liii], who wrote stories on the life of workers and essays on the history of equipment and

the production of things: *Locomotives* (1925), *Balloon* (1926), *Ten-Copeck Coin, About This Book, Light without Fire, Telegram* (1927). These essays were about the origin of things which surrounded a child in his everyday life. Each essay contained a detailed story with the technical details on how mechanical and everyday things were made, whether a book, a locomotive, or an electric lamp. After a few years, A.M. Gorky would speak about the "industrial" books by Zhytkov, characterizing them as "science fiction" – due to the language and form belonging to fiction; however, they were informative in nature and valuable for children to learn about industrial processes. Requirements of the party for the content of books were met and tasks of political upbringing were performed.

During the Soviet epoch it was usual to say that M. Ilyin's[liv] works followed the theme of Gorky's *How a Man Became a Giant*. This furthermore underpinned the literary method of Socialist realism. The technical progress described by Ilyin was related to the historical epoch, the level of science and culture, and the way of life of various classes of society during that period. Like Zhytkov, Ilyin was an engineer by qualification. He was the author of the book on the first five-year plan *The Story of the Great Plan* (1930) and its continuation *Mountains and People* (1932). In the 20s, the main theme of his works for children was the origin of things and history of material culture. *Black on White* (1928), *What's Time Is It Now* (1927), and *The Sun on the Table* (1927) told the histories of books, the watch, and lamps for children. "There are people who think that each invention can belong to one person only" Ilyin says at the beginning of the *Sun on the Table*, referring to Edison's invention of the light bulb. "However," he continues, "Edison was one of many scientists who participated in the invention of the lamp..." (Kon, 1960)

Reading comments on "industrial" books by the Soviet critic Ljudmila Kon, one realizes that the literature was evaluated on how efficiently phenomena of Soviet

reality surrounding children was explained to the reader. For example, the excursion of the pioneer team to Volhovstroy depicted in a book by P. Surozhsky, *On Volhovsroy*, in Kon's opinion poorly reflected reality through the perceptions of the characters:

> There are some details of pioneer's life in this story. However, all topicality of the theme, in essence, limits elements of the "new". Heroes of the story lack individuality, their role is [to ask] questions and [to listen] to boring answers of the guide (Kon, 1960:258).

The task of the authors was not only to show to children as readers the surrounding world, but also to popularize the Soviet way of life: that of the pioneers, and the Young Communist League, among others.

Taking into account those criteria, books by N. Smirnov and the Chichagovs *Ahmet in Moscow* (on Soviet Moscow), *Yegor – Fitter* (on electricity) were more highly approved of. In addition, it was necessary to reach "organic unity of the plot and informative material" (Kon, 1960:261). Even the book by S. Rozanov *Adventures of Travka* (1928, re-published several times), was criticized for the author's lengthy comments on the operation and components of various types of equipment. From Kon's point of view, Rozanov succeeded in reflecting the world of people and their relations through the perceptions of a small child; however, he failed to use such an approach in taking his hero to the world of equipment.

5.3. Science in Early Soviet State

Following accusations and fabricated evidence with regard to the so-called Petrograd Fighting Organization, famous Russian scientists, professors like M. Tihvinsky, V. Tagantsev, were killed. The intelligentsia was not intimidated by death sentences. In autumn 1922, a period of numerous deportations began.

Among the deported people there were the best representatives of the Russian humanist sciences: philosophers N. Berdiev, S. Franc[lv], S. Bulgakov[lvi], P. Sorokin[lvii], and B. Brutckus[lviii] (an economist who anticipated a great deal of present-day ideas in the market economy). The vacant niche was occupied by "red professors" specializing in interpretation of citations of Marx and his followers in a non critical form to appease the government. In *Experience of Curriculum for Political Economy* (1923), Alexander Con specified drawbacks of such an education as being developed mechanically, without any methodological basis:

> The titles of *The Capital* by Marx and *Financial Capital* by Hilferding were taken as a basis for such curriculum. The authors of numerous curricula of similar type probably did not pay much attention to the fact that *The Capital* was not a teaching aid, that the form of such work was defined by the principles of theoretical and not pedagogical nature (Con, 1923:5).

Alexander Con, who himself had to use the curriculum for political economy, argued that the inadequate level of education of heads of study groups familiar with *The Capital* and lacking knowledge in political economy hampered the efficiency of educational system. Heads of study groups normally could recite any of *The Capital*'s chapters, and any of its several themes. Mechanically following *The Capital*, they somehow kept up with lecturer. However, any attempt to discuss economic or social problems other than the approved patterns suggested, showed a lack of any proper idea of the system of capitalist society in general. A lecturer himself, Con concluded that "completely dissatisfactory curriculum was taken as a pattern" (Con, 1923: 7).

However, all spheres of science to which the government paid little attention or which in their opinion were not a danger to socialism, had elements of free scientific creativity. This refers also to genetics, whose representatives were

involved in the greatest scientific discoveries, as well as the theoretical physics and mathematics in Russia. Two types of science started their formation in Russia: one for talented, professional people who were far from public ideological discussions. Their discoveries were classified as useful to the state government and meant to popularize its achievements. Scientists refrained from protesting against such practices, in exchange for the possibility to work peacefully at home. The Soviet state also encouraged talent – especially for those who conformed to the Soviet ideal and had been neglected by the Tsarist regime. Konstantin Tsiolkovskii, for example, had good proletarian credentials. He came from mixed Russian, Polish and Tatar stock, was a modest school-teacher in Kaluga and was deaf. He was also a genius in the field of aerodynamics and a visionary who helped make space travel possible[lix]. Ignored by the scientific establishment, he built Russia's first wind tunnel at his own expense, and in 1899 he published a key paper on atmospheric pressure, also with his own money. Once the Soviet regime was in power, however, his research was state-funded; he was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences, and allotted a life pension. The physicists Kapitsa[lx] and the economist Kondratiev[lxi] were among other luminaries who shone in this early Soviet period.

And there was also another science—for internal use—oriented toward the creation of efficient communistic propaganda. In the USSR, the Central Institute of Labour (CIL) under the direction of A.K. Gastev was responsible for industrial sociology and psychology. The first program document of CIL outlined the rules developed by A. K. Gastev in his book *How to Work*. These rules had detailed comments, explanations, and supplements. They were actively published in the form of posters, leaflets and distributed in workshops and institutions. In the middle of the 20s, the scientist developed the idea of the new cultural system, synonymous with the scientific organization of labour (SOL). Gastev believed that the formation of SOL among the youth was the only method of fighting

against the backwardness of the country. The cultural education included development of keenness of observation, ability to correctly and clearly express one's thoughts in various forms, well-trained will and body, observance of peculiar routines and organizational approaches, acquisition of technical knowledge as well as development of economic initiative and innovation. For workers to understand the essence of SOL, Gastev suggested that small united disciplined teams should be created at the enterprises for the purpose of their personal education and organizations of boy-scouts should be formed to develop keenness of observation. In fact, Gastev formulated the state order for the qualities of personality that should be formed through schools and state propaganda among industrial workers. SOL projects were oriented toward dozens of the largest enterprises of the country, including Rostov's Factory of Agricultural Equipment, Kharkov's and Stalingrad's Tractor Factories, and Uralmashstroy, the mechanical engineering monsters which developed new, more advanced forms of organization of labour at manufacturing enterprises. A special part of the activities of SOL was the preparation of highly qualified workers to work in compliance with production rules and criteria. At training centers (their number reached more than 1500) in various cities of the country, SOL taught workers how to apply rational approaches and methods of work. More than 400 industrial companies cooperated with SOL, obtaining support in training qualified workers. Gastev continued to promote this system of labour management until his arrest and execution in 1939. 500,000 industrial and construction workers and 20,000 instructors and consultants underwent training according to the methods of SOL.

Another pre-condition for social engineering in the USSR was the science of reflexology[lxii]. It was developed in the 20s by V.M. Behterev[lxiii], director for research of the brain and psychological activities, founder of the Institute of Pedagogy (1907), and the Institute of Social Upbringing. In his work *Collective*

Reflexology (1919, 1921), the socio psychologist emphasized the decisive role of hypnosis and imitation in the formation of the public consciousness that the state needed. Reflexology methods were actively implemented at schools, factories and plants. Their supporters were convinced that man's behavior could be explained from an exclusively materialistic point of view.

Social psychology was developing in a rapid manner. Its subject included research of human relations, and the analysis of public opinion and people's ideas. New researches started discrediting Freudianism, as XXth century advances in psychology began to show flaws in many of his theories. Social psychology's object of research in the period of NEP in Russia was the exploration of physic traumas, rather than attributing them to sexual problems with a root in childhood. In I E. Fromm's[lxiv] Neo-Freudianism, more and more attention was paid to the social factors of personality development.

M. Y. Basov[lxv], L.S. Vigotsky[lxvi], P.P. Blonsky[lxvii], S.L. Rubinshein[lxviii], and A.N. Leontyev[lxix] neglected the principle of simple adaptation of an organism to the environment. "Activity" became the most important category in psychology. Needs of the state and the society stimulated research of the matters of pedagogic psychology: formation of a team, influence of public environment on personality, efficiency of training. The Georgian Psychologist D.N. Uznadze[lxx] managed to create a materialistic alternative to Freud's irrational "unconscious", which allegedly predetermines individual's activities. The scientist developed the general psychological theory of integral mindset of an individual formed in the course of a human's life. This mindset mediated the personality's relations with the environment through values and actions, leading to satisfaction of one's needs. The mindset was described as an integral, non-differentiated and unconscious state, preceding activity and treated as a mediating unit between the psychic and the physical, allowing to neglect the "postulate of spontaneity".

The famous psychologist L.S. Vigotsky, director of the Experimental Speech Pathology Institute of the People's Commissariat of Education, in *Psychology of Art* (1925) criticized the theory of "absorbtion" by Bekhterev. Vigotsky considered the transformation of feelings outside an individual to be fixed in external articles of art, thus having a potential to become instruments in the formation of personality. He viewed art as a tool, leading to the organization of behavior. Vigotsky was sure that art would play a central role in changing human nature in the spirit of socialism. His ideas gave the scientific underpinning to the Proletkult. These were policies created after Lenin's "On proletarian culture" (1920), directed towards restrictions imposed on the artists while fostering the Socialist Realism trends in art. Socialist Realism was directed to educate the people in the goals and meaning of Communism.

5.4. Mythologies of the Soviet State

The social sciences were developing in the USSR within the framework of world processes, and in some respects—particularly in the shaping the mind-set of its citizens—was far ahead of foreign research. Officials were interested in using scientific discoveries to form human needs, interests and values from the childhood, thus pre-determining the course of development of the society for dozens of years as needed. Ideological propaganda among the population was perceived as panacea that would help in finding solutions for any political and economic task. Literature for children was a convenient method to introduce ideas into the public consciousness. Perception of a child as wax or clay, of which it is possible to create everything was cultivated in the USSR in the spirit of the behavior science thanks to works by Bekhterev. Fictional characters and presentations of contemporary celebrities as embodiments of the values of the Soviet state were prominent features of Soviet cultural life, especially at times when fostering the concept of the new Soviet person was given special priority by the government. The "New Soviet Men" became the myth of the Soviet state

and as equally important as the myth of successful modernization of a backward country by means of education and indoctrination.

Figure 20. This poster contains lines from Lenin's speeches during the VIII All-Russian Soviet Congress, later in the Soviet historiography referred to as "Lenin on the re-building of the country". Particularly famous is the quote: "…this is our second party's program…" (about electrification), "without [the] plan of the electrification we can't begin the real building process", and "the growing trading, factories, cities, [and] railroads demand a totally different development, dissimilar architecturally and size-wise to the buildings of a patriarchal epoch". Tractors, factories, the symbol of electricity, the construction site of the Dnieper hydroelectric station, and the Turkestan–Siberian Railway are also present.

Krzhyzanovsky also tried to write "industrial books" for children and teenagers popularizing ideas of electrification. His book *Plan of Great Work* for children about the five-year plan was published in 1930. Rather average from the artistic point of view, the book consisted of different theses Krzhyzanovsky presented to the youth. Considering that the Party had directly related the process of electrification of the country to the name of Lenin, laid the foundation for the further development of the "good-Lenin" myth. In Greek mythology, Prometheus was a champion of human-kind known for his wiliness and intelligence, having stolen fire from the gods and giving it to mortals. Lenin in the Soviet literature was portrayed in a similar way, as a hero challenging past lifestyle, power, and laws in order to bring a better life to the common people.

In his letters from exile, Lenin wrote some naïve, banal and absurd suggestions concerning the convenience of electric power and its transportation. Electricity, according to Lenin, was making the social conditions for workers in the West easier. This assumption was easily transferred later on to his famous definition of the meaning of communism. Those letters and some notes about the polarization and propaganda of the *GOELRO-Plan* during the Soviet period were used to prescribe merits for creation of the clear, systematic science of electrification to Lenin.

The poem by N. Zabyla[lxxi] *Lenin Precept* was included in the 2nd-4th year primary school textbook *Native Word* (Russian: *Родное Слово* [*Rodnoe Slovo*], first published in 1864, having a total of 146 editions). It vividly illustrates the relation between Lenin and electrification, used for the propaganda purposes:

Lenin left us such precept –
We will not forget it –
To switch on the bright light of
Electric power stations
To delight people!

Our dear Ilyich would be happy
Together with us,
Light is shining over the country,
Over rivers and fields.

Looking at the window in the evening,
One cannot calculate how many lamps there are,
Lamps are shining in all houses,
Cities and villages.

In all parts of the country,

> Their number increases from year to year –
> This way we perform the order
> Given by Lenin to the people. (*Родное Слово* [*Rodnoe Slovo*], 1989:142, my translation)

The interpretation of the pedagogical sense of Lenin's life and work is a chapter in itself—in the former Soviet Union, Lenin was presented as a genius with the "correct" solutions to every problem relating to consolidating Soviet power. He was characterized by an apologetic stereotype, which remained normative and official during the whole of Soviet history. The myth of the "good Lenin" was a political instrument, meant to inspire followers at home and abroad. The image of "a little man with bright eyes" gave a human face to the regime. Perhaps the most-famous portrait of Lenin is *Lenin at the First Subbotnik*[lxxii] by Vladimir Krikhatsky. It appealed to the common people that Vladimir Iljich took part in removing building rubble in the Moscow Kremlin. This episode was even included for reading in *Native Word*, telling the story of Lenin carrying a log. The rumors spread about Lenin clearing the snow from the walk at the Moscow Kremlin's entrance every morning.

The importance of hard-work took deep root, entrenching itself into the consciousness of the people of the Soviet State – at least at the level of rhetoric. It built a basis for the Stakhanovism-movement – another myth of the Soviet state. The reference to this myth is to the falseness of the regime, eager to fill the gap between reality and the imaginative situation with lies. Achieving the goals of the five-year plan was a top priority as a measure of progress toward a communist utopia, so official lying about productivity became part of the economic system.

The story of Stakhanovs' life was all too fitting for the Soviet state citizen: he was born to a poor bond family, had to work for others to make a living, and had

difficulties finishing two and a half years at the rural school. In 1927 he came to the town of Kadiyivka in eastern Ukraine (to be renamed as Stakhanovsk in 1978) and worked at the Tsentralnaja-Irmino mine. Mining was seen as backward. Miners did not have a vested interest in being productive, because otherwise their quotas—not their salaries—would be increased (as it occurred later). The Partorg[lxxiii] of the mine decided to create a record of a great labour achievement and chose Stakhanov to perform it. Stakhanov mined 102 tons of coal in less than 6 hours (14 times his quota). In reality, anyone on his place could do that, as he received unseen conditions for the unstoppable work with a number of helpers on support jobs, though the record was prescribed to him solely. His example was printed in newspapers and posters as a model for others to follow. He was praised as a great hero, and his productivity caused a number of industries to revise their production capacities and increase their quotas. And then he drunk himself to death.

5.5. Concluding Remarks

As I have tried to show, literature as well as artistic culture at the beginning of the 1920s and beyond bore the consequences of the communist ideological turn. The reflection of the society in literature and art was mainly defined by the new vision of the world and needs of the country, prescribed by the heads of the Bolshevik Party. The interests of officials in the creation of literature for children can be explained by the needs to rapidly industrialize the backward state, to educate relevant economic staff, and to create devoted citizens. The official ideology predetermined a specific type of literary description of fundamental social institutions, such as the family, production processes, the state, education, religion, public and political organizations. The narrowing of the role of literature and art to be asserted as means of programming the consciousness of citizens within the framework of social engineering has explicit linkages to the concept of "development as unfreedom."

In the 1920s, the Soviet government embarked on a campaign to fundamentally alter the behavior and ideals of Soviet citizens, to replace the old social framework of the Russian Empire with a new Soviet culture, to create "New Soviet Men". The political aspect of the social sciences and social engineering were, in some respects, a continuation of pre-Soviet state policy. Censorship and attempts to control the content of art and writing, as Vigotskyi proposed it, did not begin with the Soviets, but were a long-running feature of Russian life. However, Soviet censors were not easily duped and the censorship of publications, exhibitions, and theatrical performances enforced strict limits on expression. The strict party and security officer's control had one more important goal. It aimed at convincing (and such goals were achieved) the left-wing intelligentsia of the West that socialism promotes the freedom of creative work.

Having won the hearts and minds of the progressive thinkers, the Soviet authorities hoped to gain access to the public opinion of the West, which it planned to change. Such a situation, as it was known to the Bolsheviks due to their own Russian experience created favorable conditions for the future communist leadership in such countries. Lenin sought to bring the "proletarian culture" movement closer to the state and the Communist party. The outcome of those measurements and policies in short can be summarized as follows: the Bolsheviks promoted education among the population of the state, while they looked for ways to restrict free thinking and free expression. The period of NEP was the first in the history of the newly established state when people's self-expression was dictated by the need to demonstrate that one was a genuine Soviet citizen.

Despite all attempts at social engineering, the new socio-economic system didn't reproduce itself in the structure of the people's character . Initially, the Bolsheviks managed to attract the young people, through the policies of *likbez*.

And the Communists of the industrial epoch sincerely believed in the possibility of the formation of a society with perfect social organization and strong productive forces. For them, all this was supposed to happen according to the plan designed by the leader, who claimed exclusive understanding, beyond critique, of the writings of Marx and Engels. But the falseness of the regime, the low moral standards of the authorities, supported by the nominally elected (appointed in reality) bureaucratic apparatus in its core, contradicted the postulated ideal of a new ethical outlook—an embodiment of Soviet ideals, such as selflessness, enthusiasm, high morality, and industry. Instead, they created the pre-conditions for *Homo sovieticus*

Alexander Benois in his *Diary* predicted that the national character of the majority of the population of the Soviet state—the notorious "Russian soul"—would not allow for the creation of socialist society easily. While socialism remained a dream, associated with the developed countries of the West, it was something alluring. But the realization of this dream, even by disciplinary means (terror), had to overcome a paradoxical "cultural immunity" which was both based on passive resistance and on trained indolence. The unexpected qualities of the "New Soviet Man" became a general indifference to labour, and the lack of initiative and motivation to work more efficiently and improve productivity. The ideological rejection of private ownership resulted in indifference to common property. The isolation from the influence of Western culture by restrictions on travel abroad and strict censorship of information in the media (as well as the abundance of propaganda), effectively left *Homo sovieticus* with images of a little seen and almost unattainable life associated with music, Hollywood movies, brand clothes, McDonalds' "tasty" hamburgers etc. This corresponds quite well with a concept of *close distance*, introduced by William Mazzarella in *Shoveling Smoke. Advertizing and Globalization in Contemporary India*: "The de facto magic of the goods was that they provided concrete, present

evidence of this absent source, as conjured in advertising" (Mazzarella, 2007:158). The fascination of the "exotic" and forbidden Western life-style also became a feature of *Homo sovieticus.* Somehow, the imagined perfection of products from abroad (on the level of consumption) or music, literature and artistic performance became something larger, a symbol of freedom and unity with a world where those things, songs, books, and ideas came from.

CONCLUSION. DEVELOPMENT AS UNFREEDOM TODAY? CONTINUITIES AND RUPTURES

It is generally accepted in the economic literature that the Soviet state rebuilt its economy within a remarkably short time, after it had been shattered from years of war and revolution. Moreover, it was also able to build its own industrial zone and make a technical advance within a mere decade. Equally prevalent in economic texts is an assumption, based on the Solow-model, that the industry, built in the Soviet state, declined because of low investments rates. This assumption holds explanatory power in economic terms, though it lacks a cultural dimension. The most important conclusion of this study is that the process of critical inspection—not to mention rejection—of the myth of the cultural sustainability of the industry of the Soviet state has not started in the XXI century Russia. There is little realization that the combination of methods of terror and social engineering implemented by Bolsheviks as main developmental policies was a direct continuation of the imperial traditions in Russia after the October Revolution.

The project of the industrialization of the country was initially based on the grandiose project of electrification, and further used as the justification for the industrialization's projects. The majority of the labour force employed in the realization of those projects may have initially believed that they were "spontaneously and freely" engaged, but in reality they were not free to refuse to participate. People were forced to work—because of hunger, for fear of being called a parasite and consequently imprisoned, or simply because of being a prisoner in a labour camp. While developing Soviet state at the cost of human freedom, authorities made attempts to cover up the violence with works of artists, painters, and writers. The industry in the Soviet state (not touching upon the problems of a seriously degraded natural environment) was built at the expense

of the common people, resulting in falling living standards, deprived economic, social and cultural capabilities, and restricted possibilities of movement. Created by the combined results of social engineering and authoritarian enforcements to work, *Homo sovieticus,* being an end-product of "development as unfreedom," in his core was not interested in either contributing to the further maintenance and modernization of the state, or to supporting the regime.

The advertised creation of infrastructure, industry, and high levels of education and medical care during the existence of the Soviet Union is used now by the Russian Federation political elite—to justify the coherence, obedience, and gravitation towards the Russian Federation in the former republics of the USSR. The actual ecocide and questionable standards of the health-care system remain largely un-discussed and un-attendant, little improvements have been done, in many places the situation is only getting worse because of the lack of scientific expertise, investments, and general neglect of the problems by the weak governmental institutions.

The Gloomy Statistic

Modern day Russia is a heir "to a spendthrift psychology that is partly a product of the vastness of [Russia's] land and partly a function of a Communist pricing system that put no realistic value on assets that everyone owned and no one husbanded" (Feshbach and Friendly, 1991:155). The violent break-down of the Sayano–Shushenskaya hydroelectric power station on 17 August 2009 became known in Russia as the "hydro-Chernobyl" being the largest technogenic catastrophe on the territory of the former USSR since 1986. What links the disasters in Pripyat and in Khakassia is that they demonstrate the energy problems Russia (and the USSR before it) is facing as the result of the inefficiency in extracting fuel and generating electricity, while disregarding the environmental costs. It is safe enough to predict a series of accidents related to

electricity in the near future, as the industrial and residential power consumption increases, while the capacities of the machinery functioning in the energy and other sectors are constantly diminishing.

Even the most smoothly-operating regions of the European part of the present Russian Federation show the decline of the main industrial funds by more than 50% compared to the initial industrial investment. The general situation in this sphere is that about 60% of these systems require essential upgrades to maintain their level of service. The weakest link of the electrification network is power generation. The deterioration of machinery at steam power plants is reaching as much as 70%, while for hydro-power stations it is up to 80% (the data are taken from the various media-sources; they correspond to the statistics presented by the opposition-parties[31] during the discussion of draft federal budget for 2010—2012 in the first reading on October 21, 2009). That is to say that the accident which occurred on 17 August 2009 at the Sayano–Shushenskaya HPS was inevitable, and perhaps even expected. The official explanation of this accident states that it was primarily caused by turbine vibrations which led to fatigue damage of the mountings of the turbine № 2, including the cover of the turbine. As it turns out, this turbine was very "punctual"—2009 is the year when it was supposed to be removed, based on a work life defined by the manufacturer of 30 years. It is a common practice in Russia, however, to continue operating machinery for more than 50 years, making small repairs instead of replacement. The same can be said of the interpretation of history. It should have been updated—but the old myths persist.

In other industrial spheres the situation is far from being any better. The disrepair of the machinery in the key-industries of oil and gas recovery is more than 55%. The degradation of the rendering machinery is 75% for oil and 80% for gas.

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[31] The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and Fair Russia

More often the question is whether the recovery and export of oil and gas will be able to pay their own costs.

In the metallurgy and coal-mining industries, some 80% of machinery deterioration is observable. Unofficial estimates, originating the alternative to the official media sources (mostly disseminated via Internet[32]), state that every 2 million tons of the extracted coal are paid in Russia with the life of one coal-miner.

Decay in the sphere of housing (roofs, walls, etc.) and the communal services (sewerage, electricity, etc.) are obvious to even the casual observer—there is no need for statistics and calculations. The official data show that 30% of the major funds of this branch have deteriorated beyond their specifications. However, the authorities view the increase of disrepair as originating with deferred debts for housing and communal services (the reasons for the debts vary from alcoholism to low pensions, combined with high food-prices). On September 18, 2009 the amount of debts was 158.2 billion[33] rubles, with 94.8 billion originating in the deferred payments by the population. This is a reason for the ongoing campaign of collectivization of the apartment-dwellers into so called ТСЖ (an approximate translation is "the comradeship of the owners of housing") to facilitate the transfer of the burden of house repairs from state to the population, which is not a common practice in Russia. This policy is reminiscent in its implementation of the creation of the kolkhozes in the Soviet state.

However, the modernization of mines and repairs to blast furnaces cannot be done at the expenses of miners or steelmakers. Technically it is possible for the state to legally bind the owners of those enterprises to make more investments in renovations of production facilities, but it seems unlikely in the modern, "un-free

[32] Increasingly more reliable and nuanced in high-lightening events compared to the censored TV-channels and major newspapers are becoming different Internet discussion forums and social networks like LiveJournal.com

[33] The term is used to denote 10^9 or 1,000,000,000.

developing" Russia, since the main goal of owners is to take out as much profit as possible while minimizing maintenance, investment, safety, educational costs and costs related to the environmental protection.

The History Repeats Itself

It is not fair to say that there have been no attempts to improve the economic situation in the Russian Federation, apart from further crude exploitation of its natural resources. Many hopes to modernize industry are linked to nanotechnology and the nano-industry. However, the speech of the former First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov from June 5, 2007 resembles Lenin's views of electrification. The views of nanotechnology expressed in official rhetoric as an innovative path of Russia's advancement providing "real opportunities to create a modern economy, raise the nation's standards of living, and ensure the proper security for the country" raise serious questions about the possibility of realizing those plans in the near future. The current situation with nanotechnologies in Russia is similar to Coopersmith's comparison of the GOELRO-Plan with Ronald Regan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)[34]:

> In both cases, a technical adviser and confidant – Edward Teller and Gleb Krzhizanovsky – pushed utopian plans the leader already has an interest in: the necessary ideas and institutions already existed; the technology had not actually been developed; both leaders invested much political capital; and neither plan survived criticism intact (Coopersmith, 1992:152).

There are also other similarities between Russia's past and present. The turbulent economic situation in Russia after the October Revolution draws close comparisons to the period after the Soviet Union collapse, characterized as being rapid and painful transition for the majority of population to a market-based

[34] A system of lasers and missiles meant to intercept incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles that was quickly labeled Star Wars, an epic space opera, implying that it was science fiction and linking it to Ronald Reagan's acting career.

economy. Amazingly, the Bolshevik's actions at the beginning of their rule were mirrored by Boris Yeltsin at the end of the XXth century—the product of an imperial apparatus, he began to demolish the USSR from within, and then actually rebuilt it into a miniature of the Russian Federation. It is strange to see how Western observers have missed this aspect of Yeltsin's rule, while viewing him as a liberal ruler who promoted freedom of speech and a general openness of the country towards the world. Struggling against the menace of "communistic revanchists," he was able to preserve the communists ideology under the screen of democratic reforms. Also, he was silently approved by his audience—both inside and outside of the country—to reconstruct the system of self-appointed dictatorship with the transmission of power not through fair general elections, but using the intrinsically anti-democratic procedure of "preemnichestvo" (appointment). The strongest critique of his rule in Russia is based on the assumption that he lost control over the country and its resources, both natural and human. Instead, foreign capital investors and a new type of NEPmans, or oligarchs comprising a small group of tycoons in finance, industry, energy, telecommunications, and the media took control.

The long history of "development as unfreedom" results in the contemporary Russian state being based on the fundament of business, authoritarian governance, and crime. In Russia, these three spheres have become essentially indistinguishable. The popular opinion is that all too often in today's Russia there is no contradiction in someone being a business executive, senior government official, and crime boss all at the same time.

Calls for More Un-Freedom

Yeltsin's rule laid the groundwork for many in Russia to wish for some form of authoritarianism, which could provide at least some measure of stability. Vladimir Putin's high approval ratings amongst the Russian public throughout

his presidential terms and into his second term as Prime Minister are due to the impression of him bringing political stability and re-establishing the rule of law. High oil prices have contributed to his popularity because of economic growth that has been absent since 1990.

Some oil revenue went to a stabilization fund established in 2004, as a part of federal efforts to balance the federal budget during times when oil prices falls below a cut-off price, currently set at US$27 per barrel. As the capital of the Fund exceeded the level of 500 billion rubles in 2005, part of the surplus was used for early foreign debt repayments as well as to cover the Russian Pension Fund's deficit. This action was widely criticized, since the early—and large—foreign debt repayments could have waited, and the money could have contributed to the strengthening of the middle class in Russia and investments in the country's infrastructure. Instead, lessons came too late and the catastrophe after the accident which destroyed one turbine at Russia's biggest hydroelectric power station has shown that Russia remains a fragile state.

Once again Amartya Sen's assessment has proven to be right—Russia's Soviet-era infrastructure has degraded, and to restore and renovate it, government must be prepared to make significant allocations in Russia's budget (which is not planned for the coming years' spending). Funds stored during the boom years will not be enough to rejuvenate roads, pipe-lines, electric stations, airports, or other essential infrastructure. To fund needed upgrades and to restore the Sayano-Shushenskaya plant, the economy, whose gross domestic product is under strain in an ongoing economic crisis and decreased by nearly 11 percent (it is possible the crisis only has begun in Russia), will have to turn to international debt market once again. If the decision in 2005 was to rebuild infrastructure in the country, it would have generated many new jobs and created a basis for sustained national economic growth, not only because export prices for Russia's oil and gas soared,

but also because of increased investment growth and government spending (not to mention the multiplication effects of these factors). Of course, now it is too late to talk about what could have been. The same holds true for criticism of the Soviet government for preferring an ambitious, utopian project, and forcing population into glorified slavery over offering so much needed help to the country's citizens. The most that can be expected is to learn from these past experiences and advocate for the reforms necessary to end the cycle of weak governance in Russia. While you cannot change the past, you can certainly learn from the failures of past generations to the benefit of future ones, and I hope to contribute to this ideal through my studies and this very thesis.

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LIST OF ENDNOTES

[i] Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (Russian: Влади́мир Ильи́ч Ле́нин), born Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Russian: Влади́мир Ильи́ч Улья́нов), and also known by the pseudonyms VI Lenin, Nikolai Lenin and N. Lenin, (April 22, 1870 – January, 1924), was a Russian revolutionary, a communist politician, the main leader of the October Revolution (the second phase of the overall Russian Revolution of 1917), the first head of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, and from 1922, the first *de facto* leader of the Soviet Union.

[ii] Mary Therese Winifred Robinson (born 21 May 1944) served as the seventh, and first female, President of Ireland, serving from 1990 to 1997, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, from 1997 to 2002. Robinson's posting as High Commissioner ended in 2002, after sustained pressure from the United States led her to declare she was no longer able to continue her work. Robinson had criticised the US for violating human rights in its "War on Terror".

[iii] A term used in a number of disciplines. In historiography, it is a document, recording or other source of information that was created at roughly the time being studied, by an authoritative source, usually one with direct personal knowledge of the events being described.

[iv] Yuri Lotman (1922-1993) - a prominent Russian formalist critic, semiotician, culturologist. He was the founder of structural semiotics in culturology and is considered as the first Soviet structuralist. In Tartu (University of Tartu, Estonia), he set up his own school known as the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. Among the other members of this school were such names as Boris Uspensky, Vjacheslav Vsevolodovich Ivanov, Vladimir Toporov, Mikhail Gasparov, Alexandr Piatigorsky, Isaak I. Revzin, Lesskis, Igor Grigorievitch Savostin and others. As a result of their collective work, they established semiotics of culture.

[v] Semiosphere is the sphere of semiosis in which sign processes operate in the set of all interconnected Umwelten (the term is usually translated as "self-centered world"). The concept was first coined by Juri Lotman in 1984 and is now applied to many fields, including cultural semiotics generally, biosemiotics, zoosemiotics, geosemiotics, etc.

[vi] Michel Foucault 1926 - 1984) was a French philosopher, historian, critic and sociologist. Foucault's work on power, power relationships, knowledge, and discourse, has been widely discussed and applied.

[vii] Antonio Gramsci (January 22, 1891 – April 27, 1937) was an Italian philosopher, writer, politician and political theorist. A founding member and onetime leader of the Communist Party of Italy, he was imprisoned by Mussolini's Fascist regime. His writings are heavily concerned with the analysis of culture and political leadership and he is notable as a highly original thinker within the Marxist tradition. He is renowned for his concept of cultural hegemony as a means of maintaining the state in a capitalist society.

[viii] Gramscians look at hegemony in terms of class relations. A class is considered hegemonic if it has legitimized its dominance through institutions and concessions. When a class has established dominance in this way, as well as in the formal political structural of a state, then it constitutes a *historic bloc.*

[ix] The theory is heavily influenced by the writings of Antonio Gramsci. Furthermore, Karl Polanyi, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Niccolo Machiavelli, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Michel Foucault are cited as major sources within the Critical theory of International Relations.

[x] Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Zinovyev (October 29, 1922 – May 10, 2006) was a well-known Russian logician, sociologist and writer.

[xi] State Plan of the USSR (State Planning Committee of the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR) was the state body responsible for the general state plan of development of the national economy of the USSR and control over

fulfillment of the national economy plans. Formed on February 22, 1921 by the Decree of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the RSFSR.

[xii] Krzhizanovsky, Gleb son of Maximilian (12 (24 January) 1872, Samara — March 31, 1959, Moscow) — public figure of the revolutionary movement in Russia, soviet state and political figure; scientist – power engineering specialist, academician and vice-president of the AS of the USSR, literary man; soviet economist, Socialist Labor Hero.

[xiii] Technology transfer is the process of sharing of skills, knowledge, technologies, methods of manufacturing, samples of manufacturing and facilities among governments and other institutions to ensure that scientific and technological developments are accessible to a wider range of users who can then further develop and exploit the technology into new products, processes, applications, materials or services.

[xiv] Scientific management (also called Taylorism or the Taylor system) is a theory of management that analyzes and synthesizes workflows, improving labor productivity. The core ideas of the theory were developed by Frederick Winslow Taylor in the 1880s and 1890s, and were first published in his monographs, *Shop Management* (1905) and The Principles of Scientific Management (1911).

[xv] Gastev Alexey son of Kapiton (1882—1938). Main scientific works: *How to Work* (1921), *Labor Systems* (1924). *Work Quota Setting and Organization* (1929), *Scientific Organization of Labor* (1935). A.K. Gastev was a specific-type scientist and writer. His main achievement was the Institute of Labor created in 1920 under All-Union Central Soviet of Trade Unions (AUCSTU) and transformed in 1921 into the Central Institute of Labor (CIL). He was its permanent head up to arrest and tragic death as a result of political repressions of Stalin regime. Scientific ideas and thoughts of A. K. Gastev were implemented in works of CIL.

[xvi] The Russian Provisional Government was formed in Petrograd in 1917 after the February Revolution and the abdication of the Tsar Nikolai II.

[xvii] The Entente Powers were the countries at war with the Central Powers during World War I. The main allies were the Russian Empire, France, the British Empire, Italy, the Empire of Japan, and the United States.

[xviii] Up to August 1919 the British spent an official $239 million aiding the Whites, although Churchill disputed this figure at the time as an "absurd exaggeration".

[xix] The Russian Provisional Government, led by Alexander Kerensky, pledged to continue fighting the Germans on the Eastern Front. In return, the U.S. began providing economic and technical support to the Russian provisional government so they could carry out their military pledge. The large amounts of war material were stocked in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk.

[xx] The Central Powers is one of the two sides that participated in World War I. The Central Powers consisted of the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Kingdom of Bulgaria.

[xxi] When the Allies forced the German surrender in November 1918, the Bolsheviks were preoccupied by the Civil War. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk marked a significant contraction of the territory which the Bolsheviks controlled or could lay claim to as effective successors of the Russian Empire: while the independence of Finland and Poland was already accepted by them in principle, the loss of Ukraine and the Baltic states created, from the Bolshevik perspective, dangerous bases of anti-Bolshevik military activity in the subsequent Russian Civil War (1918–20). Besides, Lenin was not prepared to write off the idea of a zone of nations around the Russian Republic which would cohere with it. On the other hand, from the viewpoint of non-Russians who inhabited the lands lost by Bolshevik Russia in the treaty, it was an opportunity to attempt to set up independent states not under Bolshevik rule.

[xxii] Military communism — internal policy of the Soviet state pursued in 1918-1921 during the Civil War. The main purpose was to supply the cities and the Red Army with weapons, food and other necessary resources when all

normal mechanisms and relations were destroyed by the war. Decision on termination of military communism was passed on March 21, 1921 at the X Congress of the LCP (B) and NEP was implemented.

[xxiii] Latvian riflemen were military formations assembled starting 1915 in Latvia in order to defend Baltic territories against Germans in World War I. In 1917, a large number of Latvian riflemen sided with the Bolsheviks. They became known as Red Latvian Riflemen and actively participated in the Russian Civil War. The Riflemen took active part in the suppression of anti-Bolshevik uprisings in Moscow and Yaroslavl in 1918. They fought against Denikin, Yudenich, and Wrangel.

[xxiv] Surplus-appropriation system – confiscation from peasants of food surpluses exceeding absolute minimum for centralized distribution thereof among other population, centralized rating and distribution of food and other goods of first priority approved by the Law on the state monopoly for bread of March 25, 1917. On the basis of the Decree of May 13, 1918, All-Russian Central Executive Committee (ALCEC) approved norms of consumption per capita – 12 poods of grain, 1 pood of cereals, etc. All bread exceeding such norms was called "surpluses" and was confiscated. To perform such task, military labor food units with special authorities were formed.

[xxv] Grain reserves in the USSR – measures for creation of centralized grain reserves aimed at supplying with bread at the price in the interests of all socialist economy in general. V.I. Lenin emphasized the "bread problem" as a problem of socialism "it seems that it is struggle for bread only, while it is struggle for socialism".

[xxvi] Soviet of People's Commissars of the USSR (*SPC, Soviet of People's Commissars*) — from July 6, 1923 till March 15, 1946 Supreme Executive and Administrative Body in the USSR (during the first period of existence – also legislative), its government (there was the Soviet of People's Commissars in each union and autonomous republic, for example, the SPC of the RSFSR).

[xxvii] The Soviet of workers' and peasants' defense led by V. I. Lenin was formed by the resolution of RCEC on November 30, 1928. In April 1920, it was transformed into the Soviet of Labor and Defense (SLD).

[xxviii] People's Commissariat of Finances (PCF) – state body of RSFSR/USSR in the rank of ministry, responsible for financial policy of the former Soviet state in 1917 – 1946.

[xxix] Supreme Soviet of the National Economy (SSNE) – supreme soviet economic body with status of people's commissariat in 1917 – 1932. Established under SPC by the Decree of RCEC and SPC of December 2 (15) 1917 to organize and manage all national economy and finances. SSNE was composed of sectoral departments (Glavsahar, Glavneft, Centrochai, etc.). Province and district soviets of national economy were formed on the local level. During the period of Military Communism, all industries, distribution of raw materials and finished products were within the competence of the SSNE. After establishment of the USSR, SSNE was authorized to exercise powers of united people's commissariat. In 1932 SSNE was abolished and replaced by three people's commissariats – heavy, light and timber industry.

[xxx] Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU — ruling body of the Central Committee of the CPSU composed of most influential members of the Central Committee who defined policy of the party and under conditions of one-party system – the whole state. Thus, members of Political Bureau were actually the members of the Administration of the USSR, even if they did not hold public offices. First Political Bureau of the CC of RSDLB (B) headed by Lenin was formed at the meeting of the CC on October 10 (23), 1917 for political coordination of the armed uprising (it was composed of A.S. Bubnov, G.E. Zinovyev, L.B. Kamenev, V.I. Lenin, G.Y. Sokolnikov, I.V. Stalin. L.D. Trotsky). Resumed operation as a permanent body in 1919 at the VIII Congress of RCP 9B). Called as CC of RCP (B), later – Political Bureau of the CC of RCP (B) and in 1952 – 1966 – Presidium of the CC of the CPSU. It was called as before according to the resolution of the XXIII Congress of the CPSU in 1966.

[xxxi] The initiative to enter peace talks with the Central Powers before signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was originally based on the hopes of the Bolshevik leaders of exposing their enemies' territorial ambitions and rousing the workers of central Europe to revolution in defense of Russia's new workers' state. The Bolsheviks intended to assist

fellow revolutionaries on the far political left as soon as they had the chance. The "great fear" in 1918 – which was Lenin's great hope—was that Bolshevism would spread to the West and particularly Germany and Austria. Germany's defeat would increase the chances of revolution in central Europe. Despite strikes and demonstrations the month before, in protest against economic hardship, the workers of Germany failed to rise up.

[xxxii] Poland was the geographical bridge that the Red Army would have to cross in order to assist the Communist movements in Western Europe. By early 1920, the Polish front became the most important war theater and a plurality of Soviet resources and forces were diverted to it. In mid-summer 1920 Lenin ordered the invasion of southern and Western Europe, intended to export Communism, if necessary, by force of arms. In early July, with initial victories against the Poles, he fantasized about bringing Communism to Italy, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. He said that even failure in Poland (which soon came) should not stop them, because he so firmly believed in world revolution (Gellately, 2007). Clearly, the Soviet expansion was a greater threat to freedom than anything the capitalist world presented.

[xxxiii] Constitutional Democratic Party ("Party C-D", "Party of People's Freedom", "Ca-Dets", later "Cadets") — one of the main political parties in Russia at the beginning of the XX century. Classified in the soviet historiography as "political party of counter-revolutionary liberal bourgeois"

[xxxiv] Mensheviks — members of moderate wing of RSDLP headed by Y. O. Martov. RSDLP was split into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks at the II Congress of RSDLP during voting on the 1st paragraph of the Party's Constitution. V.I. Lenin wanted to create a solid, determined, well-organized, disciplined proletarian party. Martov supporters were for the association with more freedoms. During the voting, Lenin supporters gained majority of votes, thus, they were called Bolsheviks. Martov supporters were called Mensheviks. In future, such groups tried to cooperate, sometimes, they were divided in opinion; however such split turned to be final.

[xxxv] Joseph Stalin (born 18 December 1878 – 5 March 1953) was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's Central Committee from 1922 until his death in 1953. In the years following Lenin's death in 1924, he rose to become the authoritarian leader of the Soviet Union.

[xxxvi] Georgy Vasilyevich Chicherin (24 November 1872 – 7 July 1936) served as People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs in the Soviet government from March 1918 to 1930.

[xxxvii] Alexander Benois was an influential artist, art critic, historian, preservationist, and founding member of *World of Art*-movement among Russian artists.

[xxxviii] Dmitri Antonovich Volkogonov (Дмитрий Антонович Волкогонов in Russian) (22 March 1928, Chita – 6 December 1995, Moscow) was a Russian historian and officer. A Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of History, Colonel General (1986), Volkogonov was the head of the Institute of Military History at the Ministry of Defense of the Soviet Union between 1988 and 1991. Volkogonov is most famous for his trilogy "Leaders" (Вожди, or Vozhdi), which consists of the three books about Vladimir Lenin (Lenin: A New Biography), Leon Trotsky (Trotsky: The Eternal Revolutionary) and Joseph Stalin (Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy) and Autopsy for an Empire: the Seven Leaders Who Built the Soviet Regime (Russian title: Sem Vozhdei), 1998.

[xxxix] The Pale of Settlement (Russian: Чертá осéдлости, cherta osedlosti) was the term given to a region of Imperial Russia, along its western border, in which permanent residence of Jews was allowed, and beyond which Jewish residence was generally prohibited.

[xl] According to Russian census of 1897 the total Jewish population of Russia was 5,189,401 persons of both sexes (4,13% of total population). Of this total 93,9% lived in the 25 provinces of the Pale of Settlement. The total population of the Pale of Settlement amounted to 42,338,367 - of these 4,805,354 (11,5%) were Jews.

[xli] The Jewish Labor Bund, was a Jewish political party in several European countries operating predominantly between the 1890s and the 1930s with remnants of the party still active in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

[xlii] Zionism is the international Jewish political movement that originally supported the reestablishment of a homeland for the Jewish People in Palestine, after two millennia of exile.

[xliii] Judaism is a set of beliefs and practices originating from the saga of the ancient Israelites, as embodied and codified in the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), as later further explored and explained in the Talmud and other texts.

[xliv] Sergei Mikhailovich Tretyakov (Riga, 1892 – September 10, 1937) was a Russian constructivist writer, playwright and special correspondent for Pravda.

[xlv] LEF ("ЛЕФ") was the journal of the Left Front of the Arts ("Levyi Front Iskusstv" - "Левый фронт искусств"), a widely ranging association of avant-garde writers, photographers, critics and designers in the Soviet Union. It had two runs, one from 1923 to 1925 as LEF, and later from 1927 to 1929 as Novyi LEF ('New LEF'). The journal's objective, as set out in one of its first issues, was to "re-examine the ideology and practices of so-called leftist art, and to abandon individualism to increase art's value for developing communism."

[xlvi] Dnieper construction site was a part of fulfillment of the GOELRO-plan. In the Soviet state construction began in 1927 and the plant started to produce electricity in October 1932.

[xlvii] The Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (1922-1928) , later known as Association of Artists of the Revolution (1928-1933)

[xlviii] Vladimir Vladimirovich Mayakovsky (Влади́мир Влади́мирович Маяко́вский) (July 19, 1893 – April 14, 1930) was a Russian poet and playwright, among the foremost representatives of early-20th century Russian Futurism.

[xlix] Marc Chagall (7 July 1887 – 28 March 1985), was a Jewish Russian artist, born in Belarus (then Russian Empire) and naturalized in France in 1937, associated with several key art moments and was one of the most successful artists of the twentieth century.

[l] Maxim Gorky was a Russian/Soviet author, a founder of the Social Realism literary method and a political activist. From 1906 to 1913 and from 1921 to 1929 he lived abroad, mostly in Capry, Italy; after his return to the Soviet Union he accepted the cultural policies of the time, although he was not permitted to leave the country.

[li] Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev (27 April 1891 - 5 March 1953) was a Russian composer who mastered numerous musical genres and came to be admired as one of the greatest composers of the 20th century.

[lii] Charskaya Lidia, the daughter of Alexey (January 19, 1875— March 18, 1937, Leningrad) was a Russian actress and writer. She spent seven years (1886—1893) in Pavlov Institute for Ladies in Saint Petersburg. The many experiences and impressions she had during her life there served as material for her future books. She married officer B. Churilov, however, their marriage did not last long. Churilov left for Siberia where he did his service, leaving his wife with their small child in Saint Petersburg. Having finished theatre courses, L. Churilova was employed by the Saint Petersburg Alexander Theatre and worked there till 1924. She started writing due to limited resources – she had to raise her son Yury alone. In 1901, a novel *Notes by the Student* was published in the magazine *Heart-Felt Word* that brought her great success. From that time, novels by L. Churilova were published in such magazines every year. During 20 years of her creative life, about 80 works were published. After the revolution, works by L. Churilova were no more popular. They were liquidated from libraries and destroyed. Within the period from 1925 till 1929, she managed to publish 4 small books for children under the pseudonym N. Ivanova.

[liii] Zhytkov Boris (August 30 (September 11) 1882, Novgorod — October 19, 1938, Moscow), was a writer, prosaist, pedagogue, traveler and researcher. He authored popular adventure stories and novels as well as publications on animals.

[liv] Marchak Ilya son of Yakov (nickname M. Ilyin, January 10, 1896—1953), Russian writer, engineer-chemist. Younger brother of S. Y. Marshak.

[lv] Franc Semen son of Ludwig (January 16 (28), 1877, Moscow — December 10, 1950, London) — famous Russian philosopher, religious thinker and psychologist. Co-author of the collections *Problems of Idealism* (1902), *Landmarks* (1909) and *From the Bottom* (1918). He tried to achieve a synthesis of rational thought and religious belief in traditions of apophatic philosophy and Christian Platonism, with particular influence from Nickolay Kuzansky and Vladimir Solovyev (notably, concepts of unanimity).

[lvi] Bulgakov Sergey son of Nickolay (June 28 (16), 1871, Orlov Province – 1944, Paris) – a Russian philosopher, theologist, economist, and Orthodox Church priest. Having defended the thesis for master's degree at Moscow University, he was employed as ordinary professor at Kiev Polytechnical Institute, Chair of Political Economy. During that period, Bulgakov was famous among wide circles of Russian intelligentsia through his public lectures combining perfect artistic properties, ideas and sincere intonations.

[lvii] Sorokin Pitirim son of Alexander (January 23, 1889, V. Turiya of Bologda Province — January 11, 1968, Winchester, USA) was a Russian-American sociologist and cultural expert. He was also a leader of right-wing socialist revolutionaries; from 1920 - Professor at Petrograd University. From 1922 - in emigration. From 1930 – Professor at Harvard University. He considered the historical process as cyclic, consisting of changes of the main types of culture based on integrated sphere of values and symbols. Stating that modern culture faces general crisis, Sorokin compared it with development of materialism and science and saw the solution in development of religious "idealistic" culture. He was one of the founders of theories of social stratification and social mobility.

[lviii] Brutskus Boris (Ber) son of David (nickname *B. Benvid*, *B. Davidovich*, October 3, 1874, Polangen, Kurland Province — December 7, 1938, Berlin, Germany) was a Russian economist, statistician, agronomist, and public figure. Member of the CC of Jewish Colonization Society, and bother of publicist Y.D. Brutskus. He made publications in Russian Thought, Life of Jews and other editions. He was influenced by populist ideas, Jewish national ideas, and protests due to persecuted Jews in Moscow (1891-92). He participated in public discussions of populists and Marxists.

[lix] Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (September 17, 1857–September 19, 1935) is considered by many as a father of theoretical astronautics. His works later inspired leading Soviet rocket engineers as Sergey Korolyev andValentin Glushko and contributed to early successes of Soviet space program.

[lx] Pyotr Leonidovich Kapitsa (9 July 1894 – 8 April 1984) was an innovative Soviet /Russian physicist and Nobel laureate, who made important discoveries in a number of different areas.

[lxi] Nikolai Dmitriyevich Kondratiev (4 March 1892 - 17 September 1938) was a Russian economist, who was a proponent of the (NEP) in the Soviet Union. He proposed a theory that Western capitalist economies have long term (50 to 60 years) cycles of boom followed by depression. These business cycles are now called "Kondratiev waves". He was executed at the height of Stalin's Great Purge and "rehabilitated" fifty years later.

[lxii] Reflexology was a kind of the behavioral science, whose classical ideas were developed by D.B. Watson from 1913 – 1925. Watson believed the subject matter of research should be behavior and not consciousness. Researching the direct relation between stimulus and reaction (reflex), behavioral science attracted the attention of psychologists researching skills, science, and experience as opposed to associative psychology and psychoanalysis. Supporters of behavior science applied two main methods of researching behavior – experiments in laboratories artificially created under controlled circumstances and observations in natural environments. According to Watson,

manipulation with external irritants made it possible to create a man with behavioral constants. "Stimulus – reaction" was the motto of behavioral science. It appeared in the sphere of psychology, reflexology and even entered pedagogy, psychiatry, sociology, and the study of art. Despite some achievements within the framework of reflexology it turned out to be impossible to get away from the mechanistic interpretation of psychical processes. Watson's ideas on behavioral science as a new method of control over the individual by society impressed civil servants and big land owners. Research carried out by behavioral science followers was supported by the Ford Foundation.

[lxiii] Behterev Vladimir son of Michael (January 20, 1857 — December 24, 1927, Moscow) — famous Russian medical expert – psychiatrist, neuropathologist, psysiologist, psychologist, founder of reflexology and patho-psychology in Russia. He was also an academician.

[lxiv] Erich Fromm (March 23, 1900, Frankfurt am Main, — March 18, 1980, Locarno) — social psychologist, philosopher, psycho analyst, representative of Frankfurt school, one of founders Neo-Freudianism and Freudo-Marxism.

[lxv] Basov Michael son of Yakov (1892—1931) — Soviet psychologist. Specialist in pedagogical psychology, pedology. Creator of methods of psychological examination of children of pre-school age. Developer of experimental research of inter-psychic functions. Actively used psychological term "activity", proposing to interpret it as a special structural phenomenon. In particular, treated conditioned reflex as component of activity of the human organism.

[lxvi] Vigotsky Lev son of Semen (November 17 (November 5) 1896 — June 11, 1934, Moscow) — Soviet psychologist, founder of culture and historical school in psychology. The culture and historical theory by Vigotsky created the largest school in Soviet psychology, whose followers were: A.N. Leontyev, A.R. Luria, A. V. Zaporozhets, L.I. Bozhovich, P.Y. Galperin, D.B. Elbkonin, P.I. Zinchenko, L.V. Zankov, etc.

[lxvii] Blonsky Pavel son of Piotr (May 14 (26), Kiev — February 15, 1941, Moscow) — philosopher, pedagogue and psychologist.

[lxviii] Rubishtein Sergey son of Leonid (June 18, 1889, Odessa — November 11, 1960, Moscow) — Russian psychologist and philosopher, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences (AS) of the USSR, one of the creators of the "activity" approach in psychology. Founder of the Chair and Department of Psychology of the Faculty of Philosophy of the MSU and the Sector of Psychology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Author of the fundamental book *Principles of General Psychology*.

[lxix] Leontyev Alexey son of Nickolay (February 5, 1903— January 21, 1979, Moscow) — a psychologist, he studied the problem of consciousness and activity. Founded (1966) and managed the Faculty of Psychology in MSU in 1960s-70s.

[lxx] Uznadze Dmitry son of Nickilay (December 20 (January 1) 1886 (1887), V. Sakara, presently: Zestafonsky District, Georgia — October 12, 1950, Tbilisi) — Georgian psychologist and philosopher developed the general psychological theory of mindset, one of the founders and professor at Tbilisi State University (1918) where he founded the Chair of Psychology, Director of the Institute of Psychology of the AS of Georgia (1941). Author of works *Main Principles of the Theory of Mindset* (1961) and *Experimental Principles of Psychology of Mindset* (1966). He was educated in Leipzig (1909) and Kharkov (1913) and was founder of the scientific school. He developed his own methodological interpretation of the notion of the *mindset* as the border between subjective and objective realms as relates to both psychic and physical reality. In Soviet psychology, Uznadze "mindset" was a legal form of "unconscious", which was prohibited in the USSR by supporters of psychoanalysis.

[lxxi] Zabyla Natalia daughter of Lev (ukr. *Забіла Наталя Львівна*) (1903—1985) — Ukrainian Soviet prose writer, fantasy writer, famous for literary works for children. Author of fantasy books for children of pre-school and primary school age, called the *Surprising Adventures of Boy Yurchik and his Grandfather*.

[lxxii] Subbotnik and voskresnik were days of volunteer work in the Soviet Union. The first all-Russian subbotnik was held on May 1, 1920, the one attended by Vladimir Lenin.

[lxxiii] An abbreviation for the "party organizer of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (партийный организатор ЦК КПСС) was a person appointed by the CPSU Central Committee to work at important places: larger plants, construction sites, kolkhozes, institutions, etc. The position was introduced in 1933. The duties of a partorg were political work and supervision of the execution of plans in production, procurement, etc. Usually they were recommended to be elected secretaries of the bureaus of local partkoms.