

IN THIS JOURNAL

"Prey" in the Film Possession

Crisis of Electoral Trust in India

Scriptures and Oneness of God

Arab Peculiarity of Jorge Amado



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Russia Vs Ukraine: What Next?

Givishvili G.

ABSTRACT

The reasons for the start of Russia's war against Ukraine are being discussed. It is shown that it was caused by Moscow's painful reaction to the collapse of the USSR empire. Due to the lack of complete consensus in the international community regarding the events taking place, the patterns of evolution of world civilization that led to the war are considered from the perspective of the Super-Strong Anthropogenic Principle (SSAP). In particular, it is shown that it was a consequence not only of the collapse of the USSR but also of many preceding events, such as its birth, as well as the birth and demise of Nazi Germany, the fire of World War II, the emergence of the Iron Curtain and the Cold War and the current confrontation between Russia and the West. All of these are interconnected through a single causal sequence. Its ultimate cause, to a decisive degree, in addition to other objective factors, was the ignorant and deeply flawed utopia of K. Marx, adopted by his Russian followers as an infallible religious doctrine. Nevertheless, in this case, it is not enough to understand the essence of what is happening and its origins. It is even more important to understand the conclusions-the strategy of Russia's future foreign policy. For it is confident that it is the suzerain among the surrounding vassals. Thinking this way was considered natural a hundred years ago. Today, when humans have reached space and invented nuclear weapons, remaining faithful to the prejudices of the past is unnatural.

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Russia Vs Ukraine: What Next?

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ABSTRACT

The reasons for the start of Russia's war against Ukraine are being discussed. It is shown that it was caused by Moscow's painful reaction to the collapse of the USSR empire. Due to the lack of complete consensus in the international community regarding the events taking place, the patterns of evolution of world civilization that led to the war are considered from the perspective of the Super-Strong Anthropic Principle (SSAP). In particular, it is shown that it was a consequence not only of the collapse of the USSR but also of many preceding events, such as its birth, as well as the birth and demise of Nazi Germany, the fire of World War II, the emergence of the Iron Curtain and the Cold War, and the current confrontation between Russia and the West. All of these are interconnected through a single causal sequence. Its ultimate cause, to a decisive degree, in addition to other objective factors, was the ignorant and deeply flawed utopia of K. Marx, adopted by his Russian followers as an infallible religious doctrine. Nevertheless, in this case, it is not enough to understand the essence of what is happening and its origins. It is even more important to understand the conclusions-the strategy of Russia's future foreign policy. For it is confident that it is the suzerain among the surrounding vassals. Thinking this way was considered natural a hundred years ago. Today, when humans have reached space and invented nuclear weapons, remaining faithful to the prejudices of the past is unnatural. A misunderstanding of this fact makes Russia's strategy after the current war unpredictable. However, it is not only the global community but first and foremost the citizens of Russia who need to know what rules of interaction between sovereign countries, distant and nearby neighbors, it intends to follow in the future. The book shows that the choice is limited and that there is less and less time left to make it.

I. INTRODUCTION

The war, which was conceived by the Kremlin as a small victorious stroll through a subdued Ukraine, has been going on for almost 4 years now. Alas, the procession did not take place. On the contrary, an extremely alarming trend is emerging. The development of means of human destruction in our century has reached a limit that threatens the existence of all humanity. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 could have set humanity back far into the caves of the Stone Age. Today, if the situation gets out of control, it could result in the complete annihilation of all higher forms of life on Earth. The number of nuclear bomb holders is no longer just two, but nine, while their total deadly arsenal has increased hundreds of times. If the pace of expansion of the nuclear club continues, soon almost half of the world will be part of it. And then nothing will be able to restrain particularly hot-headed individuals from the temptation to use this weapon to blackmail others. Thus, the Special Military Operation (SMO) represents a turning point and a critically dangerous moment in the existence of humanity. We have come too close to the edge of the abyss. If the momentum continues in the same direction, the next step will be the last one, this is obvious! And a surplus in a state of unstable balancing cannot last long.

Therefore, the question is relevant: what comes next? One thing is clear: the world must change radically. But how? I take the liberty to assert that there is no universally accepted answer. Primarily for the obvious reason that, to this day, the world has no clear understanding of why we all exist. It is true, religions pretend as if they know the answer. The simple Quran judges this with utmost frankness and cynicism: "I (Allah) created jinn and humans only so that they worship Me" (Surah Adh-Dhariyat, Ayah 56). However, sober-minded atheists remain silent on this matter. Without having firmly established facts that would allow

this topic and the speculation surrounding it to be closed, science and philosophy have, until today, preferred not to touch upon the question of human purpose at all. Everything changed in our century: finally, both facts and their explanations have emerged. But they turned out to be so unexpected that a certain number of scientists are still afraid to acknowledge them. Unfortunately, the inertia of thought is characteristic not only of believers but also of professional scientists.

Discoveries made by the Hubble and James Webb space telescopes, as well as space experiments conducted by three independent groups of scientists, have proven that the Universe is infinite in space and immeasurable in time. Therefore, Nature does not require any mystical supreme creator. The paradox is that, as it turns out, its infinite existence is impossible without Man—each of the billions of thinking atoms of the Universe, like us! Thus, the question of the purpose of Man, including *Homo sapiens*, has acquired a completely rational and real meaning! Namely: Man is called to sustain the existence of the Universe in a *perpetuum mobile* mode! For everything in this world is interconnected according to N. Bohr's principle of complementarity: "Opposites do not exclude each other, but complement each other." In particular, Man is a key link in the being of Nature in the process of its continuous self-renewal. This process represents a closed cycle: a) the transformation of elementary particles into "amoebas"; b) the development of the latter into beings endowed with intelligence; c) the activity of the intellect, which contributes to the constant generation change in the world of stars. And this endless cycle of transformations is conducted by evolution (phylogenesis)—the mechanism for generating new, increasingly complex and diverse forms of Nature's objects [1].

However, in order to meet the status of one of the demiurge-builders of the Cosmos, the mental, moral and technological development of each exoplanetary civilization in the Universe aspiring to this role must be at a level capable of handling the extremely complex task of the revival (or birth) of stars. Judging by what is happening on planet Earth today, the technological development

of our civilization has so far outpaced overall mental and moral development that it now threatens self-destruction. For Attila with a tie and a nuclear bomb in hand promises no future for our planet. Thus, the Special Military Operation (SMO), whether willingly or unwillingly, has turned out to be a test of humanity's ability to align with the goals of a cosmic mission. In the event of an inability to overcome the disagreements that led to the Special Military Operation (SMO), the Cosmos will simply eliminate us without noticing the "loss of a fighter," of which it has billions. And since everything that brought our world to its current state is the result of natural processes rooted in the distant past, it is necessary to understand why we found ourselves in a trap, whether there is a way out, and what it is. But since the SMO was initiated by Russia, it is first and foremost necessary to have a real and objective understanding of the arguments put forward in its defense by Russian society. The press covers its background and current events as follows.

PART I. THE WAR

I. REASONS FOR THE START OF THE SMO

In October 2022, Russian President V. Putin named two main reasons for the start of the special military operation. According to him, they were: first, the expansion of NATO, which meant an increase in the potential threat to Russia in Eastern Europe; second, the recognition of the independence of the Donbass republics, which imposed on Russia the obligation not to abandon them to their fate.

Relations with NATO.

Before the start of the special operation in Ukraine, Russia offered the United States and NATO member countries to conclude a treaty on security guarantees. The draft document contained requirements separately for the United States and for NATO countries.

Requirements for NATO.

1. The Alliance must push its borders in the east back to the positions of May 27, 1997. This means that NATO should not expand into new

territories-Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia-and release (release to where?) Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.

2. NATO member countries are obliged to cease any military activities on the territory of Ukraine and other Eastern European states.

Questions for readers

1. Russia consults with no one when making decisions regarding international alliances. Who gave it the right to demand that neighboring countries act in a certain way?
2. Why is NATO perceived as a threat in Russia? After all, this organization was established in 1949 with the "aim of protecting Europe from a possible threat of Soviet expansion." The first attempts to transfer the experience of Marxist revolutions to Europe were undertaken under the auspices of the Comintern as early as the 1920s. Their failure forced the Kremlin to temporarily scale back activity in this direction. However, after the victory in World War II, the Kremlin decided that the USSR had become strong enough to once again begin expanding its sphere of influence. It also refused to withdraw its tanks from the sovereign countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, which was naturally perceived as the occupation of Eastern Europe. Therefore, it is not surprising that the West responded by creating NATO as a defensive bulwark. By the way, the fact that this organization was created precisely in response-as a deterrent-is evidenced by the fact that it only becomes active in countering Russia after three years of passive condemnation of the special military operation (SMO) and that at the instigation of D. Trump.

Relations with Ukraine

The President explained that he made this decision regarding the SMO for the people of Donbas, who were subjected to '*genocide* by the Kyiv regime.' At the same time, the President emphasized that the country would not be afraid to respond to Ukraine's Western partners if they interfere with achieving the objectives of the SMO.

Our comment

According to UN General Assembly Resolution 260 (III) adopted on December 9, 1948, its Article II defines genocide as ...actions "committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group as such:

- a. Killing members of the group;
- b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- e. The forcible transfer of children from one human group to another.

But... no indisputable evidence of genocide or terror by Ukraine against the residents of the DPR and LPR that would require Russia's armed intervention was presented. Therefore, the invasion of Ukraine was an act of aggression. This was confirmed by a UN resolution adopted on March 2, 2022: out of 193 member states, 141 voted for the resolution condemning the invasion. And only 5 countries voted in support of Russia: Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, Syria, and Russia itself!

II. SPECIAL OPERATION

1. In February 2022 (at the time of the invasion), the ratio of military personnel was: Russia-900,000, Ukraine-196,000 (The Military Balance). In June 2022, The Independent, citing U.S. intelligence data, reported that Ukrainian forces were suffering significant losses, as they were outmatched by Russian forces 20 to 1 in artillery and 40 to 1 in ammunition.

Question to readers

It is striking that, despite the colossal superiority in manpower and equipment, Russia became bogged down in Ukraine. A swift takeover did not work. Does this embarrassment not closely resemble Russia's past wars? Especially considering that to get help in liberating the Kursk

region from the Ukrainian army, it had to turn to 30,000 assault troops from North Korea.

2. In April 2022, Russian Foreign Minister S. Lavrov stated on the Russia 24 television channel: "Our special military operation is intended to put an end to the reckless expansion and the reckless course toward complete domination by the United States and, under them, the rest of the Western countries on the international stage."

Question to the readers

It is becoming increasingly unclear what the Kremlin's special military operation is for and what it aims to achieve. Is it to save Russians from Ukrainian 'genocide'? To fight against U.S. domination?

3. In September 2022, according to The Washington Post, after the start of the special operation in Ukraine, Russia took control of mineral deposits totaling \$12.4 trillion: 63 Ukrainian coal deposits, 11% of oil reserves, a fifth of natural gas, 42% of metals, and a third of rare earth element deposits, including lithium, which is necessary for battery production, uranium, gold, and limestone. Amidst the noise of concern for the fate of Russians in Donbas, the dangers of Ukrainian biolabs, and the fight against U.S. hegemony, the Kremlin has already plundered Ukraine for a total of \$12.4 trillion.

Question to the readers

It creates the impression that the special military operation (SMO) is a kind of business project. Especially since contract soldiers receive "sign-on bonuses" ranging from 1 to 3 million rubles for participating in it. In a righteous war against Nazi Germany, raising the question of "sign-on bonuses" was unthinkable, even monstrous. So what is Russia fighting for today? To seize lands rich in natural resources?

III. RESULTS OF TWO YEARS OF THE SMO

In February 2024, Tsargrad Infographics published the results of the war with a brotherly (or hostile?) nation. The essence boils down to the admission: "Strike the West! Russia has challenged the world order established after the

USSR's defeat in the Cold War. The campaign in Ukraine became a slap in the face to the collective West-as Putin put it, a response to its 'cheating behavior'... And, one could say, our special operation has become the last nail in the coffin of American-style globalization. And no matter how events unfold further, it is already clear that a global government will not convene on Capitol Hill, and the United States, from being the planet's leading nation, is destined to degrade into a regional power."

Our comments

1. Judging by the tone of Tsargrad, it is most encouraged by the fact that since the start of the special military operation, Russia has begun the degradation of the USA and their transformation into a regional power.
2. According to data from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine, in two years of war, Ukraine lost 70,000 killed and 100,000-120,000 wounded military personnel, with a total of 315,000 casualties. Russia: 123,400 killed and 214,000 wounded military personnel, with a total of 653,060 casualties. The secret of how many Russia lost in just 2025 (from January to August) was inadvertently revealed by Trump, who stated that 'Russia... lost 112,500 soldiers. Ukraine also suffered heavily. It lost about 8,000 soldiers... and this number does not include those missing in action.' If the figures are close to correct, it turns out that the ratio of casualties is 1/14 in favor of Ukraine! Could it be true that those who say Russia in the past won primarily by having a multiple advantage over the enemy are right, i.e., they won not by quality, but by quantity?
3. We will never know the exact figures of losses on both sides of the barricades, but judging by the rate of losses in Russia alone, their number today should be at least from half a million to a million of the 'cannon fodder' that Tsargrad talked about. It turns out that for the sake of the sovereignty of the Russian residents of Donbas under the wing of the Russian Federation, the Kremlin is ready to 'selflessly' sacrifice hundreds of thousands of Russians from Russia? Beat your own so that others would fear?

IV. THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT V. PUTIN

Since Russia has existed, its fate at certain moments of its existence has been decided by a single person (from Vasily III and Peter I to N. Khrushchev and M. Gorbachev). And the whole nation adjusted to his momentary opinion or whim. Today, this unquestioned autocrat is President Putin. To avoid being accused of misrepresenting his views on foreign policy without evidence, we will refer to his statements concerning: a) democracy, sovereignty and equality among states; b) relations with Ukraine and the West; c) the 'right' to use nuclear weapons.

1. Speaking at the Munich Security Conference on February 10, 2007, he asked: 'What is a unipolar world? No matter how this term is embellished, in practice it ultimately means only one thing: it is... a world with one master, one sovereign... And this has nothing to do, of course, with democracy. Because democracy, as is known, is the power of the majority, taking into account the interests and opinions of the minority... I believe that for the modern world the unipolar model is not only unacceptable, but in fact impossible... because it has no moral or ethical foundation of modern civilization, and cannot have any.' What democracy and a multipolar world are, in his opinion, he explained at a meeting with young Russian entrepreneurs on June 9, 2022. At this meeting, he stated: 'In order to claim any kind of leadership, not to mention global leadership... any country, any people, any ethnic group must ensure its sovereignty... *Either a country is sovereign, or it is a colony!*!!! He repeated this thought at a meeting with Russian teachers on October 5, 2022, stating: 'Russia was and will be sovereign; for this, it is necessary to eliminate any attempts to impose foreign values and distorted history on our children.'

Question to the readers

Does the president realize that one of his statements is fundamentally contradictory to another of his judgments? Since in his mind, every sovereign country must automatically be a

metropolis, that is, possess colonies. Otherwise, it itself becomes a colony. According to Putin, there is no third option. Consequently, equality, and therefore democracy, between sovereign countries cannot exist by his definition. You are either a sovereign, i.e., a hegemon, or a vassal, recognizing me as the hegemon. In other words, the multipolar world that the Kremlin is so energetically pursuing is nothing more than a facade for a unipolar world with a single suzerain. How, then, should we view Russia's current and future relations with China? Who among them is the suzerain, and who is the vassal? Or should what was said be understood to mean that as long as Russia does not remain the sole hegemon in a unipolar world, it will be at war with the whole world? And with China as well? For two bears cannot coexist in one den- according to the law of natural selection. Should Russians really be preparing for such a turn of events?

2. Putin called the invasion of Ukraine a *forced* special operation. He declared its necessity to be the rescue of the population of Donbas from 'suffering and genocide' while simultaneously ensuring his own security. In other words, according to him, the goals of the special military operation were 'clear and *noble*.' On March 16, he stated that 'we were forced to take countermeasures when all diplomatic opportunities were completely exhausted... We were simply left with no options to resolve the problems by peaceful means that arose *through no fault of our own!*?' And in this regard, we were simply forced to start a special military operation." Realizing that Russia's blitzkrieg had failed, Putin was forced to present Russia as a victim: "Everyone wants to bite us somewhere or take something away from us, but they must know, those who intend to do so, that we will knock out everyone's teeth so that they cannot bite... The same thing happens at all times. As soon as Russia becomes stronger, there are immediately reasons to limit its development," he stated.

Our comment

Since the times of the Roman Empire, any formal pretext for declaring war on neighbors is called *casus belli*. It exactly corresponds to the principles of social Darwinism.

3. At the same Munich Security Conference, Putin stated: "Allow me to remind you that according to the UN Charter, sanctions from the UN Security Council are required for peacekeeping operations... But there is also an article in the UN Charter on the right to self-defense. And here, *no sanctions are necessary.*" In the film 'World Order-2018' (March 7, 2018), when asked about the use of nuclear weapons, Putin replied that it could not be ruled out in emergency situations. "Yes, for humanity, this would be a global catastrophe, for the world it would be a global catastrophe, but as a citizen of Russia, as the head of the Russian state, I want to ask the question: *what is the point of such a world if Russia does not exist?*" Putin added.

Question to the readers

Apparently, the meaning of the last statement is clear. It consists in demanding that the Kremlin be recognized as having full 'freedom of action' whenever it deems necessary. Otherwise, it is ready to take extreme measures! But can it be considered normal when someone, outraged that the world does not share their beliefs, is ready to wipe this world off the face of the earth, including their own country? And what should be done if not all of their compatriots are willing to sacrifice themselves?

Addition

D. Medvedev is the President of the Russian Federation from 2008 to 2012, Prime Minister from 2012 to 2020, today he is the Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, i.e. in fact, the second person of the state. Defending the right to "defend the country by all available means," he lashed out at the leaders of the Western world, who sharply condemned Moscow's actions. On 28.09.2022, he reminded the "hard of hearing, hearing only themselves": "*Russia has the right to use nuclear*

weapons in cases that lie at the heart of its state policy." At the same time, he hoped that "*even if Russia uses nuclear weapons, it will be "swallowed"*", since "overseas and European demagogues are not going to die in a nuclear apocalypse." As a true "patriot", he vilifies Western politicians with confessions: "I hate them. They are *scums* and *degenerates*. They want us, Russia, dead. And as long as I live, I will do everything to make them disappear." "The number of leading *idiots* in NATO countries is growing. After all, these *weak-mindets* are actively pushing us towards World War III." "The leaders of France, Germany and the United States are *freaks*," acting in relation to Russia "either because of childish infantilism, or because of mature *stupidity*, or because of outrageous impudence."

Our comment

Firstly, Medvedev should be entered into the Guinness Book of Records: he is unique. No European politician has ever stooped to the jargon of medieval urban underclasses, using street curses and blackmail as tools of dialogue. Does he really not understand that the slang of hooligans not only disgraces him personally—as a candidate of legal sciences—but also casts a shadow over the Russian government as a whole, since he is the second highest official in the state? Secondly, it is not impossible that our Galaxy is full of dead civilizations primarily because of exoplanetary Medvedevs. Therefore, if the global community does not wish to be buried alive, it must severely limit the ability of individuals like the deranged Medvedev to influence world order.

V. REACTION OF THE RUSSIAN ELITE

1. The closest associate of the president in the past-businessman Y. Prigozhin-admitted (on September 26, 2022) that in 2014 he, like many other businessmen, visited training grounds where "Cossacks" gathered and "tried to *throw money around in order to recruit a group that would go and protect Russians in Donbas*. But he quickly realized that half of them were scammers." He then took the

matter into his own hands and found specialists who could help. "From that moment, May 1, 2014, a group of patriots was born, which later became known as the Wagner PMC," the late businessman reported.

Our comment

Oligarch Prigozhin, known as 'Putin's chef,' is his trusted associate, as well as a hero of Russia, the DPR, and the LPR. Whether intentionally or not, he revealed that the operation to intervene in the affairs of a neighboring state had been prepared long before February 2022. It included provocations by Russia on Ukrainian territories so that the opposite side would respond in kind. This was necessary for the Kremlin to accuse Kyiv of inciting hostility between Russians and Ukrainians. Thus, the group of mercenaries 'Wagner,' created by Prigozhin at the Kremlin's initiative, was one of the first and most active participants in escalating the conflict and increasing mutual accusations. Incidentally, 'Wagner' also participated in military conflicts in Africa, Syria, and other regions of the world. However, once the goal was achieved and the fire in Ukraine raged with the required intensity, the activity of the 'chef' began to discredit his boss. And then he was simply removed. (A servant should never overestimate the extent of his influence over his master).

2. To dispel any doubts regarding the Kremlin's foreign policy, Senator A. Pushkov explained (October 4, 2022) what it actually entails. On his Telegram channel, he emphasized that Moscow "does not have a coherent ideology similar to what Western countries promote. However, there is a set of its elements—from the principle of sovereignty to the defense of traditional values... And Russia must live with these ideas and strive to spread them within the international community."

Our comment

In the Middle Ages, the Kremlin imagined itself as the Third Rome. In the Modern Era, it prided itself on being the gendarme of Europe. After the Marxist coup, it dreamed of a worldwide proletarian revolution. After the victory in World War II, it boasted about the advance of

communism by 1980. Today, it dreams of the role of a sovereign-hegemon as the protector of traditional values and Orthodox doctrines around the world. And tomorrow – a sermon on domestic tyranny? How suddenly dreams have withered. In the Patriotic War of 1941-45, patriots considered it their duty to defend the Motherland. In the 2022 Special Military Operation, they are ready to kill for things they barely understand themselves. And yet, they demand monetary compensation. What is this if not a catastrophic degradation in the understanding of patriotism.

3. No less convincing confirmation of the ideological emptiness of the modern Kremlin is provided by the Russian Foreign Minister. In April 2022, S. Lavrov stated: "Our special military operation is designed to put an end to the reckless expansion and the reckless course toward complete dominance by the United States and, under them, the rest of the Western countries on the international stage." Washington and its allies impose a unipolar development model on the world, which serves the interests of the West, and try to "stop the flywheel of history." As a result, "the state of affairs in the field of international security is rapidly deteriorating" (24.09.2022).

Our comment

The dominance of the West over the past century has brought the Third World dividends unprecedented in previous centuries and millennia. The standard of living is rising at an unprecedented pace for almost all peoples of the world, including Russian citizens. In every respect—social and intellectual, legal, technological and so on—world civilization is not degrading, but rapidly developing. And like any development, it does not occur without contradictions, sometimes acute, but resolvable. Yet there is one issue, reaching the point of irresolvable confrontation, which is associated with Lavrov's sharply increased desire to "put an end to the reckless expansion and reckless pursuit of complete domination" by the West.

4. 24.06.2022, the director of the Hermitage, M. Piotrovsky, stated: "The attitude towards military actions is not that simple. On one

hand, war is blood and killing, and on the other hand, it is the self-assertion of people, the self-assertion of a nation... We are all militarists and imperialists because we were raised in the imperial tradition."

Our comment

In his opinion, the empire's desire to unite peoples is tempting, but it is "one of the good temptations." Trying to assert oneself by trampling on the independence of neighbors, aiming to turn them into obedient vassals—is that a "good temptation"? Then why, in that case, did Muscovy – the future Russia – strive so hard to rid itself of the temptation to remain part of the Mongol Empire?

5. Surprised by the West's reaction to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, former well-known hockey player B. Mayorov stated that he is "completely astonished by the scale of Russophobia that has engulfed Europe and North America... I do not understand this hatred. Just look at history – Russia has never attacked Europe. All we ever do is fend off aggressors. Sometimes from the Poles, sometimes from the Swedes, from the French, the Germans... And this hatred extends across all fronts, including sports. Here we cut off, there we don't allow, somewhere we impose restrictions."

Our comment

Of course, it is pointless to expect an athlete to understand the nuances and intricacies of politics. But one cannot be so ignorant when it comes to basic knowledge of their own country's history and its relations with neighbors. As for the Poles, it was none other than Russia, Prussia and Austria that tore Poland apart three times: in 1772, 1793, and 1795. And until 1918 (for over a century), Poland was absent from the world map. Only a profoundly ignorant person could claim that the Great Northern War (1701-1721) was provoked by Sweden. It was Peter I who tried to 'cut a window to Europe' and was eager to reach the Baltic Sea. Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812 after several Russian campaigns in Europe. To counter him, the Russian army (led by Suvorov) made a push into Switzerland as early as 1799. The campaign

ended disastrously: the remnants of the army, having heroically crossed the Alps, barely managed to escape. In 1805, Russian troops fought Napoleon at Austerlitz and were resoundingly defeated. The next battle with Napoleon that Russia engaged in again took place in Europe (Preussisch-Eylau, 1807). In 1808-1809, Russia fought Sweden due to its refusal to join the continental blockade of England, declared by Napoleon. Ultimately, Napoleon could not tolerate the aggression of the eastern autocrat and decided to teach him a lesson. But he did not take into account that the technical capabilities at his disposal created insurmountable obstacles to the success of his campaign in the remote regions of Russia. Therefore, it is not surprising that her role in European politics from 1814 to 1854 is generally described by the expression 'the gendarme of Europe.'

As for the relations between Russia and Germany, during World War I Russia itself 'got entangled in history,' pursuing banal goals of expansion and dreaming of taking Constantinople. If we turn to World War II, is it really a secret to anyone that not only Nazi Germany thirsted for revenge, but Russian Marxists from the very first days of the Comintern were eager to fight? For what purpose? To establish the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' throughout the world, of course, led by Russia. Thus, it turns out that it was not so much the Poles, Swedes, French and Germans who wished to enslave Russia, but rather Russia itself that strove with all its might to extend its power over Europe and the world. Alas, the dreams remained dreams.

Therefore, only a series of unsuccessful attempts to turn Europe into its vassal, culminating in defeat in the Crimean War, forced Russia to change the direction of its expansion from the west to the south (the Caucasus), the southeast (Central Asia) and the Far East. Here, relying on European technologies and its experience in the conduct of wars, it relatively easily (not counting the Caucasus War, which lasted almost half a century) achieved its goals.

6. State Duma deputy and former boxer N. Valuev commented on the decision of the

International Boxing Association (IBA) to allow boxers from Russia and Belarus to participate in international competitions as follows: "Today, the hegemon manipulates world sports to serve its politics. As long as the hegemon-the USA-is at the helm, occurrences like what happened in boxing will be rare. Today, principles, adequacy and loyalty to sporting values are not valued among officials in world sports."

Our commentary

When an sportsman resorts to doping, it provokes condemnation from others. When a country engages in it, the entire international community becomes concerned. By putting domestic sports on doping, Russia turned sports into a tool of state propaganda. Does Valuev know about this deception of the entire sports world? Of course he does, just like everyone in the country! But which Russian athletes, sports officials, journalists and ordinary sports enthusiasts have admitted to this deception? They can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Mutual cover-up is passed off as patriotism. By the way, the USSR began cheating world sports at the Olympic Games in Helsinki in 1952. At that time, Soviet professional athletes were declared amateurs, and they competed with genuine amateurs without a hint of embarrassment... contrary to P. de Coubertin, who revived the Olympic Games. Who suffered as a result of Russia being barred from world sports-sports administrators? Alas, only the athletes. And who among them the most? K. Valieva-a brilliant child caught in the gears of the system.

Summary

Everything that begins eventually comes to an end. It is impossible to predict with 100% certainty how the SMO will conclude. But let's assume that the Kremlin announces that it has ultimately achieved its set goals. It is unclear, however, which of these goals will be disclosed. Nevertheless, the question arises: does the Kremlin have a meaningful long-term strategy for Russia's continued existence, and what is its essence? A brief analysis of the mindset of the Russian elite suggests that, in their understanding, Russia is and remains an empire, and at the same time, it is a beacon guiding the world

toward a happy future. But, firstly, all empires of the past, from the Assyrian, Persian, and Ottoman to the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, British, and Soviet, eventually collapsed either due to internal contradictions or because of external opposition. This is a historical regularity, a statement of fact. Therefore, there can be no talk of any happy future for Russia as an empire.

Secondly, there is no real evidence of its positive influence on the fate of the world in the past. He owes nothing to Russia, since everything progressive in him, in all spheres of human existence, originated outside of it. The only thing Russia has distinguished itself with in the past century is its decisive contribution to victory in World War II. However, in that war, Russia was primarily saving itself. And the events in Eastern Europe were a side effect. But... after liberating it from the Nazi occupier, the USSR itself became a Marxist occupier. Today, Russia, as the successor of the Soviet Union, tries, whenever possible, to revive the tools and the power over its neighbors that it once had in the recent past. Therefore, it is unclear what good it can offer the world in the future.

When launching the special military operation, the Russian elite expected the international community to turn a blind eye to it, seeing it as a 'just compensation' for the collapse of the USSR. The reality turned out to be unpredictable for the Kremlin. The world still does not recognize Russia's right to pursue expansion against Ukraine. By the end of 2025, condemnation of Russia has taken strict material, economic, and cultural forms. Its intellectual, cultural, and technological isolation continues to intensify. What conclusions does the Kremlin intend to draw from what is happening? It is important to know not only for the citizens of Russia but for the entire world community, as its military potential is capable of destroying humanity itself. Therefore, it is crucial for the world to have clarity regarding the rules under which the Kremlin intends to participate in global affairs going forward. The essence of Russia's foreign policy today is frantic attempts to take revenge for the defeat of the USSR. How long can Russia's 'butting heads' with the West and the world

continue and how might it end? Are they in the Kremlin aware that the outcome could be inglorious for humanity as a whole? But the most troubling thing is that its inhabitants do not understand the meaning of what is happening in the world. In their defense, it can be said that they are not alone in this.

The most fundamental problem of modern times is that the world community as a whole has little understanding of the driving forces that determine the dynamics and meaning of what is happening. This is because the key question of the purpose of human existence has never been posed by anyone, at any time. And there were neither circumstances nor reasons to pose it. The situation changed radically only in our century—see the Introduction. It suggested that the Special Military Operation (SMO) is, in fact, an exam that the global community is taking from evolution to determine the level of maturity of humanity's collective consciousness and its readiness for the role of the demigod of the Cosmos. And since the SMO may be the last chance to prove our intellectual and moral maturity, the tragedy can be avoided only by clarifying: 1) what reason led Russia to a harsh confrontation with the West; 2) whether it was a tragic accident or an evolutionary inevitability; 3) the ways that could prevent conflict and catastrophe. Their analysis is presented in the most concise form below.

PART II. THE PAST

I. SOCIALISM AS PRACTICE AND AS UTOPIA

Today in Russia, there is a popular thesis that the USSR was the pinnacle of human development, but the machinations of enemies destroyed this "temple shining at the top." Therefore, it is the duty of Russians to restore it to its former glory. However, the facts indicate otherwise: the collapse of the USSR occurred due to natural causes. There are several of them, but the three main ones are: 1) a false ideological foundation (Marxism) on which its political, economic, and social walls were built; 2) human psychology, encountering which turned dreams into ruins; 3) a planned (catch-up) economy that excluded private property.

As for ideology, its origin is associated with the Industrial Revolution in England and the emergence of two new classes: the 'upper'-capitalists and the 'lower' - the proletariat. The term 'socialism' was first used in P. Leroux's work 'Individualism and Socialism' as a kind of response to A. Smith's work 'An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.' According to Leroux, the individualist-capitalist, relying on private property, pursued only his own interests, without caring about the public good. (It should be noted that the concept of *private property* also arose during this revolution as ownership of the means of *mass or commodity production*). Socialism, on the other hand, was opposed to individualism (capitalism), demanding justice, i.e., equality, primarily in the distribution of material goods. In other words, Leroux contributed to the fact that, in the eyes of society, *socialism became synonymous with universal equality*.

Meanwhile, according to the science of ethology, the instinct of sociability is developed to some degree in all social animals without exception, including, of course, humans. The method by which they form into organized conglomerates is standard. This is a hierarchy that creates societies led by alpha males. Therefore, the meaning of real socialism as a mechanism for merging large communities of people into stable, viable structures-states-is also unified. Its key characteristic is *total INequality* among members of society. In other words, real socialism, which divides society into the 'top' (elites) and the 'bottom' (the people), is directly opposed to the notion of it as a symbol of equality, a notion conceived in the mind of a publicist. Moreover, during the construction of this pyramid of inequality, rivers of blood were shed. Since the pre-civilized man, free from any chains of inequality, fiercely resisted any attempts to limit his independence [2].

It should be noted that the era of 'twisting arms' for the free hunter-gatherer lasted no less than 4-6 thousand years of the Neolithic revolution. After all, it was only with the combined efforts of violence and deceit that it became possible to confine him within the cage of civilization. The

former was employed by secular leaders, the latter by religious alpha males. On this foundation, formed by natural selection (according to Darwin) and the profound ignorance of our ancestors, all civilizations of the world from antiquity to the present day were built without exception. Extremely rare deviations from this rule included only the Minoan civilization and a number of city-states of ancient Hellas, including democratic Athens. This is why it appears both logical and justified to classify all established hierarchical civilizations of the past and present under the term 'socialist.'

All spontaneously emerging new things are accompanied by upheavals. Therefore, the initial steps of the Industrial Revolution, among other things, could not help but be accompanied by various disasters affecting the majority of the people. Sympathizing with those suffering from the changes, people like C. Saint-Simon, C. Fourier and R. Owen proposed all kinds of plans to remedy the evils. But what was common in their ideas was the recognition of property as the main "apple of discord." Therefore, in their view, justice could only be achieved on the basis of: a) communal ownership; b) obligatory labor for everyone; c) equal distribution of goods. Naive as they were, they sincerely believed, like their predecessor-the utopian T. More-that private property was the most pernicious enemy of humanity, hindering its happiness. From this arose all their fantastic plans to save society from poverty and exploitation, which required total equality in the possession of property, and these came to be called socialist utopias. Louder than others in the field of utopian criticism of capitalism prophesied K. Marx. Obsessed with a mania for grandeur, the journalist, who had externally defended a dissertation in philosophy, dreamed from youth of taking the place of Christ. Meeting F. Engels suggested to him how to achieve this: since a new 'salt of the earth'-the proletariat-had appeared, he, Marx, would become a new god for them. However, the proletariat itself interested him only as 'cannon fodder,' worthy of contempt, as he admitted in correspondence with Engels [3].

Without bothering with complicated searches and proofs, Marx started with the simplest. He challenged the philosophy of G. Hegel. Without introducing anything entirely new into his framework, he, like a circus magician, with a single gesture, simply turned it from its idealistic feet to a materialistic head. This was not difficult, as at that time no one had irrefutable facts to confirm the correctness of one view over another. Any idea, no matter how speculative, had the right to exist, as long as it was loudly proclaimed. One only needed to summon the courage (or audacity) to perform this trick. Marx calculated correctly: the PR campaign effect impressed his immediate circle. Furthermore-being a complete amateur in the field of historical science, he also made a mark here by presenting the world his version of human evolution, full of falsifications and deceit. This was also easy due to the obvious immaturity of historiography at that time.

But the main trump card, or rather, not even a trump card but a joker that Marx pulled out of his sleeve like a card sharp, was called communism. Firstly, his "brainchild" promised the proletariat the advent of paradise, but... not in heaven, rather on earth. Moreover, it guaranteed the fulfillment of the slogan: "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs"-as much as is required. In this way, Marx seemingly cut off any hints of a connection between his teaching and religion. Secondly, he asserted that this paradise would come only *after* the proletariat destroyed: - a) private property;-b) all class enemies;-c) established its dictatorship throughout the world ("The Communist Manifesto"). He believed that the frivolous proletariat would bite at such a tempting bait and clear a place for him on the divine throne, ousting Christ-the god of the agrarians. By calling for lynching of everyone who, due to circumstances, found themselves above the proletariat in the social hierarchy, he placed in their hands an ideological sword for dealing with the adherents of all old idols.

However, neither Marx nor his utopian predecessors realized that the notion of property as an 'unclean force' threatening universal equality had already emerged in the primitive era. Subconsciously aware that property could divide

people, Stone Age hunters and gatherers regarded individual poverty as a public good—a guarantee of universal justice. In the 19th century, ethnography (anthropology) was only just becoming a science. And few could have imagined that for the majority of the past, *Homo sapiens*—for at least 40-50 thousand years—were governed by the structure of social relations which modern communists call... communism (from Latin: *commūnis*—"common"). This historically first, real communism was the embodiment of absolute universal equality, including equality in the possession of material goods. For such goods simply did not yet physically exist. No one produced anything beyond their own modest needs.

Accordingly, the primitive communist in the modern sense was not an ascetic, but literally destitute to the point of nudity. Yet... in no way a beggar. On the contrary, he was happy. Life in universal equality had such allure that the 'last of the Mohicans' of communism—modern hunter-gatherers from South Africa, Australia, and Brazil—still resist the encroachment of civilization's comforts. And it is not surprising that, from the perspective of utopian science fiction writers of the civilization era, the Upper Paleolithic was truly the 'Golden Age' of humanity. But this involuntary widespread misconception turned out to be an advantage for Marx. The malicious yet maniacally vain misanthrope concocted a bluff in which the word 'communism' became bait for the gullible. His 'Manifesto'—a document that brings shame to humankind—effectively provoked the proletariat to the vilest and basest impulses that could arise in a human mind: to ignite the fire of a world revolution—a civil war across the entire globe.

It is not surprising that the overwhelming majority of thoughtful Europeans considered such utopian schemes to be cannibalistic, criminal, and simply insane. Even the proletarian masses were frightened by his calls: a) to destroy private property, the individual—the owner of this property—and trade, as well as the family as such; b) to abolish the fatherland and nationality; c) to eliminate bourgeois ideas of freedom of conscience and religion; d) to anathematize universal human moral, philosophical, political,

and legal ideas. Thus, his passionate calls for a global massacre remained the voice of one crying in the wilderness. And only after his death did their poison penetrate the consciousness of his followers, both the ideological heirs—Marxists—and his opponents, the Nazis. The hatred of the proletariat toward the bourgeoisie, which Marx tried to instill in his flock, had the opposite effect—it generated hatred for his preaching among his most fanatical opponents. But one way or another, both chicks—the Marxist, his rightful heir and the Nazi, the bastard who dreamt of patricide—flew out of the same nest. (Action generates reaction—a law of nature discovered by I. Newton in experiments with basic physics).

As expected, thirsting for glory and divine privileges, he felt insulted. In response, cursing all the "obstinate" people, he decided to take revenge on all of humanity in the style of Herostratus, dedicating the rest of his life to writing "Capital"—a pompous diatribe against economics as a science. It did not address a single problem whose analysis would contribute to the progressive development of the economy and the relations between labor and capital. In other words, anything that could ease and improve the state of society as a whole and the proletariat in particular. It contained nothing except a) "exposing" the history of social relations in England during the infancy of the Industrial Revolution; b) banal truths of management known since antiquity; c) amateurish attacks on professional economists; d) calls to anathematize private property [4].

Evolution constantly tests the sanity of humanity with the most fantastic ideas, myths, and unthinkable speculations, similar to the delusions about a complete and/or flat Earth. Against this backdrop, Marx's doctrine of socialism—communism appeared the height of respectability to some particularly uncritical and gullible individuals. Especially since he established, as he believed, a clear boundary separating his 'strictly scientific doctrine' from the utopias of his predecessors. This is what enticed his Russian followers—the most radically left-wing in Europe. Marx proved to be a revelation for them for two reasons. On the one hand, he seemed to them a serious authority who dared to dispute with

luminaries such as Hegel and Adam Smith, as well as to reject religion. On the other hand, in his name as a 'brilliant scientist,' any crimes against humanity could be committed. He granted indulgences for any villainy in the name of the victory of the proletariat. Entranced by his tale, they burned with impatience to carry out a grand upheaval first in Russia, and then throughout the world.

Their fanaticism and determination were partly understandable. Nowhere, at any time, not even in the East, had people been subjected to such sophisticated mockery, disgraceful humiliation, and monstrous violence by *their own elites* as in Russia. And it was there that resistance to the "rulers" sought any justification for the necessity of radical change and for mass bloodletting. Meanwhile, the colossal internal pressure of mass protest, brewing for centuries, was preparing a social explosion of unprecedented force. And when the spring of popular anger was ready to release and erupt in the form of a rebellion, as always—"senseless and ruthless"—the Marxist-Bolsheviks immediately seized it to make it "meaningful"—directed towards seizing their own power. This was the prelude to Russia's confrontation with the West, initiated, on one hand, by the insane pretensions of the 19th-century Herostratus and on the other, by the tragic history of the Russian people in the Romanov Empire. Subjective and objective causes coincided to set the stage for another civilizational experiment.

II. THE ERA OF THE USSR

All radical changes in power structures, as a rule, are accompanied by abundant bloodshed. The coup d'état carried out by the Bolsheviks, which was followed by the Civil War, was no exception in this sense. It was expected, because the people were eager to pay off their tyrannical oppressors for centuries of suffering. But the price of revenge was an unthinkable 12 million victims! The Bolsheviks, who initiated the massacre, declared that their conscience was clear—they carried out the will of the people. But they were disingenuous: the punishment of the old elites in the name of the good of the people was the surface part of the

iceberg. Its underwater part was the desire of the Bolsheviks to become a new elite. At the same time, they did not promise the people either freedom, or equality or fraternity. In this respect they were honest: they did not give him the first, nor the second, nor the third. But by proclaiming slogans such as "Power to the Soviets! Factories to the workers! Land to the peasants!", the Marxists hoped to bribe, that is, deceive the people. And they were not mistaken. Deceiving the profoundly ignorant masses, whose submissiveness had almost reached the level of reflexes, turned out to be quite simple. And if before seizing power they were in their own way sincere in the intention of actually giving something to the people, once they took power, they quickly forgot about them. For behind the false slogan of proletarian hegemony lay the true goal—the hegemony of a new elite, the Marxist elite. Power corrupts everyone, and absolute power, as is known, corrupts absolutely. Those who did not understand this or did not bow their heads, faced bloody terror, inspired in the Bolsheviks by their leader -V. Lenin.

Selfless concern for the needs of the people was one of many fairy tales invented by the Bolsheviks—disciples of the liar Marx. This was proven by the incredible ferocity of their actions against opponents, driven by... fear for their own lives. By provoking a world revolution, they hoped its flame would distract the external enemies of Marxism from interfering in Russia's affairs. That is why, as early as 1919, the 1st Congress of the Comintern was held in Moscow. At that congress, the words were spoken: 'The hands of the proletarians reach for swords. Not a year will pass before all of Europe is Soviet... In 1920, a great International Soviet Republic will be born.' Thus, the theory of the proletariat's war against all other humanity began to be put into practice by the efforts of Marx's disciples immediately after the October coup. By the way, the second-in-command organizer of this coup—L. Trotsky—shortened his own life by continuing to obsess over the dream of world revolution (and his role in it) up until the beginning of World War II.

But the most convincing proof of serving their own selfish, rather than the people's, interests, the Bolsheviks demonstrated during the tragedy

known as the "Volga Famine of 1921-1923," in which about 6 million people perished. Unable to cope with the problem on their own, the Kremlin turned to the international community for help, which did not hesitate to respond to the request. In particular, the American Relief Administration (ARA), led by Herbert Hoover, helped save at least 9 million people from starving to death! In addition, citing the need to purchase food for the starving, the Kremlin confiscated church property worth *2.5 billion gold rubles*. Thus, from these two sources-external and internal-the Relief Fund for the Starving received a total of up to *4.6 billion rubles*. But, attention reader: only 1 (*one!*) *million rubles* were allocated for the purchase of food for them! That is, their share amounted to *less than one-thousandth of the total sum collected for their rescue!!!* Meanwhile, *5.5 million rubles* were allocated to the Comintern to finance the activities of 'brotherly Communist parties.' And to this day, it remains a mystery what operations the remaining more than *4 billion rubles* were spent on. In world history, it is hard to find another example of such monstrous hypocrisy. This is how the self-destruction of Russia began.

The emergence of the USSR completely mirrored the Eastern tradition of violence and deceit in the process of elite change. But the classical civilizations of the East existed and/or continue to exist for many centuries, even millennia. The USSR did not make it to 70 years! After the brilliant victory in the 1941-1945 war, which elevated it to shining heights, it suddenly and thunderously collapsed. What or who tripped it up? Today in Russia, the blame for the collapse of the Soviet Union is placed on M. Gorbachev & Co. There is a grain of truth in this, but only a tiny one. The overwhelming part of the burden of guilt lies with Marx! He was the main architect-ideologist who designed the foundation, as well as the political, economic, and social walls of the country. And the first, most visible sin of the project was that its path to a bright future, cleared of opponents of the proletariat, ran through the Himalayas of corpses. However, neither Judaism, nor Christianity, nor Islam, which also diligently cleared their space under the sun of opponents, stopped at such a 'trivial' obstacle. Therefore, the second, implicit yet fatal flaw of Marxism was that

it promised paradise *on earth 'here and now'*! But such a promise has an unpleasant trait – it can be tested. 'Practice is the criterion of truth,' Marx carelessly remarked, not realizing that experience would disprove the truth of his teachings. In fact, he turned out to be far less farsighted than his predecessors. For they promised paradise in the heavens, which cannot be tested.

The builders of the USSR naively thought they were doing something exceptional, unprecedented in history. In reality, all their 'innovations' were a trivial repetition of banal palace coups in the Eastern style, seasoned with the European art of fooling the masses. Nevertheless, for a utopia to prove its driving force, the overthrow had to be led by a leader for whom the value of human life was zero, and the concept of morality was merely a tool of politics. Such a person was found in V. Lenin. According to his view: "Morality is that which serves the destruction of the old exploitative society and the unification of all workers around the proletariat, which is creating a new society of communists." This new Robespierre demonstrated that he was capable of stopping at nothing, no matter how shameful the lie, and was ready to drown in blood as many people as his victory demanded [5]. And it demanded, at a minimum, $6+12 = 18$ million people. Who gave 'good grandfather' Lenin a blank check for cannibalism? Marx – the author of a pseudo-scientific voodoo! Was this crime something exceptional in history? Alas, the weight of crimes committed by the 'brilliant' practitioner of Marxism was in no way less than the severity of the 'exploits' of Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, and similar heroes of agricultural socialism.

But the seizure of power is only the overture in the force majeure drama of history. The usurper still needs to prove his viability by holding this power in his hands while thousands of other hands try to tear it away. The civil war left the country in ruins. To revive it among the builders, there had to be a leader capable of: 1) stopping the attempts of the old Leninist 'guard' to continue a suicidal game of world revolution; 2) raising the economy practically from scratch in order to urgently prepare the rear for war; 3) dealing with the 'fifth

column' regardless of the number of victims (only very naive people could think that those who lost the Civil War would forget about revenge); 4) overcoming and organizing the chaos that reigned in all departments of the state apparatus; 5) preventing deadly disagreements in the army, as well as properly arming it; 6) creating an atmosphere of an unbreakable union among the peoples of the multinational country, forging them into a single image of the 'Soviet person'. Without solving at least one of the listed points, it would have been impossible to save the USSR.

But there remained one more puzzling problem: relations with Europe. The country needed to be prepared for the inevitable war with Nazi Germany, maneuvering between it on the one hand and England and France on the other. Since the victory of Marxism in Russia had triggered a reaction in the form of the victory of Nazism—a reflection of it in a distorted mirror. Without the existence of the USSR, A. Hitler would categorically have had no chance of winning the 1932 elections. (Just as Marxism won in Russia due to two reasons: a) the objective—the peculiarities of its history and b) the subjective—Marx's teachings, similarly Nazism triumphed in Germany due to: a) the specifics of its historical past; b) Hitler's propaganda). Thus, Europe had to choose the lesser of two evils. And for the USSR, it was extremely important to demonstrate that Marxism was the lesser evil compared to Nazism.

Only a leader possessing almost supernatural qualities could resolve the unimaginably contradictory spectrum of arising problems in the shortest possible time. Such a leader was found—I. Stalin. Unlike most of the Marxist elite, he, astonishingly, was not deceitful. A cruel dictator, responsible for the blood of not only many active opponents of his policies but also of the innocent, he did not pretend, but sincerely desired a better future for the people. In this way, he became an anomaly—an exception to the rule for the overwhelming majority of those hungry for power. Having seized it, and with an indulgence from Marx and Lenin for any bloody crimes, the despot *put the interests of the people above personal*

ones! This choice of priorities was unprecedented for any tyrant.

But in doing so, Stalin committed the unthinkable. First, he materialized a utopia, which turned out to be a phenomenon unique in world history. In this way, he breathed life into Marx's paper mythology. Second, he saved the country from collapse, the Russians and many other peoples from slavery and the Jews of the Old World from complete extermination. Under any other national leader, the country would have fallen in 1941 or earlier. Third, he spared the world an uncertain outcome of the slaughter between Anglo-Saxon and German civilizations in the event of the USSR's defeat, since Germany was just one step away from creating its own atomic bomb. Fourth, he essentially determined the status of modern China as a contender against the West. Fifth, without fully realizing it, he partly initiated the global tectonic shifts that today implicitly accelerate the world's movement away from socialism and liberalism toward direct democracy. And this is far from all that is connected with his legacy. That is why Stalin remains the most controversial figure in world history, at least of the Modern era.

However, being a devout follower of Marx, he did not realize that his titanic efforts were ultimately doomed to fail. For they were like Don Quixote's attempts to fight a windmill—the power of elites of any kind, including the Marxist ones. The result: being a "black sheep" in the world of authoritarian tyrants of classical socialism, he found himself alien even among his own—the Marxist elite. And the elite took revenge on him. They had grown tired of enduring years of sole rule by a dictator that infringed on their interests and rights to what they believed was absolute power, won with blood. That is why they hastened to consign to oblivion the legacy of the last true fanatic of the Marxist utopia.

The parallel between the socialism of the USSR and primitive communism is not immediately obvious. Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the sense of satisfaction with one's existence that prevailed among the Soviet people during Stalin's rule (and, by inertia, under Brezhnev). It was

close to that feeling of fullness of life that characterized the pre-civilized era of universal equality-primitive communism. The feelings experienced by an ordinary Soviet person were caused, on the one hand, by a huge relief from the terrifying oppression that weighed on their ancestors from generation to generation. On the other hand, by the real benefits provided by the new regime, including the illusion of the free nature of many goods that became accessible to the majority of the population. It was created because no worker knew the real cost of the products they produced or what portion of it the monopolist state generously left for the worker, and what it allocated to the elite. The latter consisted not only of the party apparatus but also of many other dependents of the state treasury. The state manipulated these shares so skillfully, redistributing income and expenses, that people got the impression that they had, in a sense, actually stepped into the promised communism. Therefore, it is not surprising that, according to most contemporary Russians (according to polls from 2024-no less than 70%), the era of Stalinism was a kind of "golden age" of Russian statehood. A time of the real embodiment of the dream of a peaceful life, equality, justice, and a cloudless future.

However, neither Stalin nor his successors understood that a planned economy, according to Marx, is categorically incapable of competing with a market economy for any significant length of time for a simple reason. It is only capable of quantitative, but in no way qualitative, development. It can only be 'catching up,' or for a short time 'leading' in some already known industry (particularly in rocket engineering and the nuclear industry-unfortunately, the list ends there). But it is categorically incapable of independently generating new ideas, technologies, and industries that introduce something revolutionary or unprecedented into practice. It is a perfect stamping machine, Henry Ford's assembly line. It does not have access to phylogenesis. And the market economy does. Since private initiative, backed by private property, creates the 'founder effect,' well known in biology and culture, including in economics.

The only exceptions to this rule were the force majeure circumstances of the pre-war and post-war periods, which Stalin managed successfully.

His inept successors played around with manipulations to such an extent that they drove the last nail into the coffin of their own state. Therefore, what people in Russia today take for the USSR was in a way a mirage, allowed to become a reality for a short time. That is why nostalgia for the USSR and dreams of its revival today are akin to visions of Eden. They are absurd for another reason as well: a hundred years ago, the standard of living of peoples, both in the USSR and in the West, was quite comparable, i.e., to some extent, people were equally impoverished 'here' and 'there.' Today, the peoples not only of Europe but of the vast majority of countries in the world live in ways that their grandparents could not have dreamed of even in their wildest dreams. Countries in Asia and Africa, in particular, show a stark contrast with the past. How did this happen? Through the introduction of private property into their economies, which helped them taste life and understand the difference between poverty and prosperity. Therefore, the revival of the USSR and the renunciation of private property would mean a return to... equality in poverty. It is unlikely that not only the younger generation of Russians, but even the generation that remembers its heyday, would agree to this.

Summary

However, the haste of the elites in the process of burying Stalinism was explained not so much by the bruised psychology of ambitious individuals as by the disappointment in evolution. It became evident that socialism, whether agrarian or industrial, does not promote progress for the same reason as primitive communism. Neither the first, nor the second, nor the third are capable of stimulating the kind of dynamic cultural and technological development of humanity that the Cosmos requires. But if communism and agrarian socialism were natural stages in the "maturation" of *Homo sapiens*, then the Marxist utopia represents an anomaly in its development doomed to sterility. This raises the question: why did evolution experiment with the peoples of the USSR so ruthlessly and inhumanely? As has

already been said, it is both blind and perceptive at the same time. Satisfying its curiosity, it tests in practice any speculations that occur to collective humanity. However, the mystifications of Marxism turned out to be too catastrophic for it. According to our calculations, from 1917 to 1989, up to 111 million people worldwide fell victim to provocateur No. 1. According to other estimates, "...in the 20th century, by the direct order of convinced Marxists acting in the name of their idol, more than 150 million people were killed" [6]. But the harvest of victims did not end there. It continued within the borders of Russia itself.

PART III. THE PRESENT

I. RUSSIA AND LIBERALISM

Claiming the role of a new, industrial god, Marx completely distorted the evolution of humanity not only by presenting the distant, impoverished yet happy communist past as a near future shining with unimaginable wealth. But that is not enough, and he also falsified the era of civilization by presenting socialism as the future 'anteroom' of communism. In reality, all authoritarian civilizations, from the times of ancient Egypt and Sumer to the USSR and modern Russia, belong to the same circle-the socialist one. They are all united by one fundamental characteristic-*inequality*. Depending on space and time, it played a fundamental role either in one or another aspect of state organization-power, law, economy, etc. And thus it gave rise to various forms of socialism: agrarian (Eastern countries), oligarchic (Republican Rome, post-feudal Europe, including modern China), dictatorial (Imperial Rome), feudal (Medieval Europe), Marxist (with an elite from the party bureaucracy). Accordingly, empires were called those civilizations within this sphere that, for one reason or another, managed for a time to turn nearby or distant peoples into their colonies.

Moreover, Marx had an extremely superficial understanding, in particular, of such a key phenomenon for world civilization as ancient democracy. Which took the first step toward becoming a civilization in which complete *equality* in political, social and economic rights of

all citizens of the polis was established. In this regard, the question is appropriate: what suddenly gave rise to this phenomenon? How was the emergence of such an obvious anomaly possible against the standard socialist background? In biology, the phenomenon of preadaptation is well known. It produces, in one species or another, vital but currently useless mechanisms or organs, which turn out to be advantageous... in the future. It was precisely preadaptation that played a decisive role in the world of culture as well, giving rise to ancient democracy-a sharp contrast to the world of socialism. However, in those times and in that environment, it had no chance to develop into a full-fledged direct democracy as understood today. Nevertheless, it proved to be a great preadaptor, passing some of its cultural heritage to Rome.

The latter sought to emulate the tradition of Athens. But its elite (the patricians) resisted losing their privileges and property restrictions. In doing so, the patricians contributed to the birth of the first oligarchic republic-a civilization with elected power but preserving *inequality* in social and legal relations, as well as full freedom of any kind of property. This 'recognition' of property rights was readily embraced by Early Modern Europe-the cultural heir of Greece and Rome. All the more so because both its secular and spiritual authorities became full participants in monetary transactions. Moreover, they became so active in this regard that the attitude toward property became the primary reason for the split of Christianity into Catholicism and Protestantism. Subsequently, the desire for the free circulation of property fueled bourgeois revolutions in the Netherlands, England, and France. As a result, monarchies were either abolished in most European countries or transformed into constitutional monarchies. Thus, a third pillar of the vertical power structure-the market-type economy-was added to the two pillars of its civilizations.

Today, Marxists mistakenly call regimes that rely on these three pillars capitalism. However, the latter only pertains to a type of economic management and has nothing to do with political,

ideological or other institutions. A term that encompasses the full functioning of the state is more logically defined as 'liberalism.' At the same time, strictly speaking, liberalism represents an intermediate state between democracy and socialism. It differs from classical socialism in one, but crucial, aspect: its reliance on private property and on representatives of its elite, its alpha-male. The latter (entrepreneur-businessman) not only fully merged into the old guard of the agrarian civilization elite but also gradually pushes it out of power. And it is precisely this circumstance that allows *liberalism to be considered a subtype of classical socialism*. For it lives by the laws of social Darwinism in the same way, that is, guided by the principles of natural selection and intraspecific competition. However, in a noticeably softened form. This is because a businessman's power is limited by the market. And for the latter, production without sales is pure nonsense. It is vital for a businessman that what he produces is actively consumed. Therefore, the more buyers there are and the wealthier they are, the more bonuses the businessman earns. In this way, whether willingly or unwillingly, he contributes to improving the lives of the masses of buyers, who represent the people.

With the collapse of the USSR, Russia also entered an era of liberalism, though not so much civilized as barbaric. And Marxism is also to blame for this. The reason being that Russian liberalism is just as artificial a construct as Marxist socialism. Russian business has no own roots or history. It was born, once again in the spirit of the "Communist Manifesto": take from society what was created by the whole society and divide it among those who are bolder than others. And its "parents" were some from the Komsomol, others from the criminal gangs. It is unfamiliar with concepts and principles that have been developed in the West over centuries and are recognized as effective, even though some entrepreneurs try to bypass them. In Russia, there are no standards of entrepreneurial behavior at all. Young wolves of the Russian market live by the laws of the jungle: "*homo homini lupus est*" (man is a wolf to man). Hence the colossal gap in

income that suddenly emerged between the business elite and the people, replacing the previous approximate material equality between the party elite and the masses. The latter, of course, perceive the abruptly arising chasm as blatant injustice, made all the more outrageous by the fact that the business elite itself has nothing whatsoever to do with the creation of the property it has successfully "carved up" for its own benefit.

It is largely because of this injustice that most Russians live with blinders on, seeing only the grim aspects of liberalism. And few people realize that 99.9% of everything that surrounds them day by day is owed to liberalism. All the benefits of modern material existence for a Russian have come to him from the West. Patriots, who are the loudest when talking about Russia as the future of the world, should look around and think about what their country would become if everything introduced from abroad suddenly disappeared. But they do not do this, albeit subconsciously. Their intuition tells them that in such a case, Russia would turn into a bear's den in the literal sense of the word: a world of village huts and bast shoes with rags. After all, not only high technology, the internet, and other achievements of the modern world, but also all areas of classical culture, from writing and literature to the arts and sciences, are borrowings from the West.

It is impossible to point to a single idea that was born and 'stood on its own feet' in Russia and later became the property of all humanity. Of course, Russia has shown that in practically all of its cultural borrowings, it reached the same level of development as the originals. And sometimes even surpassed them, as can especially be seen in the example of weaponry, which has always been advanced since the Soviet era. Nevertheless, historically it has always been second in time. But... not because the Russian people are incapable of creativity, but because their social and governmental institutions in the past and even today, have not allowed their talents to manifest. These talents, by the way, are equally inherent in all peoples without exception. Unfortunately for patriots who place their nation and country above all others, this is an unacceptable reality for them. One they

categorically refuse to accept. Therefore, the only thing that was indisputably unique in the USSR was the people's enthusiasm. But even that lasted only a few decades.

However, Russia is not alone in its role as a copier of Western technologies based on private property. In fact, all the colossal technological progress achieved by the world as a whole (including Japan, South Korea and China) owes its existence to the creative and economic initiatives of Western liberalism. Now, having suffered defeat in its bet on a planned economy, Russia is making strenuous efforts to ignore its absolute dependence on it as a raw materials appendage. And it is desperately butting heads with the West, trying to prove to itself and others that the future belongs to it. What remains unclear, however, is in what form: modern or Soviet? But what, in reality, has happened in Russia since the collapse of the USSR, apart from the chasm of income that suddenly opened up between the new elite and the people? A lot-both visibly and behind a facade.

Among the obvious ones: national patriotism has completely replaced proletarian internationalism. Marx's 'atheistic' doctrine has been replaced by Orthodoxy. The status of the second world power has become almost that of a global outcast. Among the less obvious ones: calls for world revolution have turned into threats to 'bury' the West if it does not agree to recognize the Special Military Operation as legitimate. Furthermore, in order to maintain its influence over the former 'brothers' of the USSR, the Kremlin created the CIS, the EAEU and the CSTO. However, the number of participants has decreased from 16 to 5-8 members. The dreams of the former Comintern for a global proletarian revolution materialized in the creation of the SCO, which, unfortunately, is fraught with many contradictions. By the way, the sharpest are between Russia and China. The latter views the organization as an economic union and a promising market for the sale of its products. Russia, on the other hand, insists on the military component of the SCO, which is supposedly intended to prevent terrorism, extremism, and separatism. Thus, formally, Russia seems to have

broken with its imperial past, but in reality, it has not, and clings tightly to it. Moreover, its citizens have developed a panic fear, first, of the onset of chaos due to possible powerlessness of the Kremlin and second, due to the imagined threat of losing the country's 'sovereignty.' And this fear paralyzes them.

However, some Russian patriots rejoice in what they believe to be Russia's role in transforming the world from unipolar to multipolar. They are flattering themselves. The world is becoming multipolar as a result of the natural course of evolution. On the one hand, over the past century or two, humanity, as if having fallen into a lethargic sleep for 4–5 millennia, has suddenly 'awakened' and come into motion comparable to the tectonics of the Earth's plates. And the driving force behind its activation was precisely those bourgeois revolutions that freed private property from the heavy chains of Prometheus. The USSR also contributed to turning the world from unipolar to multipolar. But its influence on this process is incomparable to the role of the West. On the other hand, the USSR collapsed because none of the 'younger brothers' of the hegemon nation liked being vassals of the Kremlin. Nowadays, this chaotic process of democratizing relations is happening among all the peoples and states of the world.. Nowadays, this chaotic process of democratizing relations is taking place among all the peoples and states of the world. Especially since the indisputable world leader-the USA-does not particularly abuse its authority. They also have growing internal problems. In particular, with the rise to power of the eccentric D. Trump, chaos has sharply increased not only in the domestic but also in the foreign policy of the United States. (It seems that a state suffers when not only a cook, but also a hardened oligarch ends up at its head).

Summary

So, now we have almost all the data needed to understand how classical (agrarian) socialism differs from Marxist (industrial) and liberal (monetary) socialism. Classical socialism emerged as the offspring of two 'forces'-power and cunning. Power was embodied by the despotism of secular authority, while cunning was embodied

by the tyranny of spiritual authority. Understanding that property was the object of desire for the vast majority of people, both branches of authority, fearing the loss of their absolute dominance over society, suppressed the activities of individuals who embodied the power of money by all available means. This blockade was only broken by the bourgeois revolutions in Europe, thanks to the Greco-Roman legacy-the recognition of private property as one of the most effective drivers of material progress. Thus, the businessman became the third pillar of the pyramid of inequality-liberal socialism. Marxism, pretending to call humanity to take the next step forward-to level the pyramid with the ground and eliminate inequality as such-in reality took a huge step backward. Russian Marxists did not understand this. But the idea of: a) combining secular and spiritual dictatorship in one person; b) establishing their hegemony over the entire world, seemed extremely attractive to them. To realize their dream, they, first of all, carried out a counter-revolutionary (October 1917) coup, which blocked the path of the February Revolution of the same year. Secondly, they declared jihad against private property as allegedly the enemy of the proletariat and progress.

Unfortunately and at the same time, fortunately (history can be exceptionally paradoxical), among the "fighters for the people's cause" there was a unique individual who truly believed in Marxism. Instilling his faith and enthusiasm in a people suddenly freed from Romanov serfdom, he accomplished the impossible. But the Marxist elite, disagreeing with the diminishment of their power, immediately reclaimed it with the leader's departure. And instantly, everything fell back into place-the USSR collapsed. Yet, in doing so, Russia not so much lost an entire century as was pushed even further and deeper into the past. Of course, not in terms of technology, which it still actively uses, borrowing from the West. It delves into the archaism of the Middle Ages in terms of national mentality. And perhaps Uvarov's 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality' will soon return to the country as the dominant force in the collective consciousness of the nation. In any case, the trend toward such a development of events is more than evident. The colossal potential of the people once

again becomes a prisoner of the remnants of the past. The world is moving forward, Russia is moving backward. This is the result of the experiment conducted by the Marxists on their own country. Which, incidentally, serves as yet another proof of the principle according to which it is not so much being that determines consciousness as, on the contrary, *consciousness that determines being*.

From this, it follows that in the last century, no natural disaster or external enemy has caused more harm to Russia and the world than the teachings of Marx.

The problem, however, is that liberalism, which initiated a gigantic intellectual and technological surge for humanity, does not solve the problem silently posed to it by Nature. Not only because no one is aware of it, including Elon Musk, who does not grasp the deeper meaning of space colonization. But, above all, because liberalism not only preserved but also multiplied the pillars of inequality, adding a third pillar-the financial - to the two existing ones, secular and ideological verticals of power, i.e., the unlimited freedom of private property. And as history shows, any unlimited power tends to degenerate. Liberalism has taken a serious step towards moving away from classical socialism, but it is clearly insufficient. At the same time, the ongoing confrontation between Russia and the West represents a particular expression of a more general and broad front of disagreements that shake global civilization and hinder the dynamics of its development. These disagreements are primarily caused by two factors: *conservative collective consciousness* and *traditions of inequality*, adhered to by the 'founding fathers' of both classical and liberal socialism. They could play the role of gravediggers of global civilization if humanity does not find a worthy alternative to them.

PART IV. THE MENTALITY OF SOCIALISM

I. BELIEFS

The intellectual potential of a person in the era of primitive communism was by no means inferior

to that of a modern human and in some respects, it may have even surpassed it. However, the absolute ignorance of that era made them extremely naive in everything that went beyond routine existence. And when individuals with the psyche of an alpha male and heightened vanity appeared within their community, they easily found an audience for displaying their inflated ego (similar to modern actors or politicians). But since they also did not excel in education, unlike their peers, they could attract the attention of their fellow tribesmen only by appealing to their imagination and by instilling in them their exceptional ability to communicate with spirits. And to cement the authority they gained in this cunning way, they began to call themselves magicians, shamans, sorcerers, and so on. Thus, the first tiny step was taken toward violating universal equality. For a long time, the claims of the ambitious remained fruitless, and their power over others was weak. For every hunter-gatherer was skilled in their trade, relatively independent of the weather, and not reliant on anyone's services. But ultimately, wizards were partly helped by the fact that over the millennia, *Homo sapiens* had developed long-term memory and collective consciousness.

Everything changed when the wandering hunter turned into a farmer, tied to his (communal) plot of land-his new provider. That was when humans felt the heavy hand of the whims of weather. Which the wizards immediately took advantage of: they invented that there is a hierarchy among spirits and that the higher spirits are called gods, who, in fact, command the forces of nature. It goes without saying that if people did not want to die of hunger due to the fury of natural disasters, they had to unquestioningly obey their commanders-the gods. And the magicians, supposedly on close terms with the spirits, now took on the role of intermediaries between their surroundings and the gods. On the condition that from now on they would be considered not ordinary tribesmen, but powerful priests, heralds of the will of the gods. Their childishly naive surroundings had no choice but to accept the new rules of the game. Thus, the farmer, remaining deeply ignorant, found himself completely

dependent on the self-serving inventions of equally ignorant but extremely ambitious aspirants. This was further facilitated by the development of yet another crucial factor-the social instinct, in addition to long-term memory and collective consciousness.

Previously weakly expressed in small populations that included a certain number of family groups, it intensified as the number of these groups grew. Upon reaching a certain critical size, the classic social instinct reached a level of extraordinary strength (*eusocial*-from Greek: εὖ - fully, well + sociality). It is extremely rare in nature, as it is necessary to maintain cohesion in abnormally large, multi-thousand communities. Therefore, prior to the emergence of humans, it was observed only in a few insect species-ants, termites, and bees. However, with the appearance of humans, eusociality also began to acquire decisive importance in human communities as agricultural collectives expanded to many thousands of members.

At the same time, if a single instinct was enough for insects to maintain the cohesion of their families, in the human environment it became effective through the mediation of cultural tools. One of the first such tools were fairy tales, born, on the one hand, from children's curiosity (what, how, and why?), and on the other-from the answers to the questions they posed to their ignorant parents. What could these answers have been? Obviously, too often-extremely fantastic, even absurd, from the point of view of a modern person. In turn, some explanatory fairy tales, passed down from generation to generation thanks to the developed long-term memory, became myths. Losing connection with the names of their ancestral authors, they gained the authority of virtual reality. By selecting myths useful to themselves from this ersatz reality, and creating new tales-now for adults-the cunning priests radically transformed the collective consciousness of the farmer, which had been dwelling in darkness.

It did not become more enlightened; it merely replaced one collection of delusions with another. But in the end, humans finally recognized the

power over themselves of certain mystical celestial forces-gods-and their earthly representatives-the priests (who had invented these gods). To make their authority over society indisputable and enduring, these priests staked out a kind of gold-bearing territory: among other things, they invented the institution of religion. Thus, they began to fight for their privileges not individually, but collectively, that is, more successfully. And evolution readily assisted them in their endeavors. For there were no other, more effective ways to engage in existence within communities of thousands yet. By placing themselves above their surroundings, the *priests altered the collective consciousness of humanity-giving rise to the chimera of religion, along with inequality in human society.*

To strengthen control over the consciousness of their fellow tribesmen, they made a third invention: they devised the concept of sacredness as something lofty, close to the gods and endowed with 'holiness.' By instilling in the childishly naive farmer the idea of his supposed chosenness from above, they zombified his mind. But ideological power alone was not enough for those who had tasted its material aspect. Therefore, the priests concerned themselves with turning spiritual power into material power, laying the first stone in the foundation of the *global bureaucracy-the pyramid of hierarchy.* Over time, the burden of this pyramid, resting on the shoulders of the common person, grew so great that life began to seem like hell. Yet now, the only support left for them was God (gods), who remained their hope for justice and their protection in the face of hardships born of inequality. On earth, there was no place for hope, and they had no choice but to turn their gaze to the heavens. Moreover, even a small acknowledgment of the reality of God made life somewhat easier: the "creator," it seemed, provided a simple and easy explanation for everything. But the louder and more grandly preachers spoke of the greatness of their gods and the sanctity of their beliefs, the more examples and evidence of their deceit accumulated.

The mountains of utter stupidity, unrestrained by any boundaries of logic and rationality, that have accumulated to this day, are immense. Yet, as a

tacit acknowledgment that God (or gods) is not omnipotent after all, the concept of morality simultaneously took shape. It did not arise as criticism or protest, but as drops of common sense among the few who thought not only of themselves and believed that the duty of a conscientious person consists in showing care for their fellow beings. Nevertheless, their rare voices, crying out in the wilderness, were drowned out by the trumpeting voice from the heavens, depriving humans of the opportunity to manage their own affairs. Therefore, religious faith remains a self-deception, concealing the truth about one's own weakness, born of ignorance. This weakness manifests in: 1-immorality, 2-ignorance, 3-rigidity, 4-ossification.

- The opinion that the Bible is a beacon of morality is nothing more than propaganda. It serves as a vivid illustration of all imaginable and unimaginable vices that humanity displayed during the era of building the first civilizations. Almost all the initial chapters of the book-Genesis and Exodus-are filled with examples of the low starting point from which our journey toward morality began. This path was marked by deceit and betrayal, duplicity and treachery of its numerous characters – the descendants of Abraham. But such were the morals of virtually all humanity at a time when it was just beginning to adapt to the harsh rules of civilization, based on the principles of natural selection. Ethics almost took a central place in the sermons of Christ, which received support from Greek philosophy. But his later followers did everything possible to distort his teachings, turning it into a religious dogma. This was made easier by the fact that Christ remained a firm adherent of the principle of inequality: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's,' which assigned humans the role of humble petitioners for various blessings from above.

The concepts of 'morality' and 'Islam' are in such strange relations that it is sometimes difficult to understand how much they are compatible. If Islam acknowledges that a woman is a secondary

being, having neither her own rights nor her personal space, then what morality can there be in principle? Especially since, concerning men, Islam represents a military code for all aspects of life, and the world appears to it as a large barracks into which all humanity must be driven. Buddhism for a long time remained a teaching truly devoted to the individual. But the eusocial instinct, over centuries reshaping the consciousness of its followers, has turned their beliefs into a kind of hypocrisy. On one hand, Buddhism acquired a church, rituals and other attributes of a classical religion. On the other hand, each Buddhist is focused on their own self, ignoring the external world and taking no interest in its development. This cannot be called immoral, but it is difficult to deem acceptable. The immorality of Marxism was discussed above. And only the limited scope of this article prevents complementing the enormous register of its moral transgressions.

- The concept of reason in the Bible is associated with wisdom and Solomon is recognized as the ideal wise man. However, as a result of his inept rule, the previously unified kingdom of Israel split into Israel and Judah. The Church, a bureaucratic institution of Christianity, made every effort to ensure that believers would only believe blindly, without thinking independently. Such a "crime" was considered heresy and was severely punished. Since the Quran is, in fact, a military code in a civil guise, believers are not officially prohibited from thinking. They are simply not given room for reflection or doubt. All religions in the world, including Marxism, exhibit the same extremely cautious, and sometimes hostile, attitude towards "free thought." It is caused by a common reason-fear of free thought, fear of exposing the instability and falsehood, whether conscious or due to ignorance, of all religions. I. Kant-one of the very few believers-had the courage to admit that: "...on the *fear* of God's existence and the afterlife... on these two symbols of faith," all religion rests. Moreover, he agreed that this extremely primitive understanding of it can "be reached even by ordinary reason, without calling philosophers to help!" [7].
- Examples of cruelty toward all "those who are not like us" abound in Deuteronomy and the Book of Joshua. But were they some kind of exception in biblical times? Not at all. Against the backdrop of the ferocity of Assyrian kings and Aztec priests, they seemed like routine reprisals sanctioned by the gods. For a millennium and a half of the existence of the Christian Church, it has not only tarnished its name with the behavior of many of its leaders, but has also managed to drench the blood of heretics and pagans, non-believers and coreligionists of all continents of the world. Moreover, Christians, without false modesty, call their god the savior of mankind?! From what sin, in the name of what and whom exactly did he save in reality? In response, as a rule, there are waterfalls of words to try to chatter, or wash away this blood of shame. Islam prides itself on its peacefulness. Muslims tell these tales either to those who do not know well the bloody history of the conquests of Islam or do not follow the modern actions of its active fanatics. But Marxism has outstripped everyone in this respect. In a single century, he managed to reap a harvest of sacrifices that was at least not inferior, and probably even surpassed, to the harvests of Christianity and Islam for all the centuries of their labors in this field. All this is thanks to the fact that he supplemented the unconscious natural selection of religions with a conscious natural selection supported by his "theoretical" justification.
- Ideologies are an evolutionary project designed to strengthen the unity of large and very large human groups by brainwashing the collective consciousness of their members through the eusocial instinct. But nothing more than that. For some time, religions indeed played the role of catalysts in uniting large human communities. Sometimes they even served as symbols of preserving the national identity of particular peoples. But now these functions are successfully carried out by culture and traditions, cleansed of religious dogmas. In our time, the latter have turned into walls that hinder the mental unity

of humanity as a whole. Since their ideal is inequality-their greatest common vice. It manifests with varying intensity, in different forms, in various spheres of social existence, but inevitably. Firstly, because any ideal, including the ideal of inequality, contains within it the greatest slyness. As soon as it is achieved, even the slightest movement automatically ceases and all stimulus for further development disappears. It follows that achieving an ideal in the realm of ideology is a mirage, or a utopia. Secondly, any ideology inevitably develops its antithesis, because inequality itself generates an irresolvable contradiction between its "upper" and "lower" levels. Thirdly, conflicts between ideologies are inevitable, driven by the animalistic principle of natural selection, which leads to a global division of humanity at the level of worldview.

II. PATRIOTISM

The concept of 'patriotism' seems like the most natural feeling that unites people not only genetically (as an instinctive drive) but also culturally (through language, customs, and mentality). Yet it is also highly speculative. One example: during World War II, both Germans and Russians felt themselves to be patriots fighting for a just cause. The question arises: what is the criterion that indicates whose patriotism in this case was genuine and whose was false? Apparently, the answer must be sought in the fact that it consists of two parts. Its instinctive component has roots in the *protective* reaction of any social animal toward its habitat. Here, the positive emphasis is undoubtedly on defense as an act of justice, as opposed to aggression-the seizure of what does not belong to you. As for the cultural aspect of patriotism, the situation becomes more complicated. When humans transitioned from hunting and gathering to agriculture and animal husbandry, owning a certain territory became not so much a purpose as a synonym for life. Therefore, natural selection for them turned into a struggle for territory. But... in this struggle, the question of defense or attack arose again. A common farmer, having a certain plot, was interested in expanding it only under force

majeure circumstances. Manual cultivation of land requires significant effort, limiting the owner's ambitions.

A completely different attitude towards land ownership began to emerge with the growth of agricultural settlements and the onset of competition for territories. War became a permanent backdrop of human existence. The most fortunate alpha males with the warrior psychotype, either defenders of their tribesmen's lands or conquerors of neighboring lands, became the new elite, in addition to the priestly elite. Over time, they developed a particular taste for aggression, since their success on the battlefield not only strengthened their power over their tribesmen but also gave them authority over other peoples and their lands. Thus, although the priests were the first to begin building the hierarchy pyramid called socialism, the key role in this process was played by alpha males with the warrior psychotype. But the priests were also interested in the success of the latter, as it brought them dividends too, expanding the influence of their gods on neighboring peoples. So, the two types of elites-the warrior and the priestly-merged to become the 'upper class,' leaving their tribesmen with the status of the 'lower class' or common people.

Although wars quite effectively stimulated the creation of a strong vertical power structure, the eusocial instinct also contributed to the process of the masses recognizing the construction of their states as a common good. The concept of patriotism served as an intermediary in cultivating this feeling in them. It is impossible to define patriotism without clarifying the concepts of "nation" and "people." The literature dedicated to their interpretation is vast, but it fails to identify the main difference between the terms under discussion. Meanwhile, the difference is evident. Formally, if the people represent, so to speak, the "lower strata," then the nation is a synthesis of the "lower strata" with the elite-the "upper strata." Substantively, the goals of the people and the elite not only often differed, but were sometimes radically opposed. First and foremost, this difference manifested in their

approach to land. As a result of the predatory wars initiated by the elites, their peasant populations received only "the holes in the bagel." Moreover, it was they who served as cannon fodder in the adventures of their elites. Thus, historically, it turned out that if the people are a symbol of peace and tradition, the elite represents aggression and dynamism. But to mask this obvious conflict of interest, the elites invented the concept of "patriotism," supposedly equally close to both the people and the elite. And the instinct of eusociality greatly contributed to the development of this ambiguous feeling among the people. The specifics of the difference between the people and the elite are particularly evident in the example of Russia.

Up until the War of 1812, its elite was completely uninterested in the interests or feelings of the people, who remained for them 'working cattle,' cannon fodder and merchandise. Only Napoleon's invasion forced the elite to remember their provider in order to deal with the aggressor. The situation changed somewhat with the October Revolution, when the Marxist elite was forced to rely on the people and hear their voice in order to seize power from the old elite. And since the number of new contenders for power significantly decreased during the Civil War, the new elite had to embrace ambitious individuals from the people. However, these individuals very soon forgot their past and quickly adopted the customs of their former masters. Patriotism thus took on new colors, but in the old palette-with a clear dominance of the color of violence and blood.

To inspire the Soviet people to build a new future, it was necessary to instill in them pride in their past. And that past was bleak and humiliating for their fathers and grandfathers. Therefore, Stalin-a Marxist monarch on the Kremlin throne-set about rewriting history in the spirit of M. Lomonosov's propaganda. 'The First Russian University' claimed, in particular, that statehood was brought to Rus not by the Scandinavian Rurik with his retinue. For 'the progenitor of the Slavic people' was Noah's grandson Mosoch. That the Slavs appeared 'many centuries before the destruction of Troy,' were given writing by Alexander the Great and later fought with the Roman Empire.

Why did Lomonosov dispute the obvious? By his own admission, he wanted to demonstrate 'the greatness and antiquity of the Russian people, in NO WAY inferior to Greek and Roman heroes.' Why did Stalin decide to repeat his experiment? For the same best intentions, as he believed. But one state-sanctioned propaganda provokes the birth of many other historical myths. These began to multiply in the USSR at an extraordinary speed. It is not surprising, in this regard, that M. Thatcher, commenting on the repeated rewriting of her country's history by Russian specialists, wondered: "Which past is now fashionable in Russia?" Today, as we see, it is being adjusted to the needs of the special military operation.

This propaganda would not have had such disastrous consequences if Stalin had not singled out the Russian people among all the peoples of the USSR. Before the War, the concept of the "Soviet person" was not divided; it was holistic, meaning all the peoples of the Soviet country were considered equal. This, incidentally, also helped the country to withstand hardships. After the War, the Russian people developed a sense of their own exceptionalism. They began to see themselves as the main victors, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, as pioneers into a bright future. A former serf suddenly imagined himself as the 'older brother,' standing above the 'brothers' from allied, autonomous, and other republics. And he became intoxicated with success-a sense of patriotism based on exaggerating his own merits at the expense of belittling the merits of other peoples. For the first time, this affected not only the elite but the entire people, the entire nation. Patriotism 'swelled' to the status of nationalism. But there is nothing new in this either: many nations have been infected by the disease of such hypertrophied self-esteem. Whereas, in reality, all peoples and nations without exception possess intellectual and creative abilities equally.

Two examples that support what has been said. The first one-the ancient Greeks discovered the most important key for the development of humanity, giving rise to almost all 'high' domains of cultural creativity: philosophy and science, art, sports, etc. Without the Hellenes, the modern

world would not exist. In terms of global cultural leadership, no modern nation compares to them. But how do their direct descendants-modern Greeks-stand out on the global stage? Not in any remarkable way. Has their genetics changed? Not at all, it has remained the same. The circumstances have changed. The second example is related to the Jewish nation, whose diaspora covers almost the entire human oikumene. But nowhere and at no time have they stood out from their surroundings by demonstrating their creative potential. The only exception for them has been the West and even then only in the last 2-3 centuries. Thanks to what? Thanks to the specific intellectual and economic atmosphere inherent in the West.

Therefore, when today someone tries to prove that their race or nation, their faith or culture is superior to all others, they are either engaging in destructive self-deception (like the Germans hypnotized by A. Hitler) or making a fool of themselves. L. Tolstoy understood this well, asserting that patriotic pride is dangerous because its aggression divides nations [8]. The reality of this warning was confirmed in practice during the existence of the USSR. There, following the rise of narrow-minded patriotism among the Russian people, the awareness of the need to preserve their own identity also arose among their "younger brothers." This inevitably clashed with the requirement to remain vassals of the Kremlin. As a result, centrifugal forces emerged and rapidly grew, beginning to destroy the walls of the Union's unity from within. And, as we can see, they succeeded, confirming the writer's fears.

Summary

The concepts of "faith" and "patriotism" are not only extraordinarily multifaceted. They are also very defeated by evolution. In particular, in the past, at the stage of the formation of civilizations, they were a *blessing*. They contributed to the strengthening of internal consolidation in the growing human collectives. But they were also unable to take the next step - to merge humanity into a single family. From unifiers of individuals in limited communities, they have become dissociators of the world community as a whole. Meanwhile, the separation of the world, beliefs

and patriotism strengthen intraspecific natural selection and mental disagreements in it. And this not only does not contribute to our further development, but threatens our very existence. Therefore, in fact, they have exhausted themselves and... have become *evil*. Faith and patriotism have outgrown the age of youth, dressed in short pants of the herd instinct of eusociality. Now they will become a matter of reason and conscience of every independently thinking citizen of our planet.

Since evolution expects from us maturation-both mental and moral. This means that humanity should not only rely on bare instincts of self-preservation, but combine them with reason. For one does not exclude the other; they complement each other. However, returning to the past of traditions of ideological confrontation and primitive patriotism should in no way be forced. Let us repeat: violence, even when applied with the best intentions, only generates more violence. And this process of one violence transitioning into another is endless... unless it is stopped. Foolishness can only be ended with the help of reason, given to humanity for survival through development, not for self-destruction. But socialism either does not use reason at all or uses it wrongly, even to its own detriment.

III. CONCLUSION

The reader may reproach the author for attempting to create a new utopia-a future without ideologies, without patriotism indistinguishable from nationalism, without the state and private property, etc. Such a reproach is unfounded, as it is obvious that, on the one hand, the state and private property are the cornerstones of any highly developed civilization. On the other hand, evolution never rests on its achievements. And we-humanity-are the product of its tireless activity. At present, Homo sapiens is the pinnacle of the phylogenetic pyramid of Earth's organic life. Physiologically and intellectually, he has reached the limits of his natural development. But evolution does not consider its task complete and rest. Its ultimate goal regarding us is to prepare us for the active role of creator-demigod of the Cosmos.

But once it has fulfilled its function in the world of organic life, it moves on to the stage of cultural evolution. From now on, phylogeny must 'grow' the tree of evolution consisting of objects and phenomena generated no longer by organic life, but by human reason and hands. In other words, the time has come to switch from *natural* evolution to *cultural* evolution, and from natural selection to cultural selection. However, concepts such as justice, morality, dignity, etc., do not directly pertain to its creative sphere, since each of us is no more than one among the great multitude of thinking atoms of Nature. Therefore, it leaves this concern about us... to ourselves, endowing us with reason and thus intervening in our affairs only indirectly! Hoping that we will manage this gift wisely: relying on no mystical forces and solving the problems of mutual coexistence of all the people on our planet for the common good. When modern elites speculate with phantoms of inequality of any kind, concocted out of their unscrupulous fingers, the result is what we have today. And, more importantly, what has no future. The chance of its emergence can appear only on the condition of recognizing the principle of universal equality as basic or fundamental in the human community. The process of its breakdown took several millennia. Its restoration on a fundamentally new level cannot take that long. Nowadays, Nature may grant us only a few years to make serious decisions.

However, taking into account that over the course of many generations humanity has not only become accustomed to inequality but also recognized it as fundamental to world civilization, the question arises: is this unusual state of global equality achievable in principle? The answer: it is achievable... provided that the principles of ancient democracy are revived and further developed, taking into account the experience of past centuries and based on the high technologies of the modern age. For only democracy (and not its false imitations) possesses decisive superiority compared to all other forms of civilization. It guarantees continuous development (phylogenesis) by stimulating constant internal contradictions, resolving them fundamentally

without bloodshed, using only peaceful means. Thus, only *democracy* as a political and economic system and *humanism* as a worldview are capable of translating the conflicts of animal natural selection into the framework of civilized sporting competition.

We are aware that reversing a trend that has been forming over centuries and millennia is incredibly difficult. There will be desperate resistance to this not only from interested individuals, groups and classes, but even from entire states. Yet there is no other path toward the future except to transform *Homo sapiens* (the potentially rational human) into *Homo cogitans* (the actively thinking human). More precisely, there is an alternative, but it is a choice between becoming *Formica hominis* (the ant-like human) or turning into the ashes of the Great Crematorium. A mind incapable of understanding its purpose is not worthy of respect and does not deserve the right to exist.

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Behind the Suspense: “Knowledge” as “Prey” in the Film Possession

Shuyi Liu

ABSTRACT

The film *Possession* employs detective narrative techniques to build a suspenseful, symbol-rich structure, intertwining the plot with the pursuit of “knowledge” and transforming the viewing experience into a metaphor for the quest for understanding. This paper analyzes the construction of suspense and the deeper implications of “knowledge” as “prey” in *Possession* from three perspectives. First, it analyzes the film’s detective techniques and their role in uncovering truth. Second, it explores how unsent letters ignite the audience’s interpretive desire. Lastly, it examines unresolved mysteries, emphasizing philosophical reflections on “knowledge” and theory. These three dimensions are interrelated, collectively emphasizing the pivotal role of “knowledge” exploration in promoting female empowerment and fostering deeper theoretical reflections.

Keywords: knowledge; suspense; detective techniques; reading desire; theoretical reflection.

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The film Possession employs detective narrative techniques to build a suspenseful, symbol-rich structure, intertwining the plot with the pursuit of “knowledge” and transforming the viewing experience into a metaphor for the quest for understanding. This paper analyzes the construction of suspense and the deeper implications of “knowledge” as “prey” in Possession from three perspectives. First, it analyzes the film’s detective techniques and their role in uncovering truth. Second, it explores how unsent letters ignite the audience’s interpretive desire. Lastly, it examines unresolved mysteries, emphasizing philosophical reflections on “knowledge” and theory. These three dimensions are interrelated, collectively emphasizing the pivotal role of “knowledge” exploration in promoting female empowerment and fostering deeper theoretical reflections.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 19th-century Britain, advancements in science, culture, and industry fostered a knowledge-driven society (Allitt 2002), shaping future generations’ reverence for intellectual growth. This focus on “knowledge” is evident in the literature and art of the time, underscoring its enduring cultural and intellectual legacy. After World War II, the pursuit of “knowledge” emerged as a central theme in various novels and their film adaptations, including *Howards End* (1992), *An Education* (2009), and *The Imitation Game* (2014). These works explore the profound impact of “knowledge” on both individuals and society, using diverse settings and characters to illustrate its far-reaching influence. Among them, *Possession* (2002), directed by Neil LaBute,

stands out for its portrayal of “knowledge” as a central theme, depicted as “prey” to reflect society’s insatiable thirst for it. Adapted from A.S. Byatt’s Booker Prize-winning novel, the film not only captures the suspenseful plot and the intense atmosphere of 19th-century Victorian society’s pursuit of “knowledge”, but also integrates reflections from 20th-century intellectuals on the subject. It follows Roland Michell, a research assistant who uncovers intimate letters written by Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash, sparking his pursuit of “knowledge” and revealing its transformative impact on both personal lives and history. In doing so, *Possession* highlights the power of “knowledge”, continuing the spirit of 19th-century Britain’s scientific, cultural, and industrial revolutions, which laid the foundations for modern progress.

This study examines how *Possession* creates suspense through its detective techniques and plot structure, using “knowledge” as a metaphor for “prey”. Suspense is a critical element in cinema, as it piques the audience’s curiosity and intensifies their engagement with both the unfolding plot and the fates of the characters (Bordwell et al. 57,71). Building on this, the study further investigates how *Possession* portrays “knowledge” as “prey” in three interconnected aspects: the detective techniques employed, the unsent letters and the desire to read, and the unresolved mysteries that prompt theoretical reflections. These interconnected elements not only sustain the narrative’s suspense but also deepen the film’s broader exploration of “knowledge”, truth, and the intellectual pursuit that drives both the plot and character development.

II. DETECTIVE TECHNIQUES AND THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH

Though titled *Possession: A Romance*, the film delves into the theme of “knowledge” through

detective narrative techniques, portraying academic research as an investigative process. This fusion of “knowledge” and detective fiction adds a layer of complexity, with the search for truth driving the plot forward and each revelation further expanding the “knowledge” framework. At the core of *Possession* lies the pursuit of truth, which is revealed through a carefully crafted blend of historical and contemporary storytelling. This combination of academic inquiry and detective work not only highlights the continuity across eras but also facilitates a dialogue between the past and the present, offering the audience a unique experience in the quest for truth (Todorov 55-65). Tzvetan Todorov, in his analysis, observes that detective stories typically consist of two narrative levels: the crime story and the detective’s story (55-65). Similarly, *Possession* features two intricately woven narrative layers, united through the framework of academic research. This dual-layered structure spans the 19th and 20th centuries, blending historical inquiry with present-day investigation and thereby merging history with reality. In *Possession*, modern scholars Roland and Maud explore Victorian letters to uncover the hidden love story between Ash and LaMotte. The film also shows their emotional bond from the 19th-century perspective. As Roland unravels the mystery, the narrative shifts between timelines, blending Victorian history with 20th-century interpretations. This non-linear structure adds complexity and enriches the viewer’s experience.

In the narrative maze of the film *Possession*, Roland and Maud are not merely academic detectives but also serve as guides for the audience in their exploration of historical truths. As the plot gradually unfolds, the audience is drawn into the detective’s journey, navigating a labyrinth of unknowns and uncovering the complex truths hidden behind the case. Through their emotional connection with the detectives, the audience gains a deeper understanding of the story’s themes and motivations. Roland and Maud, like detectives, piece together Ash and LaMotte’s relationship from the clues in their letters. The letters in the library spark Roland’s curiosity, claiming they will “completely alter the

historical view of Ash as a good husband,” offering new perspectives in Ash’s study. Roland and Maud retrace Ash and LaMotte’s steps to find real-world evidence of their love story.

As their research deepens, Roland and Maud uncover more valuable clues, including letters Ash wrote to his wife, Ellen Ash. Among these clues, Maud finds inspiration in LaMotte’s line “The doll keeps the secret,” leading her to unexpectedly discover all of Ash and LaMotte’s correspondence hidden in a doll, providing crucial evidence for Roland’s study. The collaboration between Maud’s scholarly expertise and Roland’s analytical insight proves instrumental in piecing together the intimate relationship between Ash and LaMotte, highlighting the interplay between intellectual inquiry and intuitive discovery. Together, Maud’s expertise and Roland’s insight complement each other, revealing the intimate relationship between the two 19th-century poets. Through their discoveries, the film gradually uncovers the truth, providing the audience with an experience of cognitive and emotional transformation.

III. THE UNSENT LETTER AND THE DRIVE FOR “READING” DESIRE

In film, suspense is often created by withholding key narrative elements. In *Possession*, the three unsent letters create informational gaps, building suspense and stimulating the audience’s curiosity and “reading” desire.

As critics note, *Possession* is a game of desire between the text and the reader (Shinn 164-183; Bronfen 117-134). It metaphorically explores the self-repression and desires of postwar British female intellectuals, with readers and viewers developing a sensory attachment to the expressions of these desires (Barthes 1975). The first unsent letter is Ash’s secret letter found in the library. Roland discovers these unfinished letters at the start and their gaps spark the audience’s curiosity to fill them in. This interaction deepens audience engagement and mirrors literary critic Wolfgang Iser’s idea that a text’s incompleteness invites the reader’s imagination and interpretation (195). Roland uses the letter to uncover Ash’s secret, symbolizing the

search for meaning. Its unfinished nature encourages multiple interpretations, reflecting postmodern views of texts as dynamic.

The second undelivered letter is one that Alan failed to give to Ash. The camera shows Alan standing before Ash's body, holding a letter meant for him a month earlier. A flashback shows Lamott apologizing to Alan and asking her to deliver a letter to Ash, hinting at secrets and adding suspense. However, Alan did not fulfill Lamott's request and never gave the letter to Ash before his death, eventually placing it in his grave. This intensifies the drama and keeps the audience emotionally engaged. It raises questions about loyalty, secrets and loss, while challenging expectations. The film creates an emotional loop, connecting the audience's curiosity with the characters' motivations and deeper meanings. Catherine Belsey argued that unfulfilled desires in romantic stories maintain their appeal (683). By not revealing the ending, the film creates a space of uncertainty, where viewers are eager to learn more but don't want the story to end, as it would end their desire to engage. In short, the story's conclusion ends their longing (Blanchot 51). Lamott and Ash's relationship highlights the challenges women face in pursuing desires and independence.

The third unsent letter is Ash's verbal instruction. At the film's end, the omniscient narrator takes the audience back to 1865, where Ash meets his daughter and asks her to deliver a message to Lamott. However, she forgets the task while playing with her brother. This plot device cleverly taps into the audience's expectations, driving the narrative forward with a dual effect. First, it heightens the dramatic tension, as the audience wonders about the unspoken message's effect on the plot. Second, it keeps the audience emotionally engaged, evoking sympathy for the unfinished connection between Ash and Lamott. This tension deepens emotional resonance and offers insight into the characters' motivations. The scene also highlights the narrative's clever structure, using flashbacks and suspense to build to a climax. The girl's forgetfulness adds a tragic note and serves as a metaphor for fate's unpredictability and fragile communication. This

suspense enhances the emotional depth and makes the film's conclusion more impactful. The 19th-century story of Lamott and Ash lacks a clear resolution, and this open-ended narrative not only provides an emotional context for the 20th-century relationship between Roland and Maud but also stimulates the reader's ongoing desire for the text, creating a continuous dialogue of mutual engagement between the film and the audience (Mitchell 106). Audience find certainty in the known modern love story, leaving curiosity and uncertainty about the past in suspense. As scholar Maurice Blanchot pointed out, even in "silence," language still "insists" on existing(51). The film intertwines 19th- and 20th-century love stories as a metaphor for textual desire, engaging the audience's senses and emotions. Possession becomes a dialogue between text and history, inviting viewers to navigate the known and unknown while experiencing both "knowledge" and emotion.

IV. UNSOLVED MYSTERIES AND THEORETICAL REFLECTION

The film *Possession* cleverly constructs an ideal academic system, but leaves it as an intriguing mystery. This mystery explores themes like academic possessiveness, research methods, and feminist theory. Novelist Byatt uses irony to reflect on 19th-century views of "knowledge", critiquing the current academic system, with this reflection artfully presented in the film. As Brooks and Kelly note, "reproductive of the past yet accessible to the interventions of the present" (234), clarifying its knowledge mode (95).

The film portrays the debate between American and British scholars over Ash's research, reflecting the academic critique and reflection on possessiveness. For instance, the "Ash Factory" is led by British scholar James Blackadder and American scholar Mortimer Cropper, but their rivalry over Ash's letters leads to a breakdown in their relationship, leaving the future of the Ash Factory uncertain. Through this ironic approach, the film exposes the possessiveness inherent in the Anglo-American academic world of the 1980s. Furthermore, it illustrates the rise of individualism in academic research and how such

a trend obstructs the pursuit of objective truth and “knowledge” sharing. For example, the difficult collaboration between scholars suggests that personal interests often override the collective goal of advancing “knowledge” exploration. In addition, the commercialization of academia is an implicit theme in the novel; scholars’ research can be swayed by external factors like funding, which in turn undermines the purity and objectivity of their work. However, beyond the influence of external pressures, the personal ambitions and pursuit of fame by these two scholars reveal a deeper issue: that is, how individual achievements frequently take precedence over collective interests within the academic world.

The film critiques the Ash Factory’s post-structuralist methods without defining an ideal approach, inviting reflection on academic methodologies. It advocates a blended strategy of traditional and modern methods for nuanced analysis, rather than endorsing a single solution. Roland and Maud embody ideal scholars who challenge 20th-century critical methods, illustrating the film’s implicit support for a balanced academic framework. After discovering Ash’s secret letters, Roland joins Maud, a Lamott specialist, to delve into Ash’s work. Roland, previously aligned with the fragmented post-structuralist methods of the Ash Factory and Maud, employing psychoanalytic criticism, had both prioritized theory over direct textual engagement. This time, they break traditional academic boundaries by integrating their research with the natural environment. Roland reexamines Ash’s poetry, focusing on its linguistic beauty rather than solely seeking references or biographical clues. This shift transforms him into an ideal reader, emphasizing the film’s advocacy for an immersive and integrative approach to literary texts.

In *Possession*, Lamott and Maud represent the emotional journeys of 19th- and 20th-century female intellectuals, respectively. Influenced by feminism, Byatt contrasts Lamott’s independence with Maud’s emotional uncertainty. Specifically, Lamott initially avoids male possessiveness through a same-sex relationship but ultimately

chooses a path of independence. Conversely, Maud, while researching Ash and Lamott’s affair alongside Roland, develops feelings for him yet struggles with her emotions. Moreover, Maud’s pinned-up hair symbolizes her inner uncertainty; as her connection with Roland deepens, she releases her hair, symbolizing her newfound emotional freedom and willingness to embrace an equal, open relationship. Thus, this transformation reflects Byatt’s ideal gender equality.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper examines *Possession* to highlight how suspense is used in the narrative and explores “knowledge” as “prey”. Suspense symbolizes academic inquiry, critiquing contemporary theory’s detachment from reality through Roland and Maud’s investigation of Ash and LaMotte, engaging the audience’s quest for knowledge. This enhances the story’s appeal and deepens the audience’s understanding and respect for the academic research process. Furthermore, The film contrasts 19th- and 20th-century academic environments, revealing the evolving manifestations of the drive for “knowledge” within cultural and social contexts. Consequently, *Possession* offers a unique narrative approach and an artistic representation of knowledge, love, and historical truth. In this way, it provides valuable insights for both the academic world and a wider audience.

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Oneness of Scriptures and Oneness of God

Shyam Sunder Gupta

ABSTRACT

God is the infinite source of knowledge and periodically reveals tiny portions of His knowledge through chosen messengers, for good of mankind. Words revealed are perfectly designed and some content are identical and some different, as per the need of mankind. These revelations are shared orally by messenger with masses and in due course of time, collected, edited and released in written form as scripture. Due to a gap of time and communication issues, unintentionally, some errors and contradictions, within and between scriptures, have crept in, otherwise scriptures are in truth. There are three major religions, namely Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism and their respective scriptures are; Bible, Quran, and Veda. Since the source of all scriptures is one and the same, all scriptures are complementary and in true sense have Oneness. This oneness is proved through remarkable similarities between these scriptures by examining events such as the flood, creation of man and woman, the Last Day, and commonalities of popular names like Ram. Attributes of God described in all Scriptures are identical, namely; GOD is Eternal, Unborn, Immortal, Creator of Universe(s) and everything that exists within a Universe, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Subtlest of all, Unchangeable, Unique, Always Works, Source of Eternal Bliss, etc., establishing oneness of scriptures and oneness of God.

Keywords: God, oneness, revelation, scriptures, words.

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Keywords: God, oneness, revelation, scriptures, words.

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I. INTRODUCTION

We learn of God from scriptures. Written scriptures are created out of Words of God; revealed or inspired. In our world, there are three

major religions; Christianity (32%), Islam (26%) and Hinduism (15%); accounting for more than two third of total population. Each of these religions have their own principal scripture; Bible, Quran and Veda. Among these Veda is the oldest, next Bible and last Quran. It has been observed that there are some contradictions within every scripture, and also between scriptures, leading to different interpretations of some parts of content, including of God. Based on the in-depth analysis of scriptures, it is concluded that errors and contradictions within and between scriptures, are due to human intervention from the time of revelation, oral communication of revealed content to masses, process of writing orally communicated content with involvement of large numbers of persons, process of collection of written content and finally converting into written and approved Scripture. Otherwise, in reality, there is oneness of scriptures and oneness of God.

Let us look at some historical facts and reports about scriptures which bring out causes of errors in scriptures. Quran revelation started in the year 610 and it was revealed over a period of 23 years, ending in the year 632, year of death of Prophet Muhammad. After Words were revealed to Prophet Muhammad, he communicated orally with his community people. Then some of the followers started writing on available items like dry leaves, stones, paper, cloth, bone fragments, leather, whatever was available to them. After a gap of time, appreciating the importance of revealed content, some followers/leaders of the community undertook the process of compilation and started collecting the written content from hundreds/thousands of people. The process of compilation had started in the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad and continued after his death. Within 20 years of Prophet Muhammad's death, and 43 years after the initiation of revelation, the Quran was committed to written form, out of the revealed Words collected. However, it is known that it has not been possible to collect all the

content. In one mosque, in the city of Sana'a, Yemen, manuscripts were discovered which later proved to be the most ancient Quranic text known to exist at the time. What it means is that all revealed content of the Quran is not included in the final compiled version. Further, it has been reported that the Quran, in its present form, contains about 2500 errors of spelling, syntax and grammar. Besides these kinds of errors, there are scientific errors also which unintentionally got included by the committee tasked with compiling the Quran [1].

The Bible has been compiled over a period of about 1,500 years and is a collection of 66 books and letters written by more than 40 authors. Revelation of contents of Bible to Moses is estimated to be between the 16th and 13th centuries BCE. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament have undergone many changes over time, including the publication of the King James Bible in 1611. There has been addition of several books that were discovered later. For example, the Book of Judas, dated to around 280 A.D., was found in Egypt and is believed to contain secret conversations between Jesus and his betrayer Judas [2]. It is reported that there could be around 50,000 Errors and Biblical contradictions in the Bible [3].

Vedas, after their revelation to Brahma, were passed down via an oral tradition for thousands of years before Veda Vyasa compiled them and put them in written form. Veda Vyasa has put it very clearly that he edited the Vedas so they might be assimilated by less intellectual men (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.4. 24, 1.4.25) [4]. Similarly, it is clarified that he compiled the and revised Srimad-Bhagavatam (SB1.7.8), so that common men are in a position to understand scriptures. For example, in all scriptures, face of God has been mentioned and it is beautifully clarified that the conception of the virāt universal form of the God, as appearing in the material world, is imaginary. It is to enable the less intelligent to adjust to the idea of the God having form; but factually the God has no material form (SB1.3.30).

Therefore, though revealed Words are perfect, in truth and justice (Q.6:115) [5], but what has been

compiled and released as scripture, can have unintentional errors, due to not correctly understanding every revealed Word.

Quran makes interesting observations about scriptures which bring out that source of Words of God, in all scriptures, is one and the same and there is oneness of all scriptures:

1. God Knowledge is infinite and only a very small part of that infinite knowledge is revealed and hence revealed content is only largely in the form of signs (Q-42:51). Infinite Knowledge of God is excellently seen from verse "If all the trees on earth become pens, and the sea replenished by seven more seas were to supply them with ink, the Words of God would not be exhausted" (Q-31.27). This means even if one writes God's Words, in millions and millions of pages, God's Words would not be exhausted, whereas each scripture is just a few hundred or few thousand pages, a tiny fraction. Further, one point which needs to be appreciated is that even a very very small part of revealed knowledge may not be understood by the Messenger. This point has been repeatedly emphasized to the Messenger, in Quran, that if he has any doubt about revealed content to him, he should ask those who have been reading the Book before him and are knowledgeable (Q-10.94, 16.43). This point brings out that earlier revealed scriptures have similar content (Q -3.3, 10.37, 41.43) and in the new scripture revealed, some content is modified, as per the need of mankind. God effaces (deletes/erases) whatever He wills and retains whatever He wills (Q-13.38). With Him is the Mother of the Book; Eternal, Original; sublime and full of wisdom (Q - 13.39, 17.58, 43.4).
2. The purpose of revelation, from time to time, is to set forth the Truth and confirm the Books, which have been revealed earlier, the Torah and the Gospel (Q -3.3, 41.43). Before that for the guidance of mankind; He has also revealed the Criterion (to distinguish the Truth from Falsehood) (Q-3.4). We gave Moses the Scripture and the criterion that you are guided the Right way (Q -2.53).

Other Scriptures; Bible and Vedic scripture Bhagvat Puran confirm the same. For example, in the Bible it is clearly stated that “all scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for Right living (2 TIMOTHY 3.16)”. “Everything written in the scriptures was written to teach us, in order that we might have hope through the patience and the encouragement which the scriptures give us (Romans 15.4)” [6]. God is author and ultimate source of scriptures (SB 10.16.44) and the Words He speaks, are in the form of revealed scriptures (SB 10.82.30).

3. We need to understand if Messenger may not understand revealed content, can others, involved in compiling and creating written scripture, fully and correctly understand the revealed content, the obvious answer is No. Further, research has proved that the meaning of words change depending on the context in which they are spoken [7].

There are many verses in scriptures which bring out apparent differences; but reasons for it have been very succinctly answered in the scriptures itself:

Each Book (Q 3.7) has two categories of verses:

- i. Absolutely clear and lucid (with message of love and peace) verses that are core of the Book.
- ii. Others are ambiguous and none knows their true meaning but God. “Those in whose hearts is perversity, go about the part that is ambiguous, seeking mischief and seeking to arrive at its meaning arbitrarily, although none knows their true meaning but God” (Q 3.7) [5].

Therefore, as directed, while quoting the content from scriptures, one should ensure that content is clear and cannot be assigned multiple meanings and contradictions within and between different scriptures. With this in focus, it can convincingly be proved that there is strong evidence that there is oneness of all scriptures. Let us look at some examples of commonness of stories, events, names and attributes; to prove oneness of scriptures and oneness of God.

III. COMMONNESS OF STORIES, EVENTS AND NAMES IN SCRIPTURES

What should be considered as one of the most amazing aspects of scriptures is that in spite of scriptures revealed at different times, to different Messengers, at different locations, in different cultures and in different languages, some stories are more or less similar.

2.1 Flood of Noah (Bible/Quran) and Flood during the Time of King Satyavara (Bhagavat Puran)

The story of Noah’s ark is given in the Bible (Genesis) and Quran (23.27-29). In the Bible, the story goes like this: God was sorry that he had ever made men and women and put them on earth who were wicked except Noah (Genesis 6.5). God decided to destroy all living beings. God revealed to Noah that there will be massive flood seven days from now (Genesis 7.14) and asked Noah to build a boat (Genesis 7.4) and to take selected people in the boat, male and female and every kind of animals and birds (7 pairs) and all kind of foods (Genesis 6.13). Because of the flood/, everything on earth that breathed died (Genesis 7.22). After the flood was over, a new generation of Noah started (Genesis 9.7).

A similar story of flood is given in the Quran. God asked Noah to build a boat and carry those, in pairs, who have faith in HIM and only they will survive (Q 7.64, 11.36-11.48). Species in pairs were to be carried to create a new generation.

An identical story appears in Bhagavat Puran in which King Satyavara is informed by God that after seven days everything will be inundated (BP 8.24.32). God asked King Satyavara to take the boat (BP 8.24.33) and collect all kinds of herbs, seeds, seven rishis and all kinds of living entities (BP 8.24.34,35, 42), who only would survive and would create a new generation.

It is remarkable to see common features in stories from different scriptures; seven days’ time, instruction to build a boat, what is to be carried in the boat and after the flood, creation of a new generation.

2.2 Creation of Man

Description of creation of Man is similar in all scriptures:

In the Bible: Then God said, “Let Us make man in our image, according to Our likeness (Genesis 1:26)”. Lord took some soil from the ground and formed a man out of it; He breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live (Genesis 2.7).

In the Quran: We created the human being from clay, from molded mud (Q.15.26) and breathed into him HIS spirit (Q.15.29) and angels prostrated (Q.15.30).

In Bhagvat Puran: As per Vedic scriptures, Brahmā, recreates living beings (SB 3.10.19-27), out of what God has already created in subtle form (SB 3.8. 33, 2.5.11). Brahmā evolved Man and gave him his own human form. On seeing the Man, angels who had been created earlier applauded (BP 3.20.49-51). Further human physical body is created from five fundamental elements, sky, air, fire, water and earth, building blocks of matter. Element Sky creates space, Element Air creates gaseous substances, Element Fire creates all the energies like thermal, light etc., Element Water creates liquid substances and Element Earth creates solid substances. As in the Quran and Bible, the mix of earth and water represent clay. Our body is composed of seven building blocks, namely the thin layer on the skin, the skin itself, the flesh, blood, fat, marrow and bone, and life is sustained by life breath. All the seven building blocks are made out of five elements, earth, water and fire, and the life breath is produced by three elements namely; sky, water and air (SB 2.10.31). Water element being common in seven building blocks of the physical body and life breath which sustains physical body, requirement of water becomes high for living beings. In the human body, water in the body is more than 60%.

As can be seen, there are remarkable similarities in different scriptures about the steps of creation of man; created from clay, God gave HIS own form, God gave life breath and angels applauded.

2.3 Creation of Woman

Creation of woman is more or less similar in all scriptures:

In the Bible: “God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the God had taken from man, made him a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man (Bible Genesis 2.21-23)” [6].

In the Quran: "O humankind! Be conscious of your Lord Who created you from a single soul, and out of it created its mate, and out of the two spread countless men and women" (Quran 4:1) [5]. From a single soul, first God created man and out of man created woman.

In Bhagvat Puran: “In the beginning of creation, Brahmā, the father of the living entities of the universe, saw that all the living entities were unattached. To increase population, he then created woman from the better half of man’s body, for woman’s behavior carries away a man’s mind (SB 6.18.30)” [4].

As we can see, in all scriptures, the creation of woman is out of man.

2.4 Persons/Places/Calendar Months Having Name Ram/ Derived from Name Ram

Ram in Vedic Scriptures: Ram is a highly prevalent name among Hinduism. This is because Ram is the hero of popular religious books namely Ramayana authored by Valmiki and Ramcharitmanas authored by Tulsidas. Ram represents the “Sea of Bliss”, one of the key attributes of God. In all scriptures, persons/ places/calendar months have the name Ram/ derived from the name Ram.

Ram in Bible: In the Bible, there are many examples of the name Ram and names derived from Ram. If one looks at the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, three key persons are Adam, Abraham and David as reported in 1 Chronicles, Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38. Some features of Genealogy of

Jesus Christ, as seen in Fig. 1, two of his ancestors had the name Ram (1 Chronicles 2.9 and 2.25).

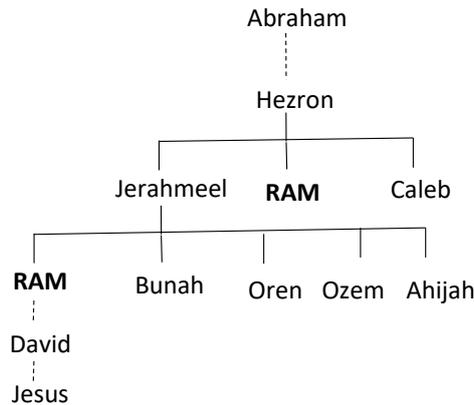


Fig. 1: Genealogy of Jesus showing two of his ancestors had name Ram [6]

There are many names in Bible which are derived from name Ram:

1. Abraham is considered the most respected prophet in the Bible - a model for mankind. His original name was Abram (Genesis: 17.5)
2. God revealed the Ten Commandments to Moses which form the foundation of the Bible. Moses's father's name was Amram (Exodus: 6.20).
3. Abiram, son of Eliab, rebelled against Moses (Numbers 16: 1-2).
4. Hiram, king of Tyre, was ever a lover of David (1 Kings 5:1).
5. In the twelfth year of Joram (Jehoram) the son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign (2 Kings 8.25).
6. King Rehoboam sent out Adoniram, who was in charge of forced labor, but the Israelites stoned him to death (2 Chronicles 10.18).
7. Ramiah was one son of Parosh (Ezra 10:25).
8. Raamah was son of Cush and Rama's sons were Sheba and Dedan (Genesis 10.7)
9. Elkanah was from the town/ Ramathaim (1 Samuel 1.1).

Table 1: Attributes of God Identical in All Scriptures

Attribute	Bible	Quran	Vedic scriptures
GOD ever exists (Eternal, Unborn, and Immortal)	Psalms 90.2 Eternal, forever Isaiah 40.28 Everlasting Isaiah 57.15 Lives forever Isaiah 44.6 First and Last and only God Habakkuk 1.12 Eternal John 3.16 Eternal life	2.255, 3.2, 25.68 Ever living 2.133, 163 One God 28.88 All will perish but He 57.3 First and the Last	BG 4.6 Unborn and immortal BG 10.9 Original source of energy BG 4.13 Immortal BG 7.25 Unborn and imperishable BG 8.3 Supreme indestructible BG 8.20, 21 Eternal unmanifest supreme divine substance BG 9.13,9.18 Imperishable BG 13.12 Beginning

			<p>less supreme Brahmn neither Sat (being) nor Asat (non-being) BG 18.54 Eternal SB 1.8.16 Unborn SB 2.9.33, 3.5.23, 24, SB 3.10, 11 Before creation only God existed BG 9.30 exists in all phases of creation (before, during and after)</p>
<p>GOD is Creator of Universe and everything that exists in the Universe</p>	<p>Psalms 90.2 creator of Universe Colossians 1.16 God Created Universe John 5.26 God source of life Ephesians 3.9 God is creator of all things Isaiah 66.2, 40.28 I myself created the whole Universe Job 38.4 God made the world Romans 1.20 [6] Ever since God created this world, his invisible qualities, eternal power and divine nature are clearly seen and perceived in the things, He has made</p>	<p>20.19 Begins the creation and repeats it 46.3 Created heavens and the earth and all that is in between them, for a specified period. 6.101, 13.26 God has created everything</p>	<p>BG 7.4, 9.4-6 Creator and sustainer of whole Universe and all beings BG 7.10 Eternal seed of all beings BG 9.10 Creator of animate and inanimate BG 9.17 Sustainer and ruler of whole Universe BG 9.13 Prime cause of creation BG 10.8 Source of all creation, everything in the world moves because of God BG 10.32 Beginning, middle and the end of all creations BG10.39 Seed of all beings. There is no creature – moving or nonmoving-that can exist without God. SB 1.10.24 It is He who creates, maintains and annihilates of material world SB 2.5.21 God Creates SB 2.6.13-16 Everything from God SB 7.9.20 Everyone in this material Universe is manifestation of God’s energy and his manifestation</p>

<p>GOD is Omnipotent (Infinite magnitude of energy and power)</p>	<p>Numbers 11.23 Is there a limit to my power? Romans 1.20 Eternal power and divine nature Psalms 46.10 Supreme Psalms 14.11 Almighty Job 11.7 - 8 Limitless Luke 1.37 For there is nothing that God cannot do Psalms 147.5 Great and mighty. His wisdom cannot be measured Romans 1.20 Eternal power</p>	<p>2.106, 5.17 All Powerful 5.28 Lord of entire Universe 13.2 Governs entire order of Universe 29.19 - 20 God has power over everything</p>	<p>BG 5.29 Lord of all worlds BG 8.9 Sustainer of all BG 8.11 Indestructible BG 10.2 Supreme Lord of Universe BG 10.7 Supreme glory and super natural power BG 11.19 Unlimited Powers BP 2.6.36 Limitless SB 1.8.20 Unlimited and unequal SB 2.5.21 Controller of all energies SB 1.17.23 Infinite magnitude and Inconceivable Energy SB 1.18.20 Unlimited</p>
<p>GOD is Omnipresent (Present Everywhere)</p>	<p>2 Chronicles 2.6 All vastness of heavens cannot contain him Jeremiah 23.23, Psalms 139.7 God is everywhere</p>	<p>2.115 In all directions 16.52 Pervades the whole Universe 34.3 Nothing escapes Him</p>	<p>BG 5.15, 5.29 Omnipresent BG 2.17, 13.13 All pervading SB 8.17.09 All pervading SB 12.3.4 Unthinkable, all pervading</p>
<p>GOD is Omniscient (Most knowledgeable and knows everything)</p>	<p>Psalms 147.5 His wisdom cannot be measured</p>	<p>6.103 Acquainted with all things 57.3 Knowledge of everything 39.46 Knower of unseen and seen</p>	<p>BG 8.9 All wise eternal being SB 1.8.28 Destines all actions and reactions</p>
<p>GOD is Subtlest of all (finer than the finest and hence cannot be seen)</p>	<p>John 1.18 No one has seen God Exodus 33.20 No one can see God.</p>	<p>6.103, 30.16, 12.100, 67.14 Allah is subtle 7.143 Cannot be seen by anyone 34.16 Most subtle 5.94 Beyond reach of perception</p>	<p>BG 8.9 Subtler than the Subtle BG 13.15 Because subtlest hence incomprehensible BG 13.16 Indivisible BG 18.18 Invisible to all BP 8.16.30 Subtlest not visible to human eyes SB 2.10.34 Finer than the finest SB 5.1.1 Beyond experimental</p>

			measurement SB 1.6.25 Unseen by eyes
GOD is unchangeable	Malachi 3.6 God does not change	3.18 Unchangeable	BG 7.24 Unsurpassable and undecaying supreme nature BG 13.14 Attribute less BG 13.27 Supreme Lord as the only imperishable substance SB 1.2.11 Non-dual substance
GOD is Unique	Deuteronomy 6.4 The Lord is our God, the Lord is one He is not like anything or anybody Ephesians 4.4 There is only one Lord	112.1 He is God, the unique one 112.5 There is none co-equal or comparable to Him	BG 10.15 Yourself alone know Yourself through Yourself BP 8.18.32 One without second BP 1.8.20 None equal to Him
GOD always Works	Philippians 2.13 Because God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose	6.135 God works all the time	BG 3.22 God always works BG 3.24 If God stops working, these worlds will perish SB 1.8.30 you work, though You are inactive

BG- Bhagavad Gita [8]

10. Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear (1 Kings 22.6)?

Ram in Quran: There are names of places derived from Ram like Iram (Q 89.7) and name of the holiest month Ramadan (Q. 2.185) in which the Quran was revealed.

2.5 Last Day

Interestingly all scriptures give almost similar descriptions of Last Day that everything on earth will get destroyed. In the Bible, it is stated that “By God’s word, the present heaven and earth are designated to be burned” (2 Peter 3:7, Malachi 4:1). In the Quran, it is stated that “the earth and

the mountains are lifted and leveled with one blow” (Q- 69:14). Similar description in Bhagvad Puran: “At the time of the final devastation of the complete universe burning to ashes”(SB 3.11. 30, SB2.2. 26).

III. ONENESS OF GOD

In all scriptures, only one and same God is described, only His names are different which is very much acceptable to God. As in the Quran, God can be called by any name; all His names are beautiful (Q-17.110). Oneness of God is confirmed from the fact that key attributes of God described in all scriptures are absolutely identical, as shown in Table I.

We should readily conclude that there is only one God, and all scriptures describe the same God, as seen from common attributes of Him; like eternal, unborn, immortal, creator of Universe, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, subtlest of all hence not seen, unchangeable, and unique and always works.

IV. CONCLUSION

For all scriptures, there is only one source, God. God is an infinite source of knowledge and He keeps revealing some tiny content, as per need of mankind, hence all scriptures have oneness and are complementary. This is seen from remarkable commonness of stories, events, names and identical messages, establishing oneness of scriptures. All scriptures describe absolutely identical attributes of God, confirming Oneness of Scriptures and Oneness of God.

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The Arab Peculiarity of Jorge Amado

Dr. Valter Luciano Gon Alves Villa

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the study of Arabic settings in the work of Jorge Amado. To this end, we choose as privileged texts of this research the twenty-four novels published by the author, where we seek to observe the similarities and differences in the representations of the Arab immigrant, as well as the lines responsible for configuring the Arab-Brazilian identity of southern Bahia, woven by the interrelationship between the cultural features of the Sertanejo and the cultural features of the Arabs, both expelled from their lands, by necessity or by wars. As a methodological theoretical reference, we will avail ourselves of Edward Said's contributions to understanding the Arab universe in the West; Alice Raillard's studies of the Baian writer's aesthetic choices; and the author's own confessions about his literary making.

Keywords: orientalism, arab immigration, brazilian identity, brazilian literature.

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The Arab Peculiarity of Jorge Amado

A Particularidade Árabe de Jorge Amado

Jorge Amado's Arabic Particularity

Dr. Valter Luciano Gon Alves Villa

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the study of Arabic settings in the work of Jorge Amado. To this end, we choose as privileged texts of this research the twenty-four novels published by the author, where we seek to observe the similarities and differences in the representations of the Arab immigrant, as well as the lines responsible for configuring the Arab-Brazilian identity of southern Bahia, woven by the interrelationship between the cultural features of the Sertanejo and the cultural features of the Arabs, both expelled from their lands, by necessity or by wars. As a methodological theoretical reference, we will avail ourselves of Edward Said's contributions to understanding the Arab universe in the West; Alice Raillard's studies of the Baian writer's aesthetic choices; and the author's own confessions about his literary making.

Keywords: orientalism, arab immigration, brazilian identity, brazilian literature.

RESUMO

O presente artigo trata do estudo das configurações árabes na obra de Jorge Amado. Para tanto, elegemos como textos privilegiados dessa pesquisa os vinte e quatro romances publicados pelo autor, onde buscamos observar as similaridades e diferenças nas representações do imigrante árabe, bem como as linhas responsáveis pela configuração da identidade árabe-brasileira do sul da Bahia, tecida pela inter-relação entre os traços culturais do sertanejo e os traços culturais dos árabes, ambos tangidos de suas terras, pela necessidade ou pelas guerras. Como referencial teórico metodológico, nos valeremos das contribuições de Edward Said, no que diz respeito à

compreensão do universo árabe no Ocidente; dos estudos de Alice Raillard acerca das escolhas estéticas do escritor baiano; e das confissões do próprio autor sobre o seu fazer literário.

Palavras-chave: orientalismo, imigração árabe, identidade brasileira, literatura brasileira.

Nascido no ano de 1912, na cidade de Itabuna, filho de sergipanos, emigrados para o Sul da Bahia, atraídos pelo boom do cacau, Jorge Amado logo se viu testemunha das guerras de conquistas de terras, empreendidas pelos fazendeiros da região, a exemplo de seu pai. Movidos pelas riquezas auferidas pelo comércio cacauzeiro, esses ruralistas protagonizaram várias histórias que, posteriormente, tornaram-se importantes e significativas para a construção de sua obra romanesca.

Narram os biógrafos do escritor, que sua família, fugindo das grandes enchentes e do surto de varíola que se espalhava pela região, instalaram-se na cidade de Ilhéus, onde Jorge Amado passaria toda a sua infância. Aos dez anos de idade, seus pais resolvem interná-lo no colégio dos jesuítas, em Salvador, de onde o escritor, depois de algumas fugas, sairia no ano de 1930, para estudar no Rio de Janeiro, a fim de terminar os estudos ginasiais.

Ainda em Salvador, onde iniciara, aos dezesseis anos, o ofício de jornalista, fez parte da *Academia dos Rebeldes*, agrupamento fundado pelo poeta Pinheiro Viegas, ocasião que lhe permitiu conhecer figuras importantes da intelectualidade baiana, entre eles, Edison Carneiro, etnólogo, folclorista e historiador, que exerceu grande influência, devido às suas pesquisas com a cultura popular.

Nesse tempo de militância literária, Jorge Amado seria fortemente influenciado pelos seus pares baianos. Reunidos em torno do programa da Academia, o grupo aspirava implantar uma literatura de raízes populares, ao mesmo tempo em que procuravam “ignorar o modernismo de importação da Semana de Arte Moderna de São Paulo e suas ramificações e re-significações regionais”. (SEIXAS, 2004, p. 44)

Sobre esses momentos, o escritor baiano confessaria, ao jornal *Gazeta de Notícias*, quatro anos depois de sua chegada à Cidade Maravilhosa, as peculiaridades daquele grupo, chegando, inclusive a fazer revelações acerca da presença árabe em sua cotidianidade que posteriormente, transformar-se-iam em matéria literária, conforme podemos observar dos seus relatos acerca do bar Brunswick, local onde os membros da *Academia dos Rebeldes* se reuniam diariamente, para promover e deliberar suas aspirações literárias:

O bar Brunswick...Quantas recordações daquele botequim de literatos, que se reuniam diariamente para comentar os fatos triviais da cidade, os escândalos do bairro literário e discutir os livros aparecidos, as revistas mais novas. Era dono do bar um árabe velho que não sei por que motivo simpatizava com aqueles literatos que faziam despesas tão pequenas...”[...] Pois nesse tempo nós fizemos na Bahia uma revista de caráter universalista, condenando o verde-amarelismo e a brasilidade dos mineiros e paulistas. – Era no bar que se passava tudo isto, sob os olhares protetores do árabe, que ainda nos guardava embrulhos e dava anúncios para as nossas revistas. (AMADO, 1934, não pag. apud TATI, 1961, p. 19-20)

Mesmo não estando totalmente inteirado com os acontecimentos do grupo do Recife, parece que havia uma rivalidade entre os grupos do Sudeste e do Nordeste brasileiro, ao que nos parece, bastante sedimentado. Essa oposição se centraliza, com mais vigor, nas maneiras de pensar a literatura brasileira, o que, de certa forma, explica o antagonismo de ideias entre os integrantes desses grupos modernistas,

implicados na contenda de reivindicar, para si, a marca de uma brasilidade literária que melhor expressasse uma identidade brasileira que, na opinião de um dos seus maiores ícones, *A chamada “Escola do Recife” foi modernismo do mais puro.* (FREYRE, 2010, p.28).

Nesse sentido, a escritura de Jorge Amado foi se delineando, adquirindo gradativamente uma forma, já discutida em outra ocasião, que se alimentou, antes de tudo, desses momentos memoráveis da vida do escritor. Talvez essa estreita relação, entre o proprietário do bar Brunswick e o escritor, tenha favorecido na configuração romanesca do personagem Nacib, o sírio do romance *Gabriela*, principalmente no que se refere ao conjunto de traços e qualidades temperamentais do árabe, na narrativa ficcional.

Quem primeiro levantou a possibilidade de o escritor baiano se valer de suas relações amistosas com os árabes foi o brasileiro, de origem árabe, Jorge Emílio Medauar. Apesar de desconsiderar ou desconhecer aquele depoimento do escritor baiano ao *Jornal Gazeta*, inclinando-se a acreditar que a inspiração adviera da existência real do bar Vesúvio, na cidade de Ilhéus, do qual Jorge Amado era vizinho, Jorge Medauar, poeta paulista da geração de 45, escritura uma lista de famílias árabes da cidade de Ilhéus, *portanto, pessoas de seu convívio* (MEDAUAR, 1993, não paginado). Estas, sem dúvida, serviram de matéria prima para configurar essa singularidade amadiana, primeiramente notada por ele, o poeta, mas não completamente observada.

Essa convivência com as famílias árabes, desde a sua infância, em Ilhéus, aliada ao desejo escritural de construir uma *literatura de raízes populares*, talvez explique o fato de que toda a sua construção romanesca, vinte e quatro romances, estender-se-á com a participação de personagens árabes, particularidade não encontrada em nenhum outro romancista brasileiro, inclusive os de origem árabe.

Desse modo, a sua obra literária, surgida na década de 1930, com a publicação de *O país do carnaval* (1931), apresenta-se em consonância, não apenas com as suas experiências adquiridas,

em convívio com a comunidade árabe, mas também em conformidade com os romancistas do movimento modernista do Nordeste, que preferiram revelar a visão de um Brasil crassado pela pobreza, pela desordem e pelo esquecimento das classes desfavorecidas economicamente, como exemplificam os vários romances amadianos, cujas raízes populares desse povo surgem, como elementos importantes na sua organização ficcional.

Apoiado nessa opção escritural, Jorge Amado desenvolverá o conjunto de sua obra, ostensivamente marcada pela profícua participação de personagens árabes em suas histórias. Dos seus vinte e quatro romances publicados, apenas um, o penúltimo, *O sumiço da Santa: uma história de feitiçaria* (1992), essa presença se fará de forma mais discreta. Voltado para a narração do convívio amoroso entre Francisco Romero Perez y Perez, filho de imigrante espanhol, e a mulata Andreza da Anunciação, essa obra se constitui como a única do autor baiano, em que a frequentação árabe se processará, através da evocação do seu universo sagrado, especialmente dos libaneses, aliado ao sistema religioso tanto dos judeus, como do cristianismo:

Do alto dos céus os deuses acompanham com benévola simpatia a jornada, laboriosa, extenuante, dos fiéis prosélitos de raça e crença. Iavé, Jeová revelado no Sinai, o bom Deus sírio-libanês dos maronitas e o misericordioso Jesus do Vaticano conduzem os passos dos intrépidos pés-de-boi – cada um seu protegido – aos esconsos da arca ou do oratório onde jaz a peça incomparável à espera do intrépido paladino: David, Salim ou João da Silva. (AMADO, 1992, p. 88)

Numa evidente referência à diversidade religiosa que funda nossa própria fé, como sugerem as denominações dos fiéis-David, Salim ou João da Silva-Jorge Amado aponta para a nossa própria constituição cultural, esse construir-se mestiço, como reconhece Lucia Oliveira, ressaltando a importância de Jorge Amado e a significativa contribuição de sua obra para o entendimento e a interpretação dos traços culturais baianos.

É também na Bahia, pela obra de Jorge Amado, que se reconstrói nova versão da mistura das três raças originais e se produz a imagem do paraíso racial. Os personagens de seus romances, na maioria figuras populares, mestiças, falam da alegria, da sensualidade, da sexualidade, do sincretismo religioso. Jorge Amado, entre outros, pode ser tomado como romancista, como intelectual, que produziu uma mudança de sinal interpretação dos traços da cultura baiana. (OLIVEIRA, 2002, p. 44)

Entre a tradição e a inovação, Jorge Amado abria suas narrativas à frequentação árabe, como se apreende da leitura de seus variados textos. Nesse encaminhamento escritural, despiria os seus personagens árabes dos estereótipos correntes no Ocidente. Dessa forma, se anteciparia, literariamente, ao discurso clássico de Edward Said que, em sua obra, *Orientalismo: o Oriente como invenção do Ocidente* (1990), desconstrói a visão ocidental sobre o Oriente. Nessa antecipação, Amado elegerá a via da aproximação positiva e empática, para tratar do árabe no Brasil, ao mesmo tempo em que tematiza a importância dos imigrantes árabes na constituição e sedimentação de uma feição baiano-nacional.

Nessa busca identitária, Jorge Amado criaria uma verdadeira galeria de molduras árabes, em contato com o Brasil. Em *O país do carnaval* (1931), seu primeiro romance, a presença árabe se fará por intermédio de dona Maria, uma árabe, dona da pensão e dona Fifi, personagens de pouca expressão. Além desses personagens, outros inominados comerciantes e mascates surgem nesse universo literário, compondo, desta forma, a trama de sua primeira experiência como romancista.

Essa referência aos comerciantes árabes se repetirá no seu segundo romance, *Cacau* (1933). Nessa obra, além dessa menção, teremos a informação de que as moças desses comerciantes árabes namoravam jovens brasileiros, fato que se repete, de modo categórico, em *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*, onde as filhas do comerciante Ásfora se casam com os nacionais, o que demonstra uma

acentuada inclinação dos imigrantes árabes à miscigenação.

Sobre esse tema da miscigenação, polêmica exaustivamente discutida entre os fins do século XIX e começos do século XX, é interessante notar os apontamentos que Alberto Torres formula em torno desses debates. Publicando uma série de artigos no jornal *Gazeta de Notícias*, reunidos posteriormente na obra *A Organização Nacional*, publicada originalmente no ano de 1914, Torres chamava a atenção para as contradições sociais de nossa coletividade, localizando, desta forma, na ausência de políticas governamentais, as causas do atraso do povo brasileiro, contrariando, desta maneira, a noção corrente de que a miscigenação de nossa coletividade era a causa primeira do atraso industrial, político, social e cultural da sociedade brasileira:

É inegável que se está operando um movimento de apropriação de indústrias nacionais por capitalistas europeus e americanos e que esse movimento não vem senão avolumar o flagrante da nossa renúncia à direção de nossa vida econômica, manifesta na antiquíssima ocupação por estrangeiros das primeiras posições na indústria e no comércio – abandono que se prolongará para o futuro com os próprios descendentes das novas raças, destinada segunda a espúria aspiração de alguns, a substituir as nossas, porque a realidade, provada pela experiência, é que todas as raças degeneram quando não recebem educação para o trabalho e não encontram meio propício à conservação e à prosperidade. (TORRES, 1982, p. 170-171-grifos nossos)

Como se pode observar em Alberto Torres, no início dos anos trinta, os debates em torno da miscigenação e do atraso da sociedade brasileira tomava conta de nossa intelectualidade. Dessas questões, alimenta-se Jorge Amado que, consciente do valor da miscigenação brasileira, continuaria a incluir, em suas narrativas, o elemento arábico.

Em seu terceiro romance, *Suor* (1934), Jorge Amado narra os dramas que envolveram os

trabalhadores baianos dos anos trinta, às vistas com suas primeiras greves, suas participações na política e as condições precárias das moradias comunitárias desses operários que, enfiados em habitações coletivas, proporcionaram um vivo e excitado quadro, semelhante ao que se vê em *O Cortiço*, de Aluísio de Azevedo, à imaginação ficcional do literário baiano, conforme podemos observar das declarações da escritora Alice Raillard, quando passeava, juntamente com o casal Jorge Amado e Zélia Gattai, pelas ruas do Pelourinho, onde ficava o casarão que abrigava toda aquela gente:

O passeio desta manhã, em que acompanhei a você e a Zélia, me causou uma impressão muito forte. Emocionou-me muito, ensinou-me muito. Como explicar? Primeiro o Pelourinho, onde fomos rever a casa em que você vivia antigamente - o sobrado de Suor, que desde então se tornou um hotel. (RAILLARD, 1990, p. 79).

É justamente, nesse casarão, que os rostos árabes protagonizam, com os demais moradores da estalagem, uma peleja grupal, compondo, desta forma, um enredo coletivo com tipos psicologicamente primários que filia essa narrativa às propostas de Zola e à forma de Aluísio de Azevedo, diferenciando-se dessa linha naturalista, por optar em dar uma explicação política às penosas condições sociais dos moradores do cortiço.

Essa explicação política, na verdade, é a expressão, ainda que tímida, de uma defesa dos ideais socialistas, momento em que Jorge Amado começava a inclinar-se mais efetivamente na militância político-partidária, direcionando, assim, suas publicações para a causa do Partido Comunista, engajamento esse reconhecido pelo escritor: “*Cacau* e *Suor*, que se seguem muito perto 1933 e 1934-, significam meu encontro com a esquerda-é o momento em que me torno um militante da esquerda”. (RAILLARD, 1990, p. 56).

Essa *ação revolucionária* (BASTIDE, 1971, p. 45) pode ser antevista em todo o romance, no entanto, será no final da narrativa, em que os grevistas recebem a solidariedade dos moradores

do cortiço – *A multidão apoiava em berros [...]* *Ouviram-se gritos em árabe* (AMADO, 1980 a, p.162) –, que Jorge Amado sintetiza sua ação, ao projetar a frase de Karl Max, na boca de um operário, morador do cortiço, *Proletários de todas as nações...* (AMADO, 1980 a, p. 163), que não conseguiu concluí-la, por conta de ter sido alvejado por uma bala, um fim trágico e doloroso, no entanto, necessário para despertar uma consciência de classe que permitisse, aos demais, completar o sentido da oração *uni-vos!*

Nesse sentido, a união se concretizaria, *todo o 68 ali estava. Descera a escada como um só homem*, (AMADO, 1980 a, p. 163) e a solidariedade árabe também se faria presente, fortalecendo os laços, representados na figura do jovem Toufick, das mulheres e crianças árabes, do dono da padaria, do seu Samara, enfim, de todo um mundo que, à semelhança do nosso, sofria o julgo das forças econômicas, simbolizadas nas diversas graduações do colonialismo europeu, promotores maiores dos ideais capitalistas, tão combatidos por Jorge Amado, em seus dias de escritor compromissado com as mudanças na estrutura vigente da sociedade brasileira.

Seguindo esse caminho de compromisso político, lançaria, no ano de 1935, Jubiabá, considerada pelo crítico Miécio Tati, um estudioso da vida e da produção artística do escritor baiano, seu “primeiro grande livro.” (1961, p. 66). Nessa obra, a consciência de classe, que Jorge Amado pretendia despertar, encontra a fórmula ideal na figura do negro Antonio Baduíno, um menino órfão, de conduta repreensível que, aos poucos, vai se regerando pela via do trabalho, até se tornar um líder consciente e politizado. Solução ficcional encontrada pelo escritor que, de certa forma atende aos propósitos da Aliança Nacional Libertadora, organização política que integrou várias correntes de esquerda, criada para lutar contra a influência fascista no Brasil, da qual Jorge Amado fez parte.

Nessa obra, Jorge Amado retoma, também, agora com mais domínio, a questão do preconceito étnico no Brasil, configurado tanto pelo biótipo de Baduíno, quanto pela religião de ascendência africana, no caso o candomblé. Em relação à

religiosidade africana, é notável o quanto Jorge Amado expressa o sentimento de tolerância e compreensão árabe às crenças alheias, ao colocar, na narrativa, um consulente árabe em contato direto com Jubiabá (AMADO, 1981 d, p.114), retomando, deste modo, o respeito que o jovem Toufik, personagem de Suor, expressava pela religião de matriz afro:

- Toufik juntou-se à negra.
 - Bom dia, sinhá Maria.
 - Bom dia, meu branco.
 - Não vai descer?
- Ela esticou o dedo, apontando o embrulho de papel de jornal. Toufik assobiou.
 - Um feitiço, puxa! Pra quem será?
- O árabe também acreditava. [...] O sapateiro espanhol desceu. Passou entre o ajuntamento sem curiosidade e ia pisando no degrau fatídico quando alguém o reteve, pegando-o pela manga da camisa.
 - Vai pisar no feitiço...
 - Ah! Vocês não descem por causa disso?
- Meteu o pé no embrulho desfazendo-o. (AMADO, 1980 a, p.69)

Como se percebe nas cenas acima, os rituais de origem africana eram parcialmente tolerados por segmentos da coletividade, incluindo, aí, os imigrantes árabes. Mas a história das religiões espiritualistas, de matriz africana, não se deu de maneira pacífica e consentida. Ocorreram muitos chutes, à semelhança do sapateiro espanhol, das instituições do Estado, especialmente do aparato policial, que não cessava de invadir os terreiros e, com pontapés e violência de todos os tipos, tentavam impedir a manifestação religiosa dos cultos africanos, que só vieram adquirir seus direitos de livre expressão, na constituinte de 1946, por emenda do próprio Jorge Amado:

Eles foram autorizados somente após a Constituição de 1946. Ao contrário era uma repressão das mais violentas; a toda hora a polícia invadia os terreiros de candomblé, quebrava tudo, batia em todo mundo, prendia o pai ou a mãe-de-santo, torturava, era uma luta horrível. A perseguição religiosa era

imensa; era uma forma de repreensão contra toda a matriz negra da nossa cultura, contra todas as expressões da cultura negra. Eu me envolvi muito nisto; Edilson também estava muito envolvido na luta pela liberdade religiosa; foi uma luta tumultuada e muito violenta. Tive a sorte, em 46, quando fui deputado da Assembleia Constituinte, de poder fazer aprovar um artigo na Constituição que garantia a liberdade religiosa no Brasil. (RAILLARD, 1990, p. 37)

Retornando a questão da participação árabe, importante traço de seu fazer literário, que se confirmará a cada romance publicado pelo autor, vamos observar uma importante continuidade em seu quinto romance *Mar Morto* (1936), em que os personagens árabes, já aclimatados nas terras brasileiras, deixam o casarão do Pelourinho para se tornarem, agora, comerciantes ou agentes bem sucedidos na capital baiana, a exemplo de Toufick. Nesse sentido, vamos observar capítulos inteiros em que esses personagens árabes são trazidos para configurar sua narrativa, especialmente o capítulo *Terras de Aiocá*, onde se vê o comerciante Murad suplicar pela vida de seu filho, náufrago, à coragem de Guma que, antes de morrer, atende ao humilde pedido do árabe.

Esse desfecho final pode representar, considerando o fio condutor da presença árabe em suas narrativas, um elo de solidariedade recíproca que, aos poucos, vai construindo um histórico de convivência amistosa entre os imigrantes árabes e o povo brasileiro. Talvez a morte carregada de heroísmo do brasileiro Guma possa simbolizar a vida para os árabes Toufick e Antônio Murad, uma solução estética simplória, no entanto, significativa para expressar esses vínculos que se formam na ficção amadiana.

Esses vínculos surgem de múltiplas direções, a exemplo da narrativa *Capitães de Areia* (1937), em que uma criança árabe, vinculada ao grupo de Pedro Bala, recebe o nome de Gringo, devido à sua fala complicada. Essa linguagem esvai-se diante do companheirismo reinante entre os integrantes mirins, liderados por Pedro Bala, um menino de rua que, juntamente com os demais, tomam destinos diferentes nessa obra pioneira no

trato das questões que envolvem os menores abandonados.

Depois dessa narrativa, Jorge Amado voltaria ao romance documental sobre o ciclo do cacau, com *Terras do sem Fim* (1943), momento em que a participação de personagens árabes, nessa trama, funcionará apenas como pano de fundo da história da rivalidade, entre os coronéis Horácio e Nhô Badaró, na conquista de novas terras; e São Jorge dos Ilhéus, romances que se enquadram na lógica da teoria marxista, conforme podemos apreender das observações feitas por Eduardo de Assis Duarte, na obra *Jorge Amado: romance em tempo de utopia* (1995), um valoroso estudo acerca da opção escritural do prosador baiano, suas tentativas de utilizar a literatura, como veículo de militância político-partidária:

Os dois romances expõem, de modo claro, a perspectiva *etapista* de nosso desenvolvimento econômico e político: primeiro o “feudalismo” dos senhores de terras; em seguida, o capitalismo dos comerciantes e exportadores, logo degenerado em imperialismo e, por fim, a possibilidade futura do socialismo, anunciada nas contendas operário-camponesas narradas em *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*. Tal configuração se encaixa nessa conjuntura ideológica, que previa inclusive a aliança com os setores burgueses e pequeno-burgueses nacionais como forma de luta contra o imperialismo. *Terras dos Sem Fim* e *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*, ao contrário de *Jubiabá*, deixam bem claro seu alinhamento com a estratégia do partido (DUARTE, 1995, p.170)

Nesse caminho, em que a relação entre literatura e militância política se complementam em São Jorge dos Ilhéus, de forma mais intencional, Jorge Amado expressa a crise que se abateu sobre a cultura do cacau, gerada, de cima, artificialmente, por iniciativa dos exportadores, todos estrangeiros, em sua maioria, ingleses, estadunidenses e alemães, três países onde a cultura do oligopólio se encontra mais fortalecida.

Além dessa comunidade de estrangeiros de procedência anglo-saxônica, a obra dispõe

referências aos vários imigrantes árabes da região de Ilhéus, a exemplo do sírio Ásfora, primeira e única criatura amadiana de origem semítica, a exercer o papel de dono de roças de cacau.

Nessas configurações, Jorge Amado demarcaria os sentimentos que ora nos distancia, ora nos aproxima desses elementos adventícios, especificamente europeus, ao revesti-los de características desagradáveis para a nossa tradição cordial, como o desdenho, especialmente *dos alemães que tratavam os nacionais desde o alto, com certo desprezo* (AMADO, 1981 b, p. 40). Diferentemente dos traços de bonomia e urbanidade do sírio Ásfora, tão apreciados por nós e pelos árabes, marcas essas que chegam a extinguir quaisquer vestígios que nos diferencie, um processo espontâneo, portanto, de naturalização, de abrasileiramento desse sírio, primeiro oriental a se naturalizar, sem restrições, sem ambiguidade, em suas narrativas:

Ásfora já não era considerado estrangeiro. Voltara à Síria com a esposa e a filha mais jovem, a única solteira, para passar uma cômoda velhice na terra natal. No fim de um ano regressava, as saudades o trouxeram de volta. Mais uma vez calçou as botas de montaria e se tocou para a fazenda, plantar e colher cacau. (AMADO, 1981 b, p.39)

Apesar dessa afirmação de brasilidade, às vezes explícita, como é o caso do personagem Ásfora, outras veladas, ainda é muito comum um olhar diferenciador sobre essa gente, reputação, muitas vezes, carregada de estereótipos, entre eles, a avidez por dinheiro. Talvez esse estigma de comerciante avaro tenha se firmado, devido ao fato de que os diversos povos sob o domínio otomano, entre eles libaneses, sírios, armênios, curdos, hebreus, ao imigrarem para o Brasil, receberam passaporte turco que, como se sabe, era o nome dado aos povos procedentes de todos os lugares, sob a jurisdição da Porta Otomana. Essa convicção quicá se tenha formado, devido à própria natureza da mascatearia que, antes da chegada dos árabes, era ofício dos portugueses e italianos, de acordo com Claude Fahd Hajjar, em estudos sobre a segunda leva de imigração árabe, ocorrida entre os anos de 1900 a 1914:

A concorrência, nesse período, era travada pelos antigos imigrantes portugueses e italianos, mais antigos no Brasil que os árabes nas atividades comerciais e no mascatear. Esta foi uma das lutas que o árabe teve que travar no Brasil, buscando o seu lugar nesta terra imensa que necessitava de quem a desenvolvesse, a explorasse e que nela pudesse ser ativo, produtivo e criador. O imigrante árabe conquista o seu lugar e mostra o muito que tem para contribuir à sua nova pátria. (HAJJAR, 1985, p. 98-99)

Diferentemente dos arroubos que circulam as declarações de Claude Hajjar, o escritor nordestino escrituraria essa pertinência árabe, com um olhar diferenciador, capturando, desta forma, os imigrantes árabes como aqueles que vieram contribuir para o processo miscigenador da sociedade brasileira, sem o viés desse progresso desenvolvimentista.

Daí que no romance *Seara Vermelha* (1946), Jorge Amado, ao lidar com os árabes mascates dessa narrativa, promove a maneira, o jeito árabe de comercializar, à categoria da arte, da magia, tal é o encantamento que esses vendedores exercem, com suas histórias e seus apetrechos, nas mulheres retirantes que *olhavam os baús mágicos dos árabes [...] e ouviam como se fosse tentadora melodia [...]*, pois os árabes não se furtavam a contar histórias (AMADO, 1981 g, p.122-123); histórias e apetrechos que abrandava até os corações mais empedernidos dos cangaceiros (AMADO, 1981 g, p.201-202), desconstruindo, no idealismo ficcional, a opinião solidificada no imaginário popular de que os árabes é um povo obcecado por adquirir e acumular dinheiro.

Até antes da publicação da trilogia *Subterrâneos da Liberdade* (1954), o autor de *Gabriela* tratou de tematizar, com mais incidência, a vida dos trabalhadores da zona do cacau, as rivalidades entre os coronéis, a vida dos trabalhadores urbanos e dos retirantes. Essa linha temática, se bem que não totalmente abandonada, deixaria de se tornar um assunto principal, para ceder lugar aos fatos da militância partidária, assunto para seus próximos romances, voltados para narrar os

fatos políticos que circularam a implantação do Estado Novo, as suas relações com as potências em guerra e, concomitante a esses, os momentos de perseguição aos membros do Partido Comunista do Brasil.

Esse era também o período das guerras de independência que o mundo árabe travava contra a França e a Inglaterra, o que ocasionou uma aproximação com a política do Terceiro Reich, circunstâncias que foram recebidas com desconfiança nos gabinetes getulistas.

Até antes do início dos conflitos, as várias comunidades de imigrantes no Brasil mantinham, periodicamente, em suas línguas de origem, a publicação de diversos jornais, revistas e outros similares, a exemplo da *Al Usba*, revista escrita em árabe, que teve grande circulação no meio literário brasileiro. Fundada e dirigida pelo poeta Chafic Maluf, a sua publicação foi proibida pelo governo no período da guerra, voltando posteriormente, onde circulou até começo da década de 1950:

Al USBA publicou 80 números durante os sete primeiros anos de sua existência. Durante a Segunda Guerra Mundial, o governo brasileiro foi levado a proibir, temporariamente, toda publicação que não fosse em língua portuguesa. A revista deixou de circular, portanto, durante esta fase. Renasce depois da guerra, dirigida por Chafiq Maluf, considerado, não sem razões, um dos melhores escritores árabes do Brasil. Continuou sendo publicada até 1953, data do último número. (ZEGHIDOUR, 1982, p.75-76)

A participação dos imigrantes na vida política, social e cultural do Brasil sofreria sérias restrições, fazendo com que os intelectuais aqui residentes evitassem atitudes que gerassem desconfortos ou perigos para a sua condição de estrangeiro. O que obviamente não chegou a ser o caminho de todos, pois alguns já estavam envolvidos demais para permanecerem reclusos, a exemplo do barbeiro de origem libanesa, Abílio de Nequete, um dos fundadores do Partido Comunista do Brasil, no ano de 1922, na cidade de Niterói.

Mas essa participação não estaria ausente nos romances de atividade política de Jorge Amado que, a essa época, seguia fielmente as diretrizes estéticas do Partido Comunista do Brasil, fazendo com que a modelagem dos vários personagens dessa trilogia seguisse as concepções marxistas, emanadas de Moscou (MORAES, 1994, p. 61). Daí a internacionalização do conflito ter desembocado em sua tríade literária, fazendo com que a política pertinente ao mundo árabe espelhasse, em sua obra, na forma de uma análise de conjuntura. *A Inglaterra fica pela Índia e pela Arábia; mas aí mesmo os americanos vão entrando cada vez mais* (AMADO, 1981 c, p. 55).

Análise de conjuntura que se expressa, também, no posicionamento espacial em que o árabe Chafik se encontra. Uma área da floresta amazônica, pretendida tanto por estadunidenses quanto por alemães (AMADO, 1981 e, p. 226-228); na importância para a causa comunista dos movimentos de independência árabe, os partidos pan-arabistas (AMADO, 1981 e, p. 243); por fim, o destino dos países árabes recém-independentes, receosos de maiores compromissos com Moscou, um estado ateu, portanto, incompatível com as tradições islâmicas do povo árabe (MAALOUF, 2011, p. 169-175), pode ser vaga referência, pois *o árabe Chafik fora embora no temor de ser envolvido pelos acontecimentos, outra vez preso e entregue as autoridades francesas* (AMADO, 1981 f, p. 203).

É claro que o contexto internacional, especificamente árabe, em guerra contra os domínios coloniais, se tornaria apenas um aceno dentro dessa proposta ficcional de Jorge Amado, que pretendia contar os fatos históricos do período referente ao Estado Novo. Esses propósitos eram tidos pelo escritor como verdadeiros e factuais, ainda que confessasse a Alice Raillard não haver uma correspondência direta e correlata entre literatura e política, entre ficção e realidade:

Subterrâneos é um livro importante, em primeiro lugar, os fatos sobre os quais o romance se funda, a luta do Estado Novo contra o povo brasileiro e dos comunistas contra o Estado Novo, tudo aquilo aconteceu,

são fatos históricos. Foram aumentados, é verdade, principalmente no que se refere à luta popular; talvez ela não tivesse tido esta mesma dimensão na realidade. Mas a luta se deu, não deixou de existir por um instante sequer. E foi heroica. E o Estado Novo foi mais do que brutal: as torturas, os assassinatos, todas essas coisas aconteceram e pesam sobre a polícia brasileira. (RAILLARD, 1990, p. 136)

Essa sua trilogia seria uma de suas últimas tentativas de subverter a história, a benefício da propaganda ideológica do Partido Comunista. Nos anos que se seguiram a essas obras, o escritor, em viagem pelo leste europeu, se depararia com experiências constrangedoras que o fez *lutar para voltar a ser escritor, e não mais o militante político* (RAILLARD, 1990, p.142). Esse fato ocorreu com a desfiliação do Partido Comunista do Brasil e da mudança de perspectiva literária.

Depois dessa mudança, Jorge Amado publicou, quatro anos depois, um dos seus romances mais conhecido, Gabriela, Cravo e Canela, considerado por muitos críticos, a exemplo de Alfredo Bosi (1994, p. 406-407), um marco divisor da estética amadiana. Se houve uma transformação de escrita literária, a partir de 1958, principalmente em se referindo às temáticas sociais e políticas-partidárias, não houve, entretanto, uma mudança no que se refere à contribuição do imigrante árabe, na feitura de seus romances. O que lhe valeu um reconhecimento por parte do escritor argelino Slimane Zighdour que, em estudo sobre a “mútua influência entre as literaturas árabe e latino-americana contemporânea”, realizado no ano de 1981, para a UNESCO, constataria a importância das narrativas de Jorge Amado, para se entender o universo árabe imigrado para o Brasil:

Desde *Cem Anos de Solidão* até a *Crônica de uma Morte Anunciada* cujo herói Nassar é um árabe, Garcia Marquez evoca-os regularmente, mas é na obra de Jorge Amado que o imigrante árabe é mais presente e é nesta obra que ele é captado em todas as suas características culturais e afetivas. (ZIGHIDOUR, 1982, p.55)

Dessa maneira, veremos desfilar, em seus próximos romances, uma diversidade de personagens árabes, representando vários tipos, com diversas características culturais e afetivas, como o comerciante sírio de *A morte e a morte de Quincas Berro Dágua* (1961); as bailarinas e mulheres fogosas de *Os Velhos marinheiros* (1961); o fraterno comerciante Chalub, o Mamed, árabe sensibilizado com as dores do amor e o esperto comerciante Abdala de *Os Pastores da noite* (1964); o filantrópico Miguel Turco, a enxerida viúva dona Êmina, seu Mamed, outro viúvo aceso, Chalub, orgulhoso de sua pátria de adoção, todos de *Dona Flor e seus dois maridos: uma história moral e de amor*, (1966); o politizado Maluf, a fraternidade dos *árabes de prestação*, o travesso e boêmio libanês Mahul e o compreensivo mascate Ibrahim de *Tenda dos milagres* (1969); os viciados em jogatinas Jamil Najar e Squeff, Bia Turca, praticante do espiritismo, o nacionalista brasileiro Kalil Chamas de *Tereza Batista cansada de guerra* (1972); o poeta Fuad Maluf e seu neto Antonio Bruno Maluf, de *Farda, fardão, camisola de dormir: fábula para acender uma esperança* (1979), personagens que, somados aos anteriores, já são suficientes para confirmar o depoimento do escritor argelino, mesmo que não tenham tanta importância para as tramas narrativas como se sucede ao árabe Nacib.

Nesse íterim, Jorge Amado publicaria o romance *Tieta do Agreste* (1977), outro grande êxito editorial do escritor, cuja recorrência árabe se faria presente. A esse novo sucesso, se juntaria os acontecimentos históricos que envolveram o mundo árabe, na década de 1970, entre eles uma maior organização da OPEP, criada na década anterior; a segunda crise do petróleo, desencadeada pelo déficit de oferta, devido ao processo de nacionalização iniciada por alguns países; a série de conflitos, envolvendo países produtores, como a Guerra de Junho (O Revés), a Guerra do Ramadã, a Revolução Iraniana, que muito convulsionou o mundo árabe; o embargo de óleo cru às nações ocidentais, pelo seu apoio a Israel na Guerra do Ramadã. Situações que provocaram a elevação do preço do barril a níveis considerados altíssimos, chegando, inclusive a

umentar, no curto período de tempo, entre os fins do ano de 1973 e começo de 1974, em mais de 400%, ocasionando uma prolongada recessão, principalmente nos Estados Unidos da América do Norte e que também teve profundas repercussões no Brasil; o confronto entre o exército do rei jordaniano Hussein, um aliado dos interesses ocidentais e os membros da Organização pela Libertação da Palestina – OLP, na capital jordaniana, e sua conseqüente expulsão, deixando um saldo de mais de dez mil palestinos mortos, em pouco mais de dez dias de combates; as peregrinações de Yasser Arafat e seus combatentes; a morte do grande líder árabe Gamal Abdel Nasser, ocorrida no ano de 1970; os acontecimentos nos jogos Olímpicos de Munique, entre outras tantas ocorrências que pautaram o jornalismo, a mídia televisiva, a indústria cinematográfica, os debates acadêmicos entre outros, conduzidos quase sempre por “especialistas” que, alinhados às políticas sionistas, fortaleceram, ainda mais, os estereótipos postos em circulação desde o Romantismo, com sua visão exótica e pitoresca sobre o mundo árabe, conforme esclarece Said, ao discorrer sobre as três causas atuais que fortalecem o preconceito às gentes árabes:

A televisão, os filmes e todos os recursos da mídia forçaram a informação para dentro dos moldes cada vez mais padronizados. No que diz respeito ao Oriente, a padronização e estereotipação cultural intensificam o domínio da demonologia acadêmica e imaginativa do “Oriente misterioso”. Três coisas contribuíram para transformar até mesmo a mais simples percepção dos árabes e do islã em uma questão altamente politizada, quase áspera: uma, a história do preconceito popular antiárabe e antiislâmico no Ocidente, imediatamente refletido na história do orientalismo; duas, a luta entre os árabes e o sionismo israelita, e os seus efeitos sobre o judeu americano, bem como sobre a cultura liberal e a população em geral; três, a quase total ausência de qualquer posição cultural que tornasse possível, seja identificar-se com os árabes e com o islã, seja discuti-lo com isenção. (SAID, 1990, p.38)

Essa quase total ausência de intelectuais conhecedores da cultura e história árabe, a que se refere Said, teria reflexos na feitura desse romance de sucesso do escritor Jorge Amado, em que a participação árabe se processará de três maneiras: a primeira, pela referência direta à existência de personagens menores da narrativa, como o árabe Chalita, dono do cinema da cidade e da gravidez escandalosa de Sátima, filha de outro árabe, o comerciante Abdula; a segunda, processar-se-á de forma mais embaciada, no entanto, essa ambigüidade não permite que a dúvida se instale completamente, pois, na narrativa, parece-nos que o árabe foi primeiro amor e homem da vida da Tieta, personagem que centraliza as atenções no romance. As indicações que colaboram, com a afirmação acima, podem ser vistas na profissão do primeiro namorado de Tieta, a mascatearia, profissão não exercida por nenhum outro nos romances amadianos, e na amizade deste com o árabe, nominado da narrativa, o Chalita, amigo íntimo da primeira paixão da protagonista:

Tieta sente no rosto o sopro da maresia, o inconfundível olor. A areia fina, trazida do outro lado da barra na força do vento, penetra-lhe os cabelos. O sol queima-lhe a pele. Ali fora mulher pela primeira vez. Em Agreste, perguntara ao árabe Chalita pelo mascate. Pois não sabe? Morreu de um tiro quando a polícia quis prendê-lo na Vila de Santa Luzia, há uns dez anos mais ou menos. Valente, não se entregou, nunca encontraram a mercadoria, as provas. (AMADO, 1981 n, p. 159)

Quanto à terceira referência, não resta dúvida que a fala do narrador, numa inferência que nos faz lembrar a voz do próprio autor, reclama o direito de ter sido o primeiro a trazer, para dentro de suas tramas romanescas, as gentes árabes. Tomadas agora como um novo modismo pelos escritores de plantão, os “especialistas” como fala Said, conforme se observa dos seus protestos, reivindicando seu pioneirismo no trato do mundo árabe, sua aproximação afetiva e seu entendimento sobre aquela cultura, posição que Jorge Amado não esqueceria de pontuar:

Uma rápida palavra, apenas, um pedido de desculpas. Vem de se ler, nas páginas precedentes: “...não há perigo de ouvidos indiscretos, tampouco de microfones secretos como acontece nos romances de aventuras sobre petróleo árabe e contrabando de armas, com espões multinacionais e espãs fabulosamente sexys”. É verdade, nada disso existe no Refúgio dos Lordes, local do encontro secreto do Magnífico Doutor com o Jovem Parlamentar. [...] Quanto a árabes, personagens no momento em alta voga nas páginas dos bestsellers, além de Chalita, envelhecido leão do deserto, não me resta nenhum outro já que o mascate morreu de tiro, dignamente, como compete a um bom contrabandista. (AMADO, 1981 n, p. 272-grifos nossos)

Chamando-nos a atenção para o seu pioneirismo, Jorge Amado diversificaria as várias feições árabes, ao trazer para suas narrativas uma multiplicidade de rostos árabes que faz, de seus romances, um campo de investigação abundante, para compreender a contribuição dessas gentes, na sedimentação de uma das possíveis identidades baianas e/ou nacionais. Na realidade, ao privilegiar a presença árabe, em meio à sua construção identitária do sul da Bahia, Jorge Amado inauguraria um caminho estético, marcado pela ausência de estranhamento e por uma perspectiva de mão dupla, que ora realça o agudo sentimento árabe de pertencimento à nossa terra, com a correspondente e efusiva aprovação das personagens brasileiras, o que só é possível graças ao apagamento das diferenças e ao realce das similaridades culturais entre nós e os árabes; ora o caminho em que, numa estratégia claramente mais complementar, tanto o árabe quanto o brasileiro reconstroem, solidariamente, o espaço nacional, como se verifica, hoje, nas narrativas de Milton Hatoum sobre a presença árabe no Norte do Brasil.

Apesar de ter pontuado todos os seus romances com a existência de personagens árabes, quase sempre vistas sob o viés da positividade, cada um com suas particularidades e características, cultuadores da amizade, da alegria, da paz, da sinceridade, da simplicidade, da gratidão, da

sensatez, da honra, da justiça, do respeito às tradições sagradas do outro, à pátria brasileira, numa quebra incontestável do estereótipo construído pelo mundo ocidental, será, no seu antepenúltimo romance *Tocaia Grande: a face obscura* (1984), que esses qualificativos convergirão para a formação da síntese de uma configuração árabe, marcada pela ausência de estranhamento, pela similaridade entre nós e os árabes, continuamente apresentada ao longo dos seus romances.

Esse movimento cíclico, em torno das gentes árabes, do tema da brasilidade, dos costumes da Bahia, da defesa da nossa forma de ser mestiço, que tanto marcam a obra de Jorge Amado, vão se delinear nesse romance como uma espécie de síntese de tudo aquilo que alimentou a imaginação do escritor, para que suas criaturas árabes se tornassem cada vez mais brasileiras, cada vez mais baianas, no construir de uma identidade continuamente transformada pelos fatores culturais, nesses deslocamentos das identidades pós-modernas. “A identidade tona-se uma “celebração móvel”; formada e transformada continuamente em relação às formas pelas quais somos representados ou interpelados nos sistemas culturais que nos rodeiam.” (HALL, 2006, p. 12-13)

Nessa “celebração móvel”, além do desfile de figurantes árabes dessa narrativa, homens e mulheres com ocupações variadas, como o poeta Medauar, o boêmio Fuad Karan, o comerciante Jamil Skaf e sua filha Aruza, o casal de comerciantes Jussara Rabat e Kalil Rabat, o hoteleiro Mamed, o garçom Adib Baruk, as industriosas irmãs Farhat e a jovem Ádma, que chegam a impressionar pela variedade de rostos e caracteres que espelham o imigrante árabe, temos, também a figura cativante e fabulosa do árabe Fadul, para onde se encaminha a ênfase da motivação conflitiva, apesar de o autor ter intencionado contar a versão dos trabalhadores do ciclo do cacau, esquecidos pela versão oficial: *Quero descobrir e revelar a face obscura, aquela que foi varrida dos compêndios de história por infame e degradante.* (AMADO, 1984, p. 15)

Essa autodenominação, antes mesmo de começar a narrativa, de ser o porta-voz dos esquecidos, resultou, na verdade, num deslocamento do núcleo dramático que é percebido, primeiramente, pela disposição dos aspectos formais, em que o autor desenvolve todo um capítulo-*O Deus dos maronitas conduz o mascate Fadul Abdala a um sítio paradisíaco*-apenas para descrever, minuciosamente, o personagem Fadul Abdala. Causando, como consequência, a desaceleração da narrativa, posta no começo, salvaguardou o intenso movimento, registrado principalmente durante os conflitos no núcleo original da futura cidade de Irisópolis.

Continuando a análise dos aspectos formais do romance, vamos observar que, dos vinte e três capítulos da obra, cinco são inteiramente centralizados nas ações do personagem Fadul Abdala. Além disso, ele, juntamente com os demais árabes da narrativa, participa, direta ou indiretamente, muitas vezes ativamente, de todas as demais divisões do livro, o que nos permite antever que os pressupostos da objetividade pretendida por Jorge Amado, ao orquestrar esse romance, fora, no mínimo, dividida com a incrível e fascinante história do árabe Fadul Abdala.

Nessa divisão, os episódios vão se sucedendo de maneira favorável a esses imigrantes. Para isso, bastar vemos os predicados com os quais o autor qualifica os personagens árabes, todos eles, configurados sem mácula, sem traços censuráveis, sem pormenores que possibilitem alguma observação que denote arranhar os bons costumes estabelecidos naqueles grupos sociais.

Essa configuração ganha mais ênfase, maior clareza, intensidade e duração, com o personagem Fadul Abdala. Todos os seus gestos, suas palavras, suas ações, seus movimentos são sempre acompanhados de aprovação por parte do narrador, que não se esquece de mostrar o quanto o árabe carrega consigo o protótipo, o modelo de um cidadão exemplar, de um homem ideal.

Daí, o narrador expressar sua aprovação, quando Fadul deseja se amigar com uma prostituta; lembrar a integração religiosa intrínseca à sua personalidade, maronita, recorria sempre às

imagens islâmicas, diante de suas angústias; elogiar o árabe, quando este renuncia à fortuna oferecida pela viúva Jussara Rabat, preferindo sua honra e liberdade; informar o quanto ele confiava nas gentes do povo, como a rapariga Coroca, e o quanto prezava a amizade com o negro Abduim; confirmação de que o árabe prefere o prazer ao negócio, o quanto é conciliador, solidário às gentes do povo, como as raparigas do povoado; seu desejo de fundar uma cidade, levado adiante com firmes propósitos; sua gratidão àqueles que lhe ajudaram nos primeiros dias de povoado; sua inteira integração à cultura brasileira, vendo nos sergipanos uma contingência de seus irmãos semitas; sua nomeação como juiz de paz do povoado; seu pendor às festividades do povo; a relativização posta pelo árabe, quando os coronéis procuravam difamar a reputação do povoado; suas reiteradas confirmações de brasilidade; sua liderança nata; por fim, os valores culturais daquele povoado, ditados por Fadul Abdala, permaneceram válidos enquanto ele continuou exercendo o ofício sagrado de guardião da cidade, numa convergência de preceitos benfazejos que chega a alçar a integração árabe-baiana a uma linha categórica de poetização somente vista na imaginação do escritor modernista Jorge Amado. Essa poetização da integração dos árabes à nossa brasilidade continuará no seu próximo e último romance *A Descoberta da América pelos Turcos* (1994), trama desenvolvida, a partir de alguns núcleos da narrativa *Tocaia Grande*, especialmente aqueles referentes ao Fadul:

Eram irmãs de Ádma, feia como a necessidade, ruim como o Cão, com quem estivera a pique de casar-se. História dos princípios do arraial, menosprezada na crônica de Tocaia Grande pois os seus lances decorreram em Itabuna; teria sido narrativa curiosa e picaresca com personagens conhecidos tal como Fuad Karam, e com novos figurantes: Adib Barud, o surpreendente garçom do bar, por exemplo - mas é tarde demais para contá-la. (AMADO, 1984, p. 406-grifos nossos)

Nesse desdobramento, lançaria dez depois de suas lamúrias, uma história composta inteiramente com personagens árabes, a exemplo da obra

Boabdil, de Gonçalves Dias, tendo como eixo norteador a história de Jamil Bichara, espécie de desdobramento do personagem Fadul Abdala, uma forma muito peculiar à narrativa árabe e que tem, em Scheherazade, a expressão maior da força narrativa, despertando, no leitor, um desejo de conhecer os próximos capítulos, o destino dos personagens, o fim das histórias, se é que ele existe.

Nesse processo de entrelaçamento de textos, Jorge Amado finda a feitura de sua obra romanesca, com a publicação de uma história totalmente dedicada a elogiar os imigrantes árabes, funcionando como uma espécie de coroamento de tudo aquilo que fora afirmado por ele, acerca das gentes árabes. Nesse sentido, o próprio autor, em uma longa explicação sobre os motivos pelos quais fora levado à publicação dessa última obra, concluiria seus comentários esclarecedores, afirmando serem os árabes, “brasileiros dos melhores” (1994, p. XVIII).

Escritor afeito ao modo popular de contar “causos”, Jorge Amado encerraria, com a publicação de *A Descoberta da América pelos Turcos*, um círculo de romances que, entre outros objetivos do prosador, procurou expressar as várias nuances que caracterizaram a comunidade árabe, aportada na Bahia. Como se vê, inicia e encerra essa obra, elogiando os árabes, num movimento circular que procurou, não obstante os estereótipos postos em circulação, conhecer, na intimidade, toda a força do espírito árabe que, segundo o escritor, é tão brasileiro e tão cheio de virtudes como nós, como os populares e trabalhadores desse Brasil baiano.

Por fim, como se observa, a propensão para o social e o político, marcou o tom das narrativas. Nessas obras, permeadas de muitos personagens da Terra das Mil e uma Noites, o árabe quase sempre é colocado ao lado das classes trabalhadoras e desfavorecidas, os quais, untados em um só drama, em um só objetivo, o de dar uma cor cada vez mais acentuada à identidade baiano-brasileira, abraçou-se trazendo para o Brasil a arte mágica de comercializar, a fascinante forma de contar histórias, a sua lealdade à pátria, e a sua simpatia com os nacionais, sobretudo, os

nacionais, oriundos das classes populares, tão caros ao escritor brasileiro mais lido e traduzido em todo o mundo. Essa é a particularidade árabe de Jorge Amado, primeiramente notada por Slimane Zeghidour, timidamente desenvolvida por Jorge Medauar. Nela reside a força de sua poetização acerca da integração árabe-baiana, até os dias de hoje.

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The Right to Question: Democratic Legitimacy and the Crisis of Electoral Trust in India

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to examine the basic principles of democratic governance, primarily focusing on the right of citizens to ask questions, a crucial mechanism for accountability. Drawing upon the Social Contract Theory, the study explores whether questions arising about the electoral system—a vital component of democracy—suggest a violation of the government's responsibility and the terms of the contract with the people. Specifically, the paper analyzes public opinion regarding the democratic contract following the 2024 Indian parliamentary general elections, when serious allegations about electoral transparency emerged. It investigates the sovereign public's actual perceptions of the allegations and counter-allegations among the Election Commission, the government and the opposition, recognizing that these controversies not only fuel political dispute but also pose a significant challenge to public trust. Furthermore, the research examines how these events affect citizens' faith in the electoral system and their future democratic participation. It also studies the perceived necessity of post-election scrutiny and the importance of addressing the public's concerns to maintain democratic credibility.

Keywords: democratic accountability, public trust, social contract, election, electoral reform, commission of india.

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Keywords: democratic accountability, public trust, social contract, election, electoral reform, commission of india.

Author: Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, MGM University, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Maharashtra, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

The most important feature of a democratic government is that it gives people the right to ask questions. This is why democracy is the most popular form of government in the world. However, if a democracy is flawed or if a government comes to power unfairly, this right to question can be lost, and the democracy can slowly end. Therefore, a pure and honest democracy is essential. For such a democracy to exist, we need sensible and well-informed public opinion. This is why the Indian Constitution, under Article 326, grants the right to vote to every citizen except those of "unsound mind." This means that a person who is not mentally sound should not vote. But the real question is: is this rule actually checked? It cannot be said that every person who votes is sensible or well-informed. When people are not sensible, they may not understand how they are being manipulated. That is why an aware and intelligent public is so important in a democracy.

Another important point comes from philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. They explained why we created governments with a simple idea: people came together and elected leaders through a kind of "contract." This contract had two main conditions: The elected leaders must protect the people's lives, property, and liberty. If the leaders fail to do this, the people have the right to change them. So, while a democratic government holds immense power, it is also entrusted with great responsibility. If the government abuses its power and neglects its duties, people naturally begin to doubt the system. They start asking questions to clear their doubts and hold the government accountable.

Two major issues are currently being discussed widely in India: the conscience of the people and

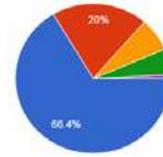
doubt about the functioning of the system. Discussion of both these concerns seems to have increased significantly following the 2024 general elections. On the one hand, public suspicion is growing. On the other hand, Rahul Gandhi, the Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, held a press conference where he presented evidence to journalists and the public. This presentation further strengthened the doubts that were already present in the minds of the people.

Rahul Gandhi has intensely questioned the government and the Election Commission (EC) regarding alleged "vote theft" and irregularities in the 2024 elections, presenting evidence in a press conference that revealed issues like fake addresses and multiple voters at single residences. He challenged the EC's transparency, demanding to know why voter lists are not available in a digital, machine-readable format and why CCTV footage is being destroyed, claiming that access to the machine-readable data would expose the full extent of the scam. In response, the EC dismissed the possibility of verification by claiming it would take 3,600 years and has largely failed to provide satisfactory answers to Mr. Gandhi's specific concerns about electoral integrity and transparency.

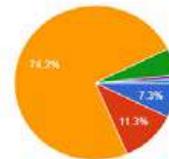
The controversy ignited by Rahul Gandhi's allegations of "vote theft"-supported by evidence like fake voter entries-and the Election Commission's (EC) defensive, non-committal response has led to significant public doubt, with survey data indicating a substantial erosion of public trust in the EC. Instead of definitively resolving the conflict between Mr. Gandhi's demand for machine-readable data and the EC's claim that verification would take 3,600 years, the exchange has intensified concerns over electoral transparency, fueling a narrative that the EC has prioritized institutional defensiveness over fully addressing the quantifiable vulnerabilities and procedural anomalies that cast a shadow on the legitimacy of the results.

According to the survey, 78% of participants watched Rahul Gandhi's entire press conference, while 21% only saw news highlights. When asked

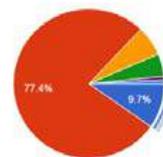
if the evidence he presented was credible, 66% of respondents found it fully credible, 20% considered it somewhat credible, and 7% did not believe it. Meanwhile, 6% were uncertain, and about 1% stated that its truth could not be confirmed without a formal affidavit.



The survey also asked respondents if their doubts were cleared by the clarification Rahul Gandhi provided in his press conference. In response, a significant majority of 74 percent stated that their doubts were not cleared at all. In contrast, 11 percent felt their doubts were partially resolved, and only 7 percent reported that their doubts were fully cleared.

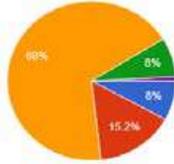


Following the press conferences by both Rahul Gandhi and the Election Commission, the survey asked respondents whether their trust in the election process had increased or decreased. The results show that a large majority of 77 percent reported a decrease in their trust. In contrast, 9.7 percent said their trust had increased, 6.5 percent stated it had remained the same, and 4.8 percent reported no change in their level of trust.

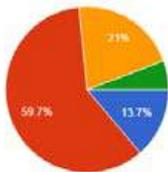


When participants were asked the critical question of whether the answer provided by the Election Commission (EC) was correct and satisfactory, the overwhelming majority expressed dissatisfaction. Specifically, 68 percent of respondents unequivocally stated that the EC's answer was not satisfactory at all. In contrast, a smaller portion, 15 percent, indicated that they

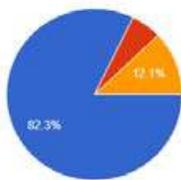
found the response to be correct and satisfactory. Additionally, 8 percent felt the EC's response was sufficient, suggesting a level of acceptance or satisfaction, even if it was not wholly convincing to them.



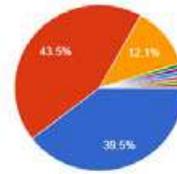
The most significant question in the discussion was whether people believed Rahul Gandhi raised his objection for political gain. On this issue, a majority of 59 percent of respondents said "no," while 13 percent said "yes." A further 21 percent also expressed doubt by leaning towards "yes," indicating a degree of skepticism about his motives.



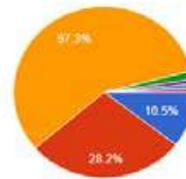
We also asked voters whether raising objections to the election process, as Rahul Gandhi did months after the elections, is necessary in a democracy. In response, an overwhelming 82 percent of people stated that such objections are necessary to ensure a responsible government is elected, while 12 percent believed it depends on the specific situation at the time, according to the survey's findings.



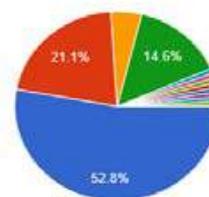
The survey also examined the impact of these events on people's willingness to vote. It found that while 39 percent of respondents said they would definitely vote, a larger group of 43 percent reported that their willingness to vote had decreased. Meanwhile, 12 percent stated that these developments made no difference and they would vote as usual.



Following these controversies, the survey also assessed how safe and trustworthy people find India's electoral system. The results show that a majority of 57 percent of respondents believe the system is not safe or trustworthy. In contrast, 28 percent feel it is safe but needs improvement, while only 10 percent find the process very safe and trustworthy.



When asked what steps are needed to strengthen trust in India's democracy and electoral process, the public suggested several key measures. A majority of 53 percent advocated for a return to voting directly on ballot paper instead of using Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). Further more, 21 percent called for greater transparency from the Election Commission and 14 percent emphasized the need to create more awareness among voters. A smaller group, comprising 4 percent, believed that objections to the electoral process should not be raised after an election is concluded.



II. CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the information and data obtained from this survey lead to a clear and conclusive answer: Indian voters harbor serious doubts about the fairness and transparency of their elections. While their doubts have raised many questions, they also feel they are not receiving adequate answers, indicating a form of administrative system failure. In a democracy,

when citizens genuinely feel that the tools they use to hold the government accountable are being blocked, the fundamental 'social contract' between the people and the government weakens. To strengthen Indian democracy, an urgent change in approach is required. The government and the Election Commission must stop simply asserting that 'the elections were fair.' Instead, they must demonstrate this by being completely open with voters and answering every question raised. The future of India's democracy hinges on restoring the people's trust, which necessitates providing proper answers to all their questions and doubts. Voters possess the fundamental right to ask questions in a democracy, a voice reinforced by the social contract. Crucially, if the government fails to protect the fundamental rights of the people, the sovereign populace has the right to change the government; if this right is nullified, the social contract effectively terminates. This present research paper, in examining this contract, concludes that the doubts and questions raised about India's electoral system are serious, and the people have not received proper answers, as clearly evidenced by this survey.

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What is Socialism?

Leonid Aleksandrovich Griffen

ABSTRACT

The doctrine of socialism as a just social order has a long history and has always provoked debate. The emergence of "real socialism" has not eliminated the disagreements regarding it. Based on an examination of various perspectives on socialism, the author concludes that the very approach to defining socialism is incorrect. Socialism should be viewed as a necessary stage in the development of society, namely, as a necessary transitional state between its class and classless periods. In a class society, participants in production are divided into managers, who privately own the means of production, and workers, who own only their own labor force. Consequently, the former dominates the latter. A classless society presupposes the abolition of private property and its replacement by public ownership. But here a contradiction arises. The transition between a class and a classless society, due to their contrasting natures, is a complex and lengthy process. And since property is a relationship between people over the means of production, realized in their shared production process, society cannot simultaneously possess both forms of ownership due to their diametrically opposed nature.

Keywords: socialism, means of production, property, possession, disposal, use, classes and strata, last stage of capitalism.

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Keywords: socialism, means of production, property, possession, disposal, use, classes and strata, last stage of capitalism.

Author: Doctor of Engineering Sciences, Professor, Senior Researcher National Historical and Architectural Museum "Kiev Fortress" Ukraine.

I. INTRODUCTION

Considering the unjust organization of the society in which they lived, many thinkers conceived of a better, more just system. This has always been the case, at least since Plato. But during the period of intense capitalist transformations in Western European society (particularly in the first half of the 19th century), living conditions for the majority of the population became truly unbearable. This particularly intensified dreams of a better future, which came to be known as socialism. The "founders of socialism," according to F. Engels, were the "great utopians" K. A. Saint-Simon, C. Fourier, and R. Owen. However, "every utopian is a convinced supporter of the theory of the absolutely good nature of man, which lacks only a definition of goals; historical conditions are ignored or considered secondary" [1]. They sought to provide just that.

M. Weber already pointed out that a utopian concept is always an act of confrontation between the thinker and the world, for it creates tension between actual existence and ideal being, generates hope for a better future, creating essential prerequisites for specific social actions aimed at bringing the real world into line with an a priori given ideal [2]. But the socialism (or the first stage of communism), which K. Marx and F. Engels had in mind, was not a *project*, but a *forecast-in* accordance with the laws of development of society. For, according to Marx, "people make their own history, but they do not make it as they please, under circumstances which they themselves have not chosen, but which are immediately present, given to them and have

passed on from the past" [3, V. 8, P. 119]. The scientific analysis of these conditions and their development is precisely reflected in Marxist theory, the conclusions of which, in particular, assumed the inevitability of replacing capitalism with socialism [4].

Defenders of capitalism, on the contrary, have always fought against the development of socialist theory. The Marxist scientific approach was particularly repulsive to them. They did everything possible to prevent its further development. This included constant attempts to exclude, even by force, discussion of this issue. In 1949, Albert Einstein concluded his article "Why Socialism?" with two theses: "Clarity regarding the goals and problems of socialism is of the greatest importance in our time of transition" and "At present, free and unhindered discussion of these problems is under a powerful taboo" [5]. The processes of transition continue to gather momentum, but the situation noted by Einstein is changing slowly. The need for discussion is even increasing, while the "powerful taboo" on questions related to socialism remains largely intact. However, this primarily concerns "clarity regarding the goals and problems of socialism" in its scientific aspect. This does not prevent the widespread dissemination of popular ideas about socialism, which usually barely reflect its characteristic features, even in the first approximation. Today, the most common conception in the West is of socialism as a system of state measures in the social sphere that do not touch on issues of production (that would be "communism"!).

Therefore, for example, in the United States, not only are there quite a few people who consider themselves supporters of socialism, but also, in general, "the Overton window for how much socialism Americans want is steadily shifting to the left." It is believed that "a little socialism (government using some of the money produced by capitalism and extracted from it through taxes) is necessary for capitalism to exist." Moreover, "in the end, capitalism cannot exist without a little socialism and the middle class cannot exist meaningfully without *a lot* of socialism, as the New Deal and the Great Society demonstrated,"

and it was "socialism that built the vast edifice of American prosperity over the last century" [6]. This, of course, ignores the fact that throughout the "last century" (as well as before), the United States, along with other Western countries, shamelessly robbed the rest of the world, and precisely through this and not through taxes extracted from "its own capitalism," organizing handouts ("socialism"!) for its "middle class." However, even now, the United States itself produces *only half* of what it consumes; the rest is "obtained" *from abroad* in various ways [7, 8]. So, reserves for "American-style socialism" still exist.

II. DISCUSSIONS OF SOCIALISM

Nevertheless, the crisis of the current unequal international (intercivilizational, global) division of labor and with it the crisis of capitalism as a socioeconomic formation based on it, still demands a serious consideration of the socialist perspective. Consequently, attitudes toward socialism are gradually beginning to shift in academic circles around the world. Even on Wikipedia networks, "we find that the global network opinion favors socialism, communism for all 6 editions" [9]. Accordingly, more and more scholarly works are appearing on this topic, including a number of articles devoted to specific problems of socialism. First of all, we note the frequently heard, correct assertion of the impasse of the Western bourgeois model of society, confirmed by all historical practice. The goal of the current global dictatorship of the imperialist powers, led by the United States, is to prolong the dominance of the "golden billion" over the exploited periphery, forever doomed to economic and social degradation. Only socialism can provide a real, rather than reactionary, utopian alternative to American-style globalism and the "new world order," and create the conditions for realizing the "concept of one world and one planet" [10]. Therefore, the problems of socialism are attracting an increasing number of researchers. Numerous theoretical "models" of socialism have existed and continue to exist, raising ongoing debate. It is not without reason that the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines the concept of "socialism" as "a rich tradition of political thought and practice, the

history of which contains a vast number of views and theories, often differing in many of their conceptual, empirical, and normative commitments" [11].

Even where socialism became a reality, the perception of it was far from unambiguous. In relation to socialism in the USSR, even proponents of the socialist path of development were divided into numerous currents, which, however, if we exclude minor points, fit quite clearly into three main frameworks. According to the *first*, the USSR undoubtedly had a socialist system. It had many positive features, although it was not without certain shortcomings. Over time, for a variety of reasons, both internal and external, these shortcomings intensified, leading to the crisis of socialism. The *second* model also doesn't deny the presence of socialism there, but not genuine socialism, with "distortions." Proponents of this view believe that it wasn't "true" socialism, but rather some kind of "feudal," "barracks," "bureaucratic," or some other kind of socialism. In the future, it would be necessary to learn from these mistakes and, this time, build "true" socialism ("democratic," "humane," "with a human face," etc.). And finally, according to the third model, there was no socialism at all in the USSR, because its most essential attributes were absent. Therefore, the task of building socialism must begin anew (of course, capitalizing on the positive aspects that did exist). Moreover, a number of previous problems would first need to be resolved.

It would seem that these points of view are quite different, yet, paradoxically, they are based on common foundations: *utopianism* and *anti-historicism*. Indeed, when defining the essence of a real social system, in all these cases they use a certain (often quite different) set of "characteristic features" of socialism, given *a priori*. Comparing these with reality (the accuracy of which often leaves much to be desired) allows proponents of these views to draw conclusions about both the presence of socialism and its "quality." However, a growing number of countries worldwide consider themselves to be under a socialist system. And these countries are developing their own views on the essence of socialism. Socialism is generally

interpreted as a system in which collective interests and control over the economy prevail over private interests. The goal of socialism is the elimination of exploitation and the achievement of equality. However, the specific interpretations of socialism in Soviet scientific literature and in capitalist countries differ significantly.

In the classical Marxist interpretation, the means to achieving these goals is the abolition of private ownership of the means of production—since for socialism as a classless society, "the transformation of private property into public property is the first prerequisite for the abolition of classes" (The Communist Manifesto). To achieve this, nationalization was envisioned as a transitional measure, with public (collective) ownership eventually envisioned. In the Soviet Union, state and cooperative-collective ownership existed (the 1936 Constitution), but subsequently, strict priority of state ownership of the means of production prevailed: "The means of production are the property of the entire people—state property (all-Union and republican)" (the 1977 Constitution). Academic works have primarily sought to theoretically substantiate this factual position.

In post-Soviet publications, the approach to defining the most important characteristics of socialism has changed significantly. This primarily concerns issues related to the ownership of the means of production. Although the post-Soviet tradition retained, to a certain extent, an emphasis on centralized planning and "rigid" forms of ownership, it increasingly accepted that "the socialization of property does not preclude a formal multi-structured system, provided that commodity-money relations are supplanted and workers' self-government is strengthened" [12]. Attempts are being made to synthesize the Soviet experience with new realities, while maintaining an emphasis on socialization and spiritual orientation. A return to the idea of socialization is taking place, but with due consideration for the "historical mistakes" of the USSR. Flexible models are being sought: state + self-government, socially responsible private ownership, a combination of Marxist elements with national specifics,

traditional communal ownership (within the framework of the Russian idea), etc. [13].

Western "democratic socialism" allows for a combination of private and public ownership. "Socialism is possible with a plurality of forms of ownership, including private ownership, provided there is public control and limitations on market power" [14]. That is, the primary emphasis is on democratic control, the redistribution of wealth, and social justice. "Socialism is possible as a system in which power over the means of production is democratized-through cooperatives, state corporations or community institutions" [15]. Specific Chinese notions of socialism ("socialism with Chinese characteristics") deserve special mention (see, for example, [16]; but we will return to this issue below).

So far, utopian tendencies prevail in the discussion of problems related to possible forms of socialism, with the idea of it largely being the result of the social *design* of this system from those elements that appeal to the authors of such projects, presenting them as desirable. However, the development of society does not take into account anyone's wishes or assessments, but proceeds according to its inherent *laws*. Therefore, it makes sense to imagine future society not as a *desirable project*, but as a *forecast* based on an analysis of the actual process of its development, determined by the objective laws of social movement. These laws have already been realized in previous social processes and will determine future ones as well. And, of course, it is desirable to consider the existing experience of socialist construction and the functioning of real socialism.

2.1 Scientific and Technological Progress and Social Development

Human society has undergone numerous significant changes in its development. Chief among these was the transition from a primitive (egalitarian) society, which lacked what was later called the *social division of labor*, to a class society, for which such a division of labor is its most characteristic feature. This transition, like subsequent socioeconomic changes, was driven by

the development of social productive forces. The growth of knowledge and its embodiment in the advancement of tools and technologies increased the productivity of each individual. However, at a certain point, the *individual's* limited ability to personally master these advances became insufficient for each member of society to utilize *all* of their existing knowledge and skills. This is when the so-called social division of labor emerged. Initially, this involved the *specialization* of producers' labor functions (the "horizontal" division of labor), but with further scientific and technological progress, a social division of production participants into *executors* and *organizers*-the "vertical" division of labor-occurred, with the eventual formation of corresponding social groups (classes) [17]. The transition from one state to another, due to its fundamental nature, constituted an entire epoch (the period of the commune).

Class society, as a result of scientific and technological progress, which significantly influenced the specific nature of the division of labor, also underwent certain social changes in its development. The most important here was the gradual transfer of two of the three fundamental production functions (*direct action* on the object of labor to change it, the *supply of energy* for this transformation and *control* over the process) from human individuals to the forces of nature. Therefore, "in all formations, at certain stages of their development, a technological revolution occurred, expressed in the transfer to technology of new production functions previously performed exclusively by humans" [18]. Quantitative changes led to qualitative changes, as a result of which socio-economic formations in the development of society replaced each other-*slavery*, *feudalism*, *capitalism*. However, the third function always remained entirely with humans.

Due to its global nature, capitalism, over the half-millennium of its existence, has achieved scientific and technological progress at an increasing rate. And the moment has arrived when it has become possible to transfer the third production function (*control*) to technical devices. Initially, these were isolated automation tools, but now, thanks to *artificial intelligence*, the prospect has opened up

of *completely* transferring this *production* function from humans to the means of production. Such a transfer not only changes the nature of the division between so-called "mental" and "physical" labor, but ultimately leads to the elimination of this division altogether, due to the complete transfer of the function of managing the *direct* impact on the means of production from humans to technical devices. And consequently, to the end of the class form of society, having *fully fulfilled its functions* in social development.

This process is objective, independent of the will of people. But it is realized through their activity, which is precisely controlled by their will. Social *ideology* provides direction for this activity. And ideology, at its core, reflects the socio-economic interests of the ruling class. It is shaped by production relations and is intended to convince all strata of society that the organization of society that exists in these interests is the most just and natural. Ideology determines the nature of people's actions in accordance with its norms. In other words, there is an interdependence between scientific and technological progress, the development of productive forces, the social division of labor, production relations and ideology.

The interaction between them is characterized by a highly inertial nature. Therefore, all transitions between socio-economic formations have been significantly extended over time and characterized by transformations with a gradual shift in form. But this is especially true for fundamental social changes-the transition of society between its *fundamentally different* states-class and classless. Therefore, the first transition (the period of the commune) lasted for millennia. Today, social change has accelerated significantly, but even today, a direct transition from capitalism to a classless, egalitarian society (Marx called it communism) cannot be instantaneous and requires a certain transition period.

2.2 The Social Function of Socialism

Let us briefly summarize what was said above about the laws governing the succession of socio-economic formations. It all begins with the

constant, spontaneous development of knowledge and the refinement of production tools and technology (i.e., *scientific and technological progress*). This process leads to the *development of society's means of production*, with a corresponding improvement in production processes. This, in turn, results in new forms of *social division of labor*, defining *new relationships between people in the production process*. At the center of this entire process is the "vertical" (social) division of labor, expressed in the forms of *ownership of the means of production* (and consequently, in the relations of "domination and subordination"). Therefore, during the transition from a classless society to a class society, and vice versa, these relationships undergo a *fundamental* shift: in the former, they emerge, while in the latter, they virtually *disappear*. And today, this is the primary task that *socialism* must fulfill.

Perhaps the main misconception in prevailing notions of socialism is the idea that "the fundamental value of socialism is justice" [19]. According to Wikipedia, "Justice is a concept of what is due, which requires conformity between action and reward: in particular, the conformity between rights and duties, work and reward, merit and recognition, crime and punishment, and the conformity between the roles of various social strata, groups, and individuals in society and their social position within it." Utopian socialists were precisely those who called for justice. But the point is that society consists precisely of "*different* strata and groups" occupying different "social positions" because they perform *different* functions in society. And their members, accordingly, have *different* interests and corresponding notions of what is due. Therefore, their understandings of justice *differ significantly*, and sometimes radically. Consequently, justice as a criterion of the "quality" of social relations (apart from its specific interpretation in jurisprudence) is objectively devoid of any meaning.

But if justice is not the main characteristic of socialism, then why is it needed at all? Because it represents a state of society that objectively connects two fundamentally different states-the

current class system and the future classless system. The main difference between socio-economic systems lies in the forms of ownership of the means of production, since they determine the roles played in social production by the social groups included within it. Current society, with its "vertical" division of labor, primarily consists of various socio-economic groups (classes) with different interests, but in a classless society, in which this division of labor is eliminated, differences in *this regard* will also disappear. This means that *private* property, characteristic of any class society, will be replaced by what is usually called public property. And since these are *fundamentally* different states of society, the transition between them requires a state of society whose *special properties* ensure this transition.

Since socialism is a society in which there is no exploiting class, its emergence signifies the abolition of private property. However, as F. Engels wrote in *The Principles of Communism*, it is "impossible to eliminate private property outright, just as it is impossible to immediately increase the existing productive forces to the extent necessary for the creation of a social economy" [3, Vol. 4, P. 332]. This is precisely what the special nature of the organization of society-socialism (or, according to Marx, the first phase of communism)-is *objectively* designed for. Its main distinguishing feature is the *unique nature* of property relations in the means of production.

Failure to understand this *unique nature* of property relations under socialism leads to meaningless assertions such as: "The victory of socialist movements in a number of colonial countries from 1945 to 1960, primarily in China, led to the emergence of political regimes that combine the principles of the socialist, capitalist, and feudal modes of production" [19]. In fact, any "combination of principles" between *heterogeneous* socio-economic formations based on *diametrically opposed* ideologies is *fundamentally* impossible: a "struggle for dominance" will inevitably arise between them. This is especially true when the goal is to build a classless society. For while during periods of change within a class society, only the form of

private property changes, between it and the extremes of the sequence, fundamental changes occur: first, public property gives way to private property, and then vice versa. Since public and private property require fundamentally different *ideologies* to function, and a directly opposed socio-psychological atmosphere, they *cannot coexist in principle*. On the other hand, such a radical change simply cannot occur instantly (or even in a "short transition period"). The only solution is a relatively lengthy transition period, during which *neither private nor public property exists*.

2.3 On the Essence of Property Relations

The classics of Marxism always emphasized that property is *not a relationship between people and its object* (in this case, the means of production), but a relationship *between people regarding* said object. That is, it is not a material phenomenon, but an ideal one, existing in people's *consciousness*. Consequently, it is impossible to imagine the *coexistence in a person's consciousness* (unless they are schizophrenic), and therefore the simultaneous functioning in society of property relations that are *the same* for all its members (i.e., public), and property relations that are *different* for each individual (i.e., private). Therefore, socialism, with its *unique* property relations, serves precisely to facilitate *the transition* from a class society with private ownership of the means of production to a classless society with public ownership (or, more precisely, with the virtual absence of such a specific relationship between people regarding the means of production), precisely what distinguishes it from previous socio-economic formations-as well as from the classless society that follows.

But before turning to the problems of property under socialism, a few words should be said about property relations over the means of production in general. Initially, the means of production in society belonged to everyone and to no one in particular. However, as a result of the development of the division of labor, certain groups of individuals began to perform functions that changed their relationships with other groups

alienated from the means of production. The specific nature of alienation depends on the socio-economic relations that exist in a given historical period. However, in principle, the types of alienation can only correspond to the types of appropriation that can exist at all. With regard to property relations, social practice has identified *only three* possible types of social appropriation: 1) *the concept of the unity of subject and object*; 2) *the ability to control the functioning of the object in accordance with the will of the subject*; 3) *the ability of the subject to use (in any form) the results of the object's functioning*. In principle, these three aspects can, in each specific case, with respect to specific subjects and objects, exist *together, separately or in some combination*.

The existence of these three types of relations, as applied to the means of production, was subsequently legally enshrined in three concepts characterizing actually functioning property relations: *possession, disposal, and use*. It should be noted that these terms are primarily used today in jurisprudence, and are not generally considered to have a direct bearing on issues of property in economic terms. However, as Marx noted [3, V. 13. P. 7], property relations themselves represent merely the legal expression of certain production relations (consisting, as we have seen, in the nature of the social division of labor). Consequently, the corresponding legal terms also, in one way or another, reflect economic relations. However, during the period of the dominance of individual private property, especially under capitalism, questions related to their components, thanks to the long-established customary coincidence of the latter in object and subject, did not have any particular practical significance and were only brought to light when certain legal cases arose. However, when considering the problem of property relations as a whole, including their essence, origin and development, this point takes on a very significant significance.

The object of interest to us is the *means of production*. The subject can be either *society as a whole* or an *individual* (or a limited and clearly defined group of them). If all three relationships *coincide*, then the ownership relationship is

integral-i.e., in the first case, ownership is *public*, in the second, *private*. But what if not? Then the ownership relationship takes on a *divided (split)* character. However, the question arises: is such a discrepancy even possible? Not only is it possible, but it has already existed in human society (under the commune) for thousands of years. And it returns again under socialism, confusing its hapless "theorists." If we return to the first transition from public to private ownership (the commune period), then, as already noted, this occurred over a very long period. And, for example, throughout this time, ownership of the primary means of production-land-was not integral, but fragmented, with different subjects in possession, disposal, and use. The community also *owned* the land on which it lived and from which it "fed." The clan, through its governing bodies, *managed* the land plots, and transferred them to individuals (or more precisely, families) for *use*.

Prior to this, property had been public (meaning that special ownership relations over the means of production were essentially absent) for a very long time (approximately twenty thousand years), but approximately 10,000-12,000 years ago, its fragmentation began. The extremely diverse concrete forms of this fragmentation were constantly changing, bringing property ever closer to its dominance in the form of private ownership. This began approximately 5,000-6,000 years ago with the emergence of the first class society. In this case, land ownership was forcibly taken from a given agricultural community by the victorious community (usually nomads). A slave state arose, in which members of the first community became *slaves*, and those of the second became *slave owners* [20]. Last to pass was ownership (now private) of land and other means of production – initially in a group form, gradually transforming into individual ownership. This remained the case throughout the reign of class society, changing only its specific forms in accordance with the level of development of productive forces. Today, the development of productive forces has practically reached a level at which it urgently demands the *abolition of private property*. That is, the emergence of a transitional period in the form of a society known as socialism.

Like the first transitional period (community), socialism is characterized *not by holistic* (intersecting relations of ownership, disposal, and use within a single entity), but by property relations *divided* (splitting) among entities. Consequently, under socialism, as in the commune period, the main social groups are represented not by *classes*, but by *strata*. In countries where socialism has triumphed, these strata have formed differently depending on specific conditions, but in one way or another, they have assumed separate ownership, disposal, and use of the means of production.

2.4 Socialism as a Socio-Economic Formation

The title of this section is not entirely accurate. The term "socio-economic formation" is commonly used to denote a class-based organization of society, with a ruling class whose members own the means of production and an oppressed class, dispossessed of this ownership and subordinate to the former, which utilizes its labor force. As already noted, socialism, based on a split form of property ownership, has no classes (although there were attempts to define the nomenklatura in the USSR as a distinct class [21]), only social groups (strata) occupying different positions in society. However, we will use this term, since a general term for this transitional period has not yet been devised.

Nevertheless, the latter has ceased to be a figment of utopian imagination and has become a *real social phenomenon* that can now be studied as something quite tangible. It should be noted, however, that this is not such a simple matter, as the forms in which socialism has existed and continues to exist are markedly diverse, stemming from the specific conditions of its emergence and functioning. But in all cases, its characteristic features, in one form or another, express the fundamental distinguishing features of this socioeconomic phenomenon. Thus, in the Soviet Union, for most of its existence, the ruling stratum, represented by the so-called nomenklatura, merely *managed* socialist property, while the state, represented by the Soviets, *owned* it and its *use* was public. A similar situation exists today in the PRC, as well as in

several other countries attempting, in one form or another, to embark on the path of socialist construction. Moreover, the *specific forms* of divided property relations vary enormously, conditioned by the differences in the specific conditions of their existence in the historical past and today.

The phenomenon of *divided property* is a *fundamental* issue for socialism. How this is realized in each specific case depends on the specific circumstances. What makes socialism in countries with different histories so unique? Each country that has achieved socialism implements its own version of property relations, and arguing about which is more correct is pointless. For, as Marx once pointed out, "the same economic basis—the same in its fundamental conditions—can, thanks to infinitely varied empirical circumstances, natural conditions, racial relations, external historical influences, etc., reveal in its manifestations endless variations and gradations that can be understood only by analyzing these empirically given circumstances" [3, V. 25. II, P. 354]. A full examination of this issue requires specialized research, which is yet to be conducted. Therefore, here we will primarily limit ourselves to a brief analysis of this social system in the form in which it first actually manifested itself and existed for a relatively long time. That is, *Soviet socialism*.

It arose in Russia as a result of the revolution led by the Bolsheviks (later communists) under the leadership of V.I. Lenin. This was not a proletarian revolution as envisioned by the classics of Marxism. It took place in a separate, comparatively backward country, primarily by peasants seeking land. Or, in the words of V.I. Lenin, "thanks to the alliance of the proletarians of city and village" [22, V. 42. P. 111]. It was not, in fact, supported by the proletariat of the "advanced countries." It was not without reason that A. Gramsci rightly called it "a revolution against Marx's "Capital"" [23]. But it endured and laid the foundation for a new socio-economic system—socialism. (We provided a fairly detailed analysis of this event earlier in our work [4]).

So, here we turn to the form of socialism that it took in the USSR. That is, to "real socialism." After all, "it is perfectly clear that without a theoretical understanding of the system that existed for almost seven decades in the form of the USSR, it is impossible to fully understand either Russian history as a whole, or the global reality of the 20th century, or post-Soviet society, since it is the result of the decomposition of "real socialism" [24]. True, with "theoretical understanding" the situation was not very favorable, since even the General Secretary of the CPSU had reason to declare: "To be frank, we still have not adequately studied the society in which we live and work, have not fully revealed its inherent patterns, especially economic ones. Therefore, at times we are forced to act, so to speak, empirically, by a very irrational method of trial and error" [25].

First of all, the revolution changed the form of property *ownership*. According to Engels, "the first act in which the state truly acts as the representative of the whole (!) of society is the seizure of the means of production in the name of society" [3, V. 20. P. 291]. At the same time, as Lenin believed at the time, "all citizens are transformed here into hired employees of the state, which is the armed workers" [22, V. 33. P. 101]. With the liquidation of the exploiting classes, the nature of the use of the means of production also changed: socialist property, converted, in Lenin's words, "to the benefit of the entire people" [22, V. 35. P. 192], was ultimately used by this state to provide the means of subsistence for the country's population.

The situation was more complex with the *management* of property, as the most active component of property relations, dependent on the nature of the *social division of labor*, which also determines the nature of production relations. The right to *dispose* of property (the means of production) is the right to determine the specific nature of their functioning, i.e., *the production process itself*. However, the material means of production are not inherently endowed with the capacity for independent functioning. They are set in motion by human individuals

through the application of their labor power. Therefore, in a certain sense, "property is the disposal of someone else's labor power" [3, Vol. 3, p. 31]. This is precisely what determines the leading role of the disposal of the means of production.

Initially, the disposal of the means of production was local and fragmented. It was carried out through self-governing bodies-*Soviets*, created primarily on the basis of *enterprises*. In other words, it did not yet reflect the *common interests* of even the *workers as a whole*, let alone their entire population, but only their individual production associations. And the workers, in Lenin's words, "inherited from capitalism... an inability, an unaccustomedness to collective, solidarity-based work" [22, Vol. 36, p. 169]. Nevertheless, in the first years of "war communism," the situation regarding the management of the means of production confiscated from the capitalists was precisely this: the primary objective was simply to survive. The new managers' poor preparation for this function was partially compensated for by the forced involvement of former owners, technical specialists and other managers in production management under workers' control (to a certain extent, this truly amounted to a "dictatorship of the proletariat").

2.5 Management of the Means of Production in the USSR

The old ideology proved to be a crucial factor in the development of new production relations. As constructive objectives gradually came to the fore, syndicalism within the proletariat became the main obstacle to their solution [22, Vol. 39, P. 309]. It became clear that bourgeois ideology was tenacious and, until the victory of new socio-economic relations, self-perpetuated, including within the working class. With the victory of the socialist revolution, a situation arose in which a potential barrier arose in the development of society, created, in Lenin's words, by "old prejudices that chain the worker to the old world" [22, Vol. 43, P. 308], and when, consequently, socio-economic transformations had to be largely

carried out by Soviet power against the influence of socio-psychological factors.

The absence of corresponding socio-economic relations in their entirety precluded any hope of working-class *self-organization* in the production process. A new vertical social division of labor was required: a *special apparatus* proved necessary for the effective *management* of all the means of production. And then, not the entire proletariat as a mass (as had been assumed by theory), but only a certain "vanguard of the proletariat took the construction of power into its own hands." A "dictatorship of the revolutionary elements (!) of the class" began to be established [22, Vol. 39, Pp. 295, 267], and, above all, *their management of the means of production*. There occurred "the separation of the revolutionary and only revolutionary, part of the proletariat into the party, and the same part of the party into its leading centers" [22, Vol. 41, P. 448].

Accordingly, the place of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a "self-organizing mass" is taken by the dictatorship of that relatively *narrow group of people* who "separated" themselves into the aforementioned "leading centers" organized into a *hierarchical* structure—that is, the party, economic and administrative stratum—the *nomenklatura*, which became the *dominant social group* (stratum). Under these conditions, it was precisely political power, the *dictatorship of the "revolutionary vanguard"*, professing *socialist ideology*, that could lead society to that point in socioeconomic development from which socialist consciousness among the masses would develop automatically, based on existing socialist socioeconomic relations.

Thus, a special social group was formed that, *in its entirety*, assumed the most important social function—the *management of socialist property* (the main means of production). This positively changed the socioeconomic situation. However, there were also significant shortcomings. Shared social functions inevitably led to the formation of common interests among its members, strengthening the cohesion of a particular social group. This later led to a significant change in the nature of its functioning. In fact, from the very

beginning, V.I. Lenin noted the negative aspects associated with both the special common interests of this social group and its actual composition. On the one hand, he understood that "we cannot live without this apparatus; all branches of administration create the need for such an apparatus" [22, Vol. 36, P. 169]. On the other hand, he saw that, due to a shortage of trained personnel, "our state apparatus... is to a large extent a relic of the old, least subjected to any serious changes" [22, Vol. 45, P. 383]. But he believed that the situation could and should be rectified by strengthening workers' control.

One way or another, despite all the shortcomings, the second period of socialist development in the USSR (after the brief era of "war communism") began. Individual enterprises were managed by party committees, under the direction of their protégés (the party nomenklatura). This means that, in state-owned industrial enterprises with "public" ownership, day-to-day affairs were effectively "commanded" by party committees at various levels (primarily through their leaders). But even in agriculture (where a certain "collective ownership" was believed to exist), they were also managed by the nomenklatura, represented by the same party organization leadership. Regarding this, I.V. Stalin wrote: "Party organizations will have to continue, for a definite short period, to be closely involved in agricultural affairs with all their minutiae—plowing, sowing, harvesting, etc." [26, Vol. 14, P. 175]. And so they did, down to the "minutiae," but not for a "short period."

However, such "command" was not at all the main factor in the management of socialist property. A far more important role was played by *centralized* management instruments, allowing the nomenklatura as a whole, as a strictly organized leading social group of Soviet society, to manage the entire national economy of the country as a *single entity*. First and foremost, this was the central planning body, Gosplan, which generated the corresponding *orders for economic bodies throughout the country*. The main task of Gosplan was "the development of a single national economic plan, the methods and procedures for its implementation" [27, pp. 203, 204]. "The organization and organizational procedures of

planning were developed at Gosplan of the USSR and were constantly improved. This is an extremely important element,... involving huge masses of specialists in this process. Indeed, virtually all enterprises in the country participated in the development of national economic plans, submitting their proposals to the relevant ministries and they in turn to Gosplan of the USSR. But this was preceded by extensive work by the Government of the USSR and Gosplan of the USSR." Its task was also to "take into account the balance of financial resources" [28].

It is well known that Gosplan directly determined the direction of development, its pace, the volume and proportions of the national economy, and so on. However, much less well-known is another instrument that guaranteed the strict implementation of these plans and the country's sustainable development. This was the so-called "dual-circuit monetary circulation," which ensured *financial control* over the activities of enterprises and the functioning of the entire national economy by managing the circulation of so-called "non-cash money." Dual-circuit monetary circulation was not simply different representations of *the same money*-cash and non-cash (as is the case today, for example)-but two *fundamentally different* forms of its existence, each fulfilling its own special and specific functions in solving the overall problem.

This is how it was perceived at the time. "A mandatory (!) condition for planning monetary circulation is a clear distinction between the spheres of non-cash and cash circulation, which takes place in a socialist economy. Thanks to this distinction, the Soviet state is able to directly determine those monetary transactions that require cash. Cash circulation encompasses the following areas of monetary relations: payments from enterprises and organizations to the population (wages, collective farm workers' wages for workdays, pensions, etc.); payments from the population to state and cooperative enterprises and organizations for goods and services; payments to the financial system (taxes, loan payments, repayments of loans for individual housing construction, deposits in savings banks, etc.); payments from one population group to

another, primarily through collective farm trade. A strict distinction between the spheres of cash and non-cash circulation does not, however, exclude a close relationship between these spheres. Enterprises' and organizations' funds for sold products are credited non-cash to their settlement and current accounts with the State Bank. The withdrawal of funds from these accounts for the payment of wages is made in cash. However, despite such a close connection between cash and non-cash payments, non-cash payments cannot directly influence the volume of money in circulation" [29].

Something similar took place and continues to take place in socialist China. There, too, the State Planning Committee initially functioned-as long as ownership of the means of production remained state and collective. And then, "with the CPC Central Committee's deepening understanding of the capital patterns in the socialist system, capital-related policies have undergone a developmental journey through several stages-from the negation and elimination of capital to the support and operation of capital and finally to the stage of regulating and guiding capital" [16].

Currently, another body of state economic governance operates in the PRC-the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). It is one of the key institutions of Chinese central government at the ministerial level, subordinate to the State Council and the Communist Party of China. The main functions of this body (with an emphasis on how it interacts with private capital and the private sector) are: the formation of strategies for national socio-economic development; macroeconomic regulation and management; project planning and evaluation; industrial policy, etc. [30]. Of course, the specific forms of governance here differ quite significantly from those that existed in the Soviet Union, but in the context of the PRC they reliably ensure the disposal of all means of production in the country by its Communist Party, regardless of formal property relations. A similar situation, in one form or another, exists in other countries that have proclaimed the construction of socialism.

2.6 Division of Labor Under Socialism

With the establishment of Soviet power, the exploiting classes were eliminated, meaning the nature of *the social division of labor* changed significantly. At the same time, as we have seen, the most important authority in ownership of the means of production under socialism is assigned to a *specific social group*. Therefore, the "vertical" division of labor into managers and executors remains. However, it differs from previous forms in the question of who *owns* and *uses* the means of production. While in previous systems, the rights of owner and user were primarily assigned to certain *ruling individuals*, under socialism, priority in this respect is, in one way or another, given to the *entire population of the country*. In principle, the problem of the division of labor under socialism was quite significant and greatly occupied Soviet researchers of this system. However, their attempts to resolve it were hampered by incorrect notions about the "vertical" division of labor. The vertical division of labor is not so much a technological phenomenon (like the horizontal division of labor) as a social one. In a certain sense, it was practically equated with what the classics of Marxism called the division of "physical" and "mental" labor, which was only partially true.

In essence, when discussing the division of labor in production, what is meant is not whether it is performed "mentally" or "physically," but rather its place within the structure of the production process—in a group of managers or *performers*. Both types of labor presuppose the inclusion of both cognitive and physiological processes in individuals. But they are different in nature. We examined this point in detail in [28]. Here, we will only briefly outline the essence of the process. The human information system essentially consists of two subsystems: the individual (figurative) and the social (symbolic), which arises from the unification of the latter with the corresponding individual subsystems of other people through material information carriers. While constituting *a single system* in the process of functioning (thinking) in the individual consciousness, it nevertheless includes two types of thinking: *practical* thinking and *theoretical* thinking. The

first is associated with the individual's *direct* actions in relation to external objects to *achieve practical results*, while the second, in interaction with other individuals, contributes to an *understanding* of the essence of these objects *in order to formulate a program of action* that takes into account the interests of the entire society. This is a direct result of the practical and theoretical thinking of any individual.

However, as society developed, these two elements, along with their bearers, became divided into managers and implementers. This determines the structure of class society. Under socialism, this division still persists, but with significant adjustments. In the economic sphere, this was expressed in a corresponding change in *the subject of control* over the means of production. This transition proved extremely painful, as new tasks required a corresponding shift in orientation, which is extremely difficult for active participants in the process, and for some, downright impossible. Only thanks to the genius of Lenin, who practically intuitively determined the required direction of development, was his will and authority able to emerge from the crisis with relatively minor losses (although for the communists themselves, these losses resulted in the loss of almost a third of the party's membership).

In the second stage of socialist development, while its collectivist nature remained and deepened, its fundamental socioeconomic characteristics underwent significant changes. With the shift in the vertical division of labor, ownership of the primary means of production changed first and foremost. As for *ownership*, property remained state-owned, although the nature of the state changed—state power shifted from the "armed workers" (the dictatorship of the proletariat) to the "governing centers" (which continued to be slyly referred to as the "dictatorship of the proletariat"). On the other hand, due to the gradual increase in social homogeneity within Soviet society, the nationwide nature of *use* only strengthened. However, the situation with control was different. The organization of production, objectively aimed at the further development of socialism, was possible

only through the *dictatorship* of a relatively *narrow group of functionaries*, united by a common ideology, discipline and organization, in a context in which socialist ideology had not yet fully formed among the masses.

No, the peculiar "nomenklatura class" it formed did not transform into a *true social class* in the usual sense, since it could only *dispose* of the means of production (not own or use them). However, it was precisely due to this latter circumstance that the nomenklatura became the *dominant stratum* of socialist society, "responsible" for the *material* conditions of production. Another stratum of this era, "responsible" for *the personal* factor of production, became those commonly called «workers» (workers, peasants, and the technical intelligentsia). And there was no "working class," "collective peasantry," or "laboring intelligentsia" that *officially* represented the structure of Soviet society. All of these, naturally, existed and had their own characteristics and interests, but they were merely *subdivisions* of a given stratum with specific labor functions. In other words, they represented a specific version of the *horizontal* (technological) division of labor. And relative to the ruling stratum—the nomenklatura—they all found themselves in an identically subordinate position, and together they created, together, a structure of *vertical* (social) division of labor.

This social structure ensured highly effective economic and cultural development for the country. Moreover, initially, the fundamental interests of the dominant social group (the nomenklatura) largely coincided with the fundamental, deep-seated interests of the majority of the people, since socialism had significantly improved their situation. Margaret Thatcher, so respected by Western adherents, said in her Houston report on the collapse of the USSR: "The Soviet Union was a country that posed a serious threat to the Western world. I'm not talking about a military threat. In essence, there was none. Our countries were sufficiently armed, including with nuclear weapons. I mean an economic threat. Thanks to the planned policy and a peculiar combination of moral and material incentives, the Soviet Union managed to achieve

high economic performance. Its gross national product growth rate was roughly twice as high as in our countries" [32].

Thanks in large part to the active work of the nomenklatura, rapid and successful development was achieved in the national economy, as well as in science, culture, education, and other fields. In a very short time, the country was transformed from a backward semi-colony into a powerful industrial power with a developed technosphere and noosphere. Moreover, this development was achieved through its own resources, not by plundering other countries, as Western countries had done for centuries. Socialist China is now demonstrating similar successes (it's worth mentioning that it is *the only country* in the world where food prices are falling, not rising).

It is also important that, thanks to this organization of the national economy, the USSR effectively avoided participation in the international capitalist division of labor in its vertical form. I.V. Stalin formulated this in his report to the 14th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks): "We must structure our economy in such a way that our country does not become an appendage of the world capitalist system, that it is not included in the general system of capitalist development as its subsidiary enterprise, that our state develops not as a subsidiary enterprise of world capitalism, but as an independent economic unit, relying primarily on the domestic market" [26, Vol. 7, P. 298]. Which, in fact, was successfully achieved.

Of course, the horizontal "hypostasis" (which today's adherents of capitalism essentially only imply by the international division of labor; it is not customary to mention the vertical) was preserved. Trade relations with the West, albeit with significant difficulties, gradually developed; a significant number of American, German, and other bourgeois specialists actively participated in the industrialization of the USSR; scientists interned in Western scientific laboratories, and cultural ties were established. But at the same time, Soviet science, technology, and education were rapidly developing, making the Soviet Union increasingly *self-sufficient*. This prevented the

West from completely bringing it under its control.

2.7 The Historical Fate of "Real Socialism"

During the period of Soviet socialism, socioeconomic relations in the country changed considerably—from the first attempts to introduce a "dictatorship of the proletariat" to the *counterrevolution* seven decades later with the restoration of private property. However, the aforementioned characteristic features of the socioeconomic structure (the fragmented ownership relations over the means of production), to which socialism in the USSR owed its aforementioned successes, remained largely unchanged for most of its existence.

However, compared to other socioeconomic formations that have already passed the main stages of formation, development, and, in part, elimination, socialism, including its Soviet variant, has not yet reached the end of its journey. Any social phenomenon goes through three stages: formation, the revelation of its fundamental properties, and completion with preparation for the transition to another state. If we consider Soviet socialism, it only completed two stages of its existence, as it failed to achieve the third (final) stage due to the overwhelming pressure of global imperialism. And socialism undoubtedly still has yet to pass through it. But what this stage will be, we can only *speculate* for now, based on existing experience and some preliminary considerations. In particular, on the considerations expressed by V.I. Lenin in his article "On Cooperation."

This article is important, above all, because, in Lenin's own opinion, it truly represented "a radical change in our entire view of socialism." For the first time in Marxist literature, based on the notion of a socialist country as a *single factory*, it effectively recognized a separate *collective*—in the form of a cooperative—as the basic economic entity of the new society. Lenin understood perfectly well and repeatedly emphasized that "cooperatives in the context of a capitalist state are a collective capitalist institution." Nevertheless, he believed that there

was a way out of this situation: "And there is only one way out—the merger of cooperation with Soviet power" [22, Vol. 45, pp. 376, 374], in which the *production collective* becomes the fundamental *structural component* of socialist society. This means not a capitalist cooperation with individual shares, but a socialist one, with the obligatory integrating role of the state through its ownership of the means of production. It is in this sense that Lenin consistently develops the views on cooperation of the founders of Marxism—but this time based on the experience gained in socialist construction, taking into account the actual formation of *new*, previously non-existent social entities—*collectives*.

This latter point represents a crucial, fundamental point, one that "fundamentally" distinguishes Lenin's view, including from the "dreams" of numerous past and present supporters of "cooperative socialism." For here, a completely different kind of social division of labor will take place. It can be assumed that this stage, as with the previous stages of socialism, will be characterized not by some kind of "collective ownership," but by the same split in property relations based on ownership, disposal, and use. However, in the third stage, the implementation of property relations will most likely be realized through state ownership, public use, and collective disposal of the means of production. The most characteristic feature of the coming socialism will be its significant democratization, with a strengthening of the economic role of work collectives. Through a democratically formed work collective council, it will manage the *enterprise's* means of production, which are under its full economic control — but not ownership. These will be owned by the state through the system of Soviets.

This "system of civilized cooperators with public ownership of the means of production... is the system of socialism" [22, V. 45. P. 373], or rather, its final stage. Maximum independence for enterprises, whose work collectives control the means of production, with the integrating role of the socialist state, which owns them, represented by a hierarchical system of democratically elected Soviets. The latter will also ensure their general

public use. This is the basis for production relations in the upcoming third and final stage of socialism. Marx himself once spoke of the coming society as "based on the principles of collectivism" [3, Vol. 19, P. 18]; incidentally, China has also long considered its "fundamental foundation to be collectivism" [33]. The primary structural element of this new society will be *collectives*. Through development and international integration, they will ultimately potentially form a *single human society* with a complete absence of any *stratification*, as well as any *social* division of labor-communism.

The situation in the USSR was practically ready for a gradual transition to the third stage by the end of the 1930s. But it never arrived. And the reason for this was the same nomenklatura that had once ensured its success. The fact is that, over the years of the USSR's existence, the nomenklatura had actually *changed*. Even before, it had been reluctant to relinquish its right to manage property, transferring it to collectives of workers. After all, doing so would have deprived it of its exceptional social status. But initially, it included people selflessly devoted to the communist idea, hardened by prisons and exile, who had personally carried out and defended the revolution. However, over the years, other people joined it. Now they were *co-opted* into this social group in accordance with its demands. And these demands gradually shifted from appropriate ideological and businesslike qualities to adherence to common interests and the strict implementation of the will of the higher authorities.

The events of 1937 resulted from internal contradictions within the nomenklatura. The international situation also contributed to this. Then came the war, the post-war reconstruction period, the Cold War... The acute illness of society became chronic. Socialism never reached the next stage of development; a period of decay began. The nomenklatura, meanwhile, became increasingly "embourgeoisified," increasingly seeking to control property, adding *ownership* and *use* to it. To this end, it carried out a coup d'état, or more accurately, a *counterrevolution* ("perestroika"), betraying everything it

supposedly revered. The development of socialism in the USSR was interrupted. The country, historically speaking, regressed to the miserable semi-colonial state of "*dependent capitalism*".

But what the Soviet Union had accomplished during its existence was not in vain. The USSR clearly demonstrated the possibility of abolishing capitalism and building and successfully operating a "post-capitalist" (socialist) social system. It significantly contributed to the elimination of the colonial system in its "classical" form in the world; at the cost of enormous sacrifices, the USSR prevented the domination of the most reactionary form of capitalism on the planet-fascism (Nazism), and also contributed to a very significant degree to the implementation and protection of certain revolutionary transformations in a number of countries (this is especially true of the Chinese revolution).

2.8 Current Global Social Processes and Socialism

But the most important thing in the world today is that the form of capitalist global vertical division of labor (i.e., the centuries-long relationship between exploiting and exploited civilizations), which still dominates the planet, is gradually becoming obsolete through "natural" means. The *final stage* of the international vertical division of labor under capitalism has effectively begun to slowly but surely emerge. But, according to the general law of system development, while essentially a product of this very system and shaped by the laws of capitalism *itself*, it is nonetheless already beginning to "work" not so much to strengthen, but ultimately to *destroy*, this socio-economic system. For, in the words of Marx, "capitalist production necessarily generates its own negation as a natural process" [3, V. 23, P. 773]. Naturally, external influences (for capitalism as a system) were also present, as a new social order-socialism-emerged in the world.

Yes, capitalism continues to develop quite significantly, although it inevitably experiences a developmental *crisis*, caused and directed, as has been said, by the *operation of its own laws*. The fact is that today, *the main growth in profits*

comes from the organization of production in "uncivilized" countries with *cheap labor*, implemented by Western capitalists. The latter are undergoing active *industrialization*. However, due to the outflow of industrial capital and declining profitability, the systematic *deindustrialization* of the "civilized" countries themselves is also inevitably occurring, leading to certain inevitable consequences for the entire capitalist division of labor. First of all, due to this redistribution of production, social stratification within the Western countries themselves is intensifying-transnational oligarchs are growing rich, while the so-called "middle class," on which the social stability of these countries was based, is shrinking in numbers and becoming poorer due to the unwillingness of large capitalists to share their profits with them. This is natural, since along with the transfer of material production to the countries of "dependent capitalism," the role of those social strata that provided the intellectual component in the "core" countries also diminishes.

For example, their leader-the United States of America-is slowly but surely transforming from a country of industrialists, engineers, and skilled workers into a country of bankers, small traders, and clerks. The same processes, although less pronounced, are occurring in other Western countries. A significant role was also played by the disruption of the global capitalist monopoly on "intellectual labor" in the "developed countries," brought about by the emergence of a new social order-socialism. Vigorous technological and cultural progress in the USSR significantly disrupted the nature of the global division of labor. The crisis of socialism there slowed this process, but it can no longer be stopped. As a result, the West has increasingly begun to lose its global monopoly on "intellectual labor," which again disrupts the previously established global division of labor. The emergence of new centers where "intellectual labor" develops, and the weakening of old ones, inevitably results in a kind of "regionalization" of the world, directly threatening the global dominance of the West in general and the United States in particular. This destroys the very foundations of the scientific and

technological base on which the capitalist vertical international division of labor, which ensures this dominance, was actually based.

Former colonies, by developing their own production, are beginning to free themselves from their semi-colonial dependence, but they will not be able to transform into Western-style capitalist countries. Western countries "built" themselves as capitalist countries through unequal economic relations, thanks to which their rates of scientific and technological development sharply increased relative to other civilizations. At the same time, as F. Braudel wrote, due to this "unequal exchange," "the division of labor on a global scale... was not an agreement between equal partners." Accordingly, "Europe was already drawing a significant share of its essence and strength from the entire world." "And it was precisely this supplement that raised it above its own level in the face of the challenges it encountered on the path of its progress" [34, P. 43, 396]. This can no longer be returned - no one will agree to tolerate exploitation on a global scale anymore. But there is no other capitalism. So, only socialism remains.

But a simultaneous transition of all countries to socialism is unlikely. The destruction of the unipolar world will not lead directly to socialism. Its first consequence, it seems, will be the regionalization of most states with mixed economies based on state capitalism. But in essence, regionalization will also mean the end of capitalism-*for it can exist only in one form-global*, representing a kind of "iceberg" in the "sea of life," with the above-water portion of the "civilized countries" and the underwater portion of everyone else. Deprived of its "support"-the ability to exploit "uncivilized countries"-the West will become just *one of* a number of disparate "ice floes." Moreover, scientific and technological progress and interaction will inevitably, gradually and effectively, eliminate the *global* "vertical" division of labor, i.e., the *international* (intercivilizational) division of "mental" and "physical" labor.

But other forms of the division of labor will remain a necessary element of the functioning of society in its individual social entities for some

time, and so it will not disappear completely. However, it will, including on a global scale, take other forms, particularly intra- and interregional cooperation-voluntary and mutually beneficial, since countries will no longer be bound by the current (*still essentially colonial*) global (read: American) financial system. Only as the human economy gradually transforms into a truly global one will the "vertical" division of labor be *abolished in the reverse order* of its origin. Even now, Western countries are rapidly losing their dominance in the system of global, unequal division of labor they created. And only after its complete decline will it be time to eliminate what Marx considered the *main contradiction of capitalism*-the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

And here, *socialism* will have its say. For a long time now, the socialization of production, due to the dominance of monopolies (today primarily transnational ones), has reached such a scale that, in the words of V.I. Lenin, written a hundred years ago, "monopoly capitalism is evolving into state-monopoly capitalism": after all, "if the largest capitalist enterprise becomes a monopoly, it means it serves the entire people"- albeit to the benefit of the owners of the means of production. But "socialism is nothing other than a state-capitalist monopoly, *directed to the benefit of the entire people* and, to that extent, *ceasing to be a capitalist monopoly*". This is the only path to further development, for "one cannot move forward from monopolies... without moving toward socialism" [22, V. 34. P. 191-192].

III. CONCLUSION

Meanwhile, new centers of socialism are constantly emerging. Various countries are attempting to build a new society, experiencing both significant achievements and significant mistakes along the way. The experience of the People's Republic of China is particularly significant. Initially, the Communist Party of China, which led the process, adopted Soviet experience-both its best and worst aspects. The specific social conditions that existed in that country were particularly significant here. However, the communists in the PRC were able to

successfully utilize the Soviet experience, despite many mistakes. However, the situation gradually improved, and the advantages of socialism began to take hold. Very high rates of economic development were achieved, as a result of which China has already displaced the United States from the first place in the world in terms of production and is beginning to actively push it forward in science and technology. This is despite the fact that in China, the current phase of socialist development is considered the lowest point. In essence, they are effectively experiencing what was known in the USSR as the New Economic Policy (NEP). But China continues to successfully move along the socialist path, simultaneously serving as a significant obstacle to capitalist restoration. This also serves as an example for many other countries.

Socialism is an inevitable consequence of the collapse of the global capitalist system. It is a natural stage of social development. Objectively, its formation and development are driven by the social processes themselves in the world. Subjectively, for the development of socialism on a global scale to proceed as successfully as possible, with minimal costs and at an accelerating pace, it is highly desirable that its builders understand what they are building. In other words, a general theory of socialism must develop. And it will, of course, develop. It is hoped that this article will also make its modest contribution to this development.

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The Chazar Forts of the Lower Don. Comparison

Dr. Valerii S. Flerov

SUMMARY

The defense capacity of the fortresses of Khazar Khaganat has not been studied up to date as an independent topic. But it is wrong to consider the fortresses which are the largest in area and/or have the longer perimeter of external walls to be the most defensible. In general, all metric and quantitative data give only purely formalized estimates. No matter how much I want to formalize, summarize in tables, correlate them all, it is impossible to do without verbal descriptions and comparisons. Such kind of comparisons is proposed for three Khazar fortresses located in the Lower Don and constructed from different materials. 1) The fortress of Semikarakorsk is a khagan's residence, built of raw brick with structures in citadel made of burnt one. In its plan this fortress looks like a "square in square". 2) Thsimlianskaya Right Bank fortress is built of white limestone blocks; 3) Sarkel (or Thsimlianskaya Left Bank fortress) is built of burnt brick.

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The Chazar Forts of the Lower Don. Comparison

Хазарские Крепости Нижнего Дона. Сравнение

Dr. Valerii S. Flerov

SUMMARY

The defense capacity of the fortresses of Khazar Khaganat has not been studied up to date as an independent topic. But it is wrong to consider the fortresses which are the largest in area and/or have the longer perimeter of external walls to be the most defensible. In general, all metric and quantitative data give only purely formalized estimates. No matter how much I want to formalize, summarize in tables, correlate them all, it is impossible to do without verbal descriptions and comparisons. Such kind of comparisons is proposed for three Khazar fortresses located in the Lower Don and constructed from different materials. 1) The fortress of Semikarakorsk is a khagan's residence, built of raw brick with structures in citadel made of burnt one. In its plan this fortress looks like a "square in square". 2) Thsimlianskaya Right Bank fortress is built of white limestone blocks; 3) Sarkel (or Thsimlianskaya Left Bank fortress) is built of burnt brick.

The main characteristics of these three fortresses are given in the Table. Semikarakorsk and Thsimlianskaya Right Bank fortresses were constructed in the late VIII-the early IX century, and were captured simultaneously several years after the construction of Sarkel, most likely in the time of internal conflict in Khazaria at the end of the first third of the IX century. Being synchronous, they are built in different traditions. Semikarakorsk fortress is more archaic, but the use of burnt brick appeared there earlier than in Sarkel, i. e. before Petronas Kamatiros mission to Khazaria.

The main disadvantages of Semikarakorsk fortress were the unstable raw brick, absence of towers and moat. In Thsimlianskaya Right Bank fortress the internal space was

fundamentally different: it was divided into three sectors. The same principle was used in Sarkel, but with a division into five sectors. Such kind of internal division, as well as rectangular plan of the towers is the main similarity between Thsimlianskaya Right Bank fortress and Sarkel. On the other hand, This Smilianskaya Right Bank fortress like Semikarakorsk had with had a two-chamber workshop attached to fortress' walls.

Sarkel was the most perfect of Khazaria's Don fortresses. It had a moat, towers, it was divided into five sectors and it was built of solid construction material. At the same time, it is impossible to estimate the defense capacity of each fortress without knowledge of specific circumstances of their destruction. The tactical situation at the moment of threat of each one of the fortresses can only be modeled depending on the initial data introduced by researchers. We can only assume that local tribes of the Don Region of the Khazar period did not have rich experience in using catapults, battering rams or other siege techniques.

In peacetime, the Lower Don fortresses could serve as administrative posts, or a bases of small military units. In fleeting clashes of local importance and in favorable circumstances, each fortress could defend itself. But in a wider operational environment these fortresses with their small garrisons could not influence the overall course of hostilities because they were completely isolated. Only help from outside could save them.

I do not deal with the long-standing question "against whom" Sarkel and the Right Bank fortress were built. More often, Hungarians are implied among others. Why did none of the authors raise the same question with regard to the Semikarakorsk fortress? Against the Hungarian or another tribes? It is worth

recalling that M. I. Artamonov had raised the question of mistrust of the central authorities to the local population (Artamonov 1968, p. 18).

I. ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Тема обороны крепостей Хазарского каганата до настоящего времени не рассматривалась, хотя некоторые оценки отдельным из них давались. Сложно составить программу такого исследования. Обычный Набор оценок раннесредневековой крепости включает: план, строительный материал, периметр и площадь, стены со всеми их признаками; фундамент/его отсутствие; наличие/ отсутствие башен, их число, метрические характеристики каждой, расстояния между ними, рвы, эскарпы, структура внутреннего пространства крепости, наличие цитадели, донжон, его местоположение, высота, степень застройки крепости жилыми и иными сооружениями, и т. д. Дело осложняется тем, что для хазарских крепостей не все из упомянутых признаков установлены ввиду неполноты сохранности и особенно недостаточности вскрытых площадей.

Кроме перечисленных констатирующих характеристик, обороноспособность крепости определяется другими чрезвычайно значимыми обстоятельствами-окружающая местность, среди которой возведена крепость; ближайшие подходы к ней и их рельеф, которые могли служить дополнительным препятствием для любого потенциального противника, но и напротив, обеспечивали скрытность при подходе к крепости, внезапность нападения. Так, правый берег р. Дон, зона степей, буквально изрезан густой сетью древних глубоких и протяженных оврагов, яров, в которых могли скрываться большие массы войск.

Было бы неверно выдвигать на первое место самые большие по площади и/или по периметру внешних стен крепости. Вообще же все метрические и количественные признаки дают лишь сугубо формализованные оценки. Как бы ни хотелось формализовать, свести в таблицы, коррелировать «все» признаки

крепостей, без вербальных описаний и сравнений обойтись невозможно.

Для каких-либо оценок необходима корреляция между минимум двумя крепостями. К примеру, длина их стен должна соотноситься с количеством башен, расстоянием между ними. Однако, небольшая крепость со стенами не длиннее 100-120 м могла сохранять обороноспособность и без башен. Такими, вероятно, было большинство крепостей каганата. Тем не менее, их трудно ранжировать по одной линии, учитывая, что каждая обладает только ей присущими особенностями и каждая или группа близко размещенных, была сооружена с определенными целями.

Для суждений о конкретной крепости необходимо знать (установить) её *первоначальное назначение*, которое в свою очередь, особенно при отсутствии нарративных источников, может объяснить характеристики ее фортификации и особенности внутренней застройки¹.

Еще сложнее определить потенциал крепости в обороне большого региона: Тихая Сосна-северное пограничье каганата, Северский Донец, Нижний Дон. Едва ли не самая сложная для исследователя задача, установить, каким потенциалом обладал враг, в ожидании которого сооружена крепость. Судьба конкретной крепости, даже самой, на первый взгляд, совершенной, зависела не только от гарнизона, но, едва ли не в решающей степени, от всего хода военного противостояния. Речь идет о внешнем противнике. Не следует, однако, забывать, что крепости сооружались и для решения внутренних задач.

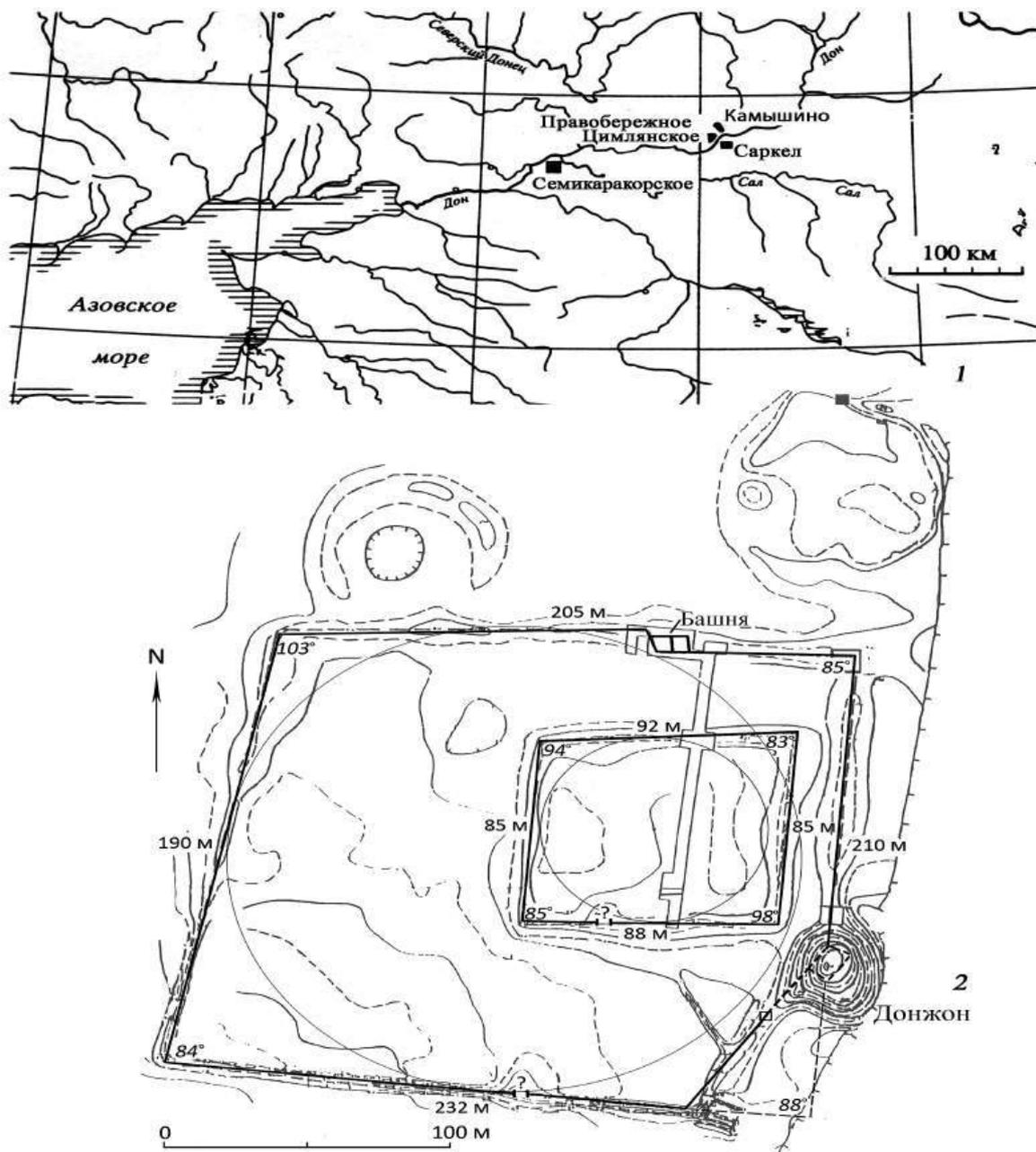
¹ Неясно являются ли крепостями местонахождения Башанта I и II в бассейне р. Егорлык в Калмыкии. См.: Очир-Горяева М. А., фон Карнап Борнхейм, Кежеев Э. Открытие первого на территории Калмыкии памятника городского типа эпохи средневековья // Тр. III (XIX) Всероссийского археологического съезда, т. III. СПб.–М.–В. Новгород, 2011, 172-174; Очир-Горяева М. А., Ситдииков А. Г., Кияшко Я. А., Нага Т. К изучению памятника эпохи средневековья Башанта-II // ПА. 2016. № 4, 23-36.

Рассмотрим изложенные выше тезисы более детально на примере трех ниже-донских крепостей, в разной степени раскопанных.

Самой известной среди ниже-донских хазарских каменных и кирпичных крепостей является кирпичный Саркел. Но помимо него в пределах современных границ Ростовской обл. представлены менее известные историкам и археологам каганата белокаменные Правобережная Цимлянская Камышинская, а также кирпичная Семикаракорская,

крупнейшая в бассейне Дона–Северного Донца в крепостных стенах которой абсолютно преобладает сырцовый кирпич.

СЕМИКАРАКОРСКАЯ КРЕПОСТЬ: Раскопки проводил автор в 1971-1974 г. Находится в четырех километрах западнее г. Семикаракорска Ростовской обл., в 115 км к востоку от г. Ростова-на-Дону, на левобережье р. Дон при впадении в него левого притока-р. Сал (Илл. 1: 1).



Илл. 1: 1- Крепости Хазарского каганата на Нижнем Дону;
2- Семикаракорская крепость

Расположена не непосредственно при слиянии Сала с Доном, но в трех километрах выше по течению Сала; на это стоит обратить внимание. Сал-степная неширокая, но в своих низовьях глубокая с быстрым течением извилистая речка шириною до 20 м.² Постоянно меняет свое русло из-за подмывания берегов. В целом городище лежит в простирающейся на много километров донской пойме.³

Решающим при выборе места стали особенности местности и рельефа. Для строительства был выбран низкий плоский холм (всхолмление), который лежал внутри вытянутой, почти замкнутой петли Сала, охватившей территорию примерно 4×1 км. В сухое время года петля Сала была первым рубежом при подходе к городищу. При разливах Дона все пространство поймы вместе с руслом Сала уходило под воду. Не затопленным оставался только холм, превратившийся на значительное время в остров. Стоявшая на нём крепость оказывалась практически недоступной для потенциального врага. После ухода основной воды, окружающее пространство ещё значительное время оставалось труднопроходимым.

Таким образом, для защиты крепости природные условия были использованы предельно рационально. Как увидим далее, точно так же защищались подходы к крепости Саркел, которая, как и Семикаракорская, стояла в левобережной донской пойме.

Внешняя крепостная стена и стена цитадели крепости воздвигались из сырцового кирпича с вставками обожженного⁴. К нашему времени

² Определение «хазарские» означает расположение крепостей на территории Хазарского каганата, археологически – относящиеся к салтово-маяцкой культуре. В данном случае это определение не относится к этническому составу их строителей, населения и гарнизонов.

³ Флёров В. С. Фортификация Хазарского каганата на Нижнем Дону. Семикаракорское городище. М., 2020. 372 с.

⁴ Флёров В. С. Семикаракорская крепость Хазарского каганата: строительство из сырцового кирпича, технология, сроки//Степи Европы в эпоху средневековья. Т. 7, Хазарское время. Донецк, 2009, 479-488. Флёров В.

стены превратились в «валы» со средней высотой около метра, расплывшиеся до 15-16 м в ширину. Внутри них прекрасно сохранились до 10-12 нижних слоев кирпичной кладки. Благодаря «валам» очертания крепости ещё и сегодня хорошо просматриваются на поверхности.

Подчеркну, перед стенами крепости *не было ровов*, не окружали они и цитадель. На это следует обратить внимание, так как, казалось бы, вы должны увеличить обороноспособность крепости стонкими стенами.

В основе плана Семикаракорской крепости (Илл. 1: 2) лежит древний принцип двух концентрических квадратов, однако реализован он был с нарушениями. Невысокая строительная культура привела к следующему. При том, что для крепости была выбрана ровная и практически горизонтальная площадка, строители не сумели сделать ее углы и углы цитадели прямыми. В итоге на внешнем периметре углы оказались разновеликими: северо-восточный-85°; северо-западный-103°; юго-западный-84°; проектировавшие, но затем срезанный в связи с резким понижением рельефа за донжоном, юго-восточный-88°. Неравенство углов привело к несоразмерности длины стен: северная-205 м, западная-190 м. Если бы не был срезан юго-восточный угол, то южная достигла бы-232 м, а восточная – 210 м. Впрочем, на обороноспособности крепости эта особенность не сказалась, но она резко отличает ее от Саркела с его прямыми углами (Илл.3, 4).

В цитадели углы: северо-восточный-83°, юго-восточный-98°, юго-западный-85°, северо-западный-94°. Длина стен: северная-92 м, восточная-85 м, южная-88 м, западная-85 м.

Площадь крепости-примерно 43 500 кв. м, из которых на цитадель приходилось около 7 600 кв. м. По площади Семикаракоры значительно превосходили все кирпичные и белокаменные крепости Хазарского каганата бассейна Дона,

С. Фортификация Хазарского каганата на Нижнем Дону. Семикаракорское городище. М., 2020, 24-163.

уступая только Хумаринской на Кубани и, вероятно, Итилю, о размерах которого можно только строить предположения⁵.

При значительной длине крепостных стен, 190–232 м, вдоль них в рельефе *башни* прослеживаются. Не оказалось их и на вскрытых участках стен, за исключением постройки названной условно «*башня*»-мастерская, фортификационное назначение которой остается под вопросом. Это двухкамерное сооружение, 15×8 м, из сырцового кирпича, встроенное с внешней стороны в коленообразный изгиб северной стены крепости (Илл. 2: 1). В западном его помещении обнаружены остатки горнов с кусками железистого шлака. Аналогичное двухкамерное сооружение с россыпью шлака пристроено с внутренней стороны к стене Правобережной Цимлянской крепости, башни которой выглядели совершенно по-другому.

Не видно остатков башен и в рельефе стен цитадели. Справедливости ради отмечу, что историк В. М. Пудавов, как и другие донские любители старины XIX-нач. XX вв., упоминал башни и ворота, но раскопки на их месте не проводил. Точные места расположения он не указал.

Рельеф на месте углов крепости и цитадели также говорит *об отсутствии угловых башен*. Это наблюдение подтвердилось раскопками на северо-восточном углу крепости, где башни действительно не оказалось. Другие углы не распахивались, но внимательно осматривались.

Донжон. В южном конце восточной стены крепости находится оплывшая курганобразная насыпь (Илл. 1: 2). Её происхождение десятилетиями оставалось «загадкой», тем более что подобного не отмечено в других крепостях Хазарского каганата. В 1974 г. на стыке стены и насыпи были произведены раскопки, в результате которых выяснилось,

⁵ Флёров В. С. «Города» и «замки» Хазарского каганата. Археологическая реальность. М.–Иерусалим, 2011, 83–106. В настоящий момент в дельте Волги большие работы по поиску Итиля ведет Д. С. Соловьёв (Астрахань) при участии В. А. Сарапулкина (Белгород).

что насыпь является развалинами грандиозного строения из сырцового кирпича с включениями десятков, если не сотен, обожженных. Ничем иным, как донжоном, это сооружение не могло быть. Не противоречит предложенному определению и встроенность этого сооружения в линию крепостных стен, а не размещение внутри крепости или ее цитадели. Оба варианта в истории фортификации известны. Донжон мог быть прямоугольным (как вариант, квадратным), но более вероятны очертания неправильного прямоугольника или удлинённой трапеции. Последнее соответствует очертаниям насыпи. Донжон больших размеров, названный Х. Х. Биджиевым «многоэтажной башней», известен в каменной крепости Хумара. Впрочем, его реконструкция раскопками не подтверждена⁶.

Какой была первоначальная высота семикаракорского донжона? Судя по площади «кургана», т. е. его развалин, овал 35×40 м, и их нынешней высоте, не менее 2,5 м, донжон имел не менее двух-трёх этажей. При такой высоте его стены, вероятнее всего, были слегка наклонными. Если принять высоту крепостных стен за 5 м, то высота донжона достигала не менее 10 м. Каких-либо серьезных фортификационных функций он не нес. Его основное назначение – обеспечить наблюдение за степью в восточном направлении минимум на 20–25 км при ясной погоде. Разумеется, он мог использоваться и как обычная башня, что обороноспособность крепости заметно не повышало. Обороноспособность возрастала при наличии системы башен.

Стены крепости и цитадели. Как бы ни были примечательны и даже оригинальны все прочие особенности Семикаракорской крепости, именно стены более всего характеризуют степень её обороноспособности. В первую очередь это относится к их толщине: в пределах 1,45–1,60 м. Этот показатель вдвое меньше, чем у сложенных из обожженного

⁶ Биджиев Х. Х. Хумаринское городище. Черкесск, 1983, 26, 27; рис. 26–28.

кирпича на известковом растворе стен Саркела (3,72-3,76 м) и сложенных из белокаменных блоков стен Правобережной Цимлянской крепости (4,20 м).

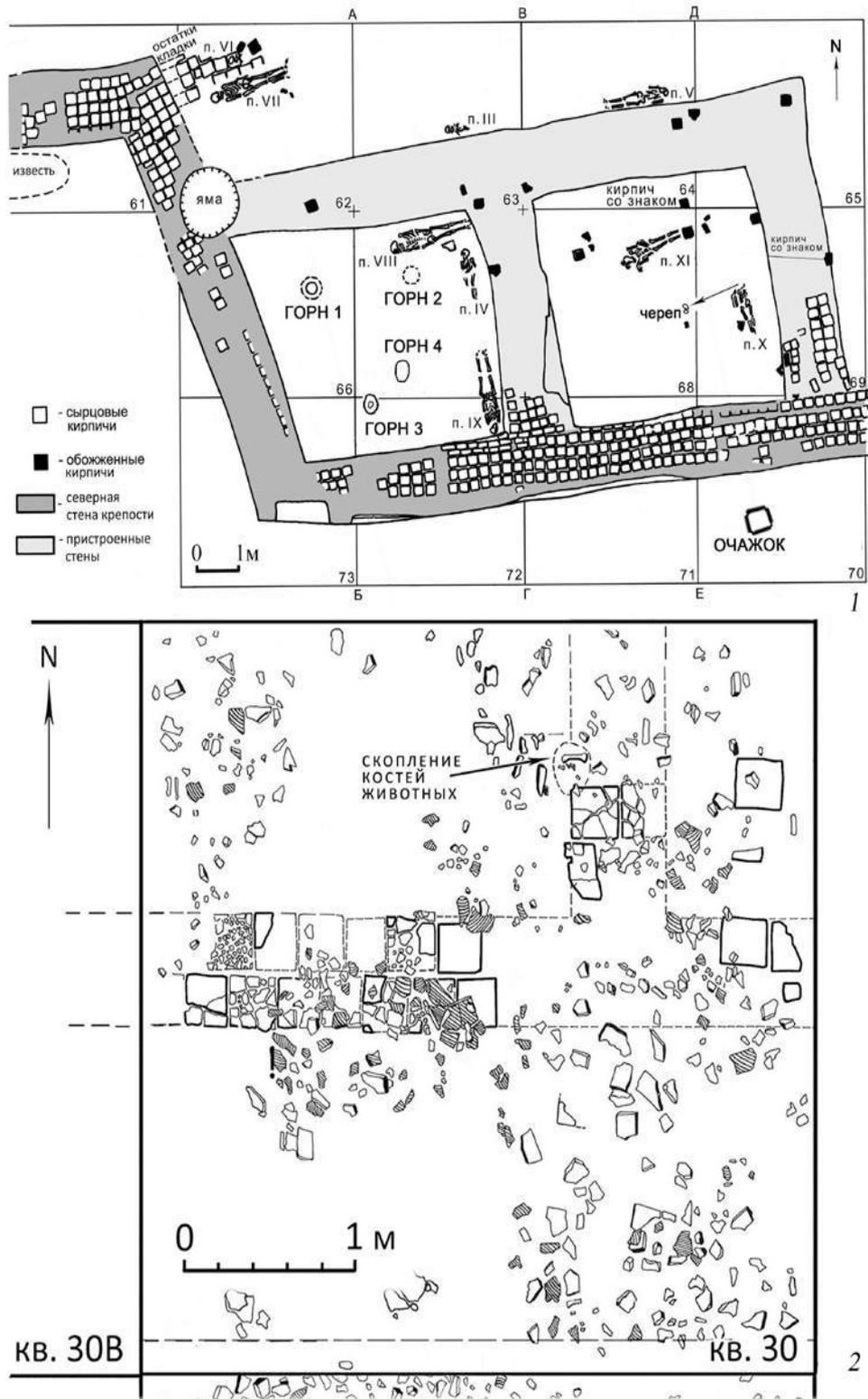
Все стены и сооружения крепости возведены *без фундамента*. Строители ограничились снятием тонкого слоя гумуса и выравниванием полосы соответствующей ширине стен. Надо признать, выравнивание до горизонтального состояния производилось достаточно тщательно. Во всяком случае, стремление к этому очевидно.

Здесь не место в деталях описывать технологию строительства стен, но укажу на то, что при хорошем качестве сырцового кирпича, нарушения в его укладке многочисленны. Впечатление, что кладкувели недостаточно подготовленные для этого люди. Вероятно, и без должного инженерного контроля за вертикальностью возводимых стен. Последнее подтверждают продольные вертикальные трещины внутри стен, тянувшиеся на многие метры. Рискну предположить, что происходили обвалы того или иного участка в ходе самого строительства.

Не найдено доказательств облицовки сырцовых стен панцирем из обожженных кирпичей. В условиях местного климата сырцовые необлицованные стены требовали постоянного ухода, подмазки. Проследить следы ремонта оказалось невозможным, поскольку поверхности стен не сохранились. В той или иной степени, они выкрошены. Только местами вдоль них замечены мало выразительные разрозненные комочки или пятна известкового раствора, но как первоначально он использовался, объяснить не удалось. Во всяком случае не для побелки. Иначе вдоль их основания, внутри и снаружи, известь тянулась бы сплошными полосами.

Строения в цитадели. Через цитадель в направлении С–Ю была проложена траншея шириною 4 м. В результате были обнаружены развалины зданий из *обоженного кирпича*, занимавшие, судя по рельефу, большую часть

внутреннего пространства цитадели. Среди развалин сохранились и обрывки стен, сложенных в два кирпича и окруженных многочисленными обломками *черепицы*(Илл. 2: 2).



Илл. 2: Семикаракорская крепость: 1 – «башня-мастерская» на северной стене; 2 – остатки строений из обожженного кирпича в Цитадели

Каково же было назначение Семикаракорской крепости? На мой взгляд, ответ кроется в объяснении мнимого несоответствия слабости её фортификации с расположением в *цитадели зданий из обожженного кирпича с черепичной кровлей*⁷.

Строительный материал оборонительных стен, оказался самым непрочным из применявшихся в каганате-сырцовый кирпич. Судя по незначительному объему его развалов, внешние и внутренние стены не были высокими, максимум 4-5 м, и к тому же не имели башен. Не отвечает задаче надежной обороны толщина стен в пределах всего двух метров при отмеченном несовершенстве кладки сырцового кирпича.

Отсутствие башен, особенно на внешних стенах со средней длиной в 200 м и ров может показаться необъяснимым, если рассматривать Семикаракорскую крепость как обычное фортификационное сооружение. Но дело в том, что тонкие без башен стены и не предназначались для долговременной обороны: они были ничем иным как *оградой жилища кагана («дворца»)*, но никак не настоящими крепостными стенами. За оградой цитадели располагался сам каган (возможно, шад). Между внешними стенами и стенами цитадели его сопровождающие, «свита», немалый отряд охраны, припасы.

Непосредственным же жилищем каганов были те самые кирпичные постройки в цитадели, от которых сохранились только развалины с обрывками стен, сложенных в два кирпича в ширину. Известия письменных источников о запрете всем, кроме кагана, строить из обожженного кирпича⁸ нашли в данном случае подтверждение в раскопках Семикаракорской цитадели.

⁷ Подробнее в: Флёров В. С. Фортификация Хазарского каганата на Нижнем Дону. Семикаракорское городище. М., 2020, 326-333.

⁸ Заходер Б. Н. Каспийский свод сведений о Восточной Европе. Горган и Поволжье в IX – X вв. М., 1962, 198, 199; Калинина Т. М. Проблемы истории Хазарии (по данным восточных источников). М., 2015, 58.

Аналогичной слабостью обороны отличалась и громадная по площади и протяженности каменных стен, 2 793 м, столица Первого Болгарского царства Плиска: «По причине больших расстояний между воротами и угловыми башнями можно было ожидать значительного количества башен, т. к. обыкновенно они располагаются максимум на 50 м друг от друга. Это правило в Плиске не сохранено. Самое малое расстояние... 94 м - расстояние от башни № 3 до юго-восточной угловой и до восточных ворот. Для остальных башен это расстояние от 160 до 200 м, между башнями №№ 5 и 6 это расстояние достигает 351 м и только между башней № 6 и южными воротами оно 118 м... С малым числом фронтальных башен, расставленных на большое расстояние одна от другой, *плисковская крепость выглядит скорее как парадная, представительская крепость, предназначенная не для обороны и не для военных действий, а скорее внушения впечатления своей высотой и объемами ворот и башен. Этот эффект усиливается окрашенным в красный цвет раствором в швах [между блоками-В.Ф.], что придавало стенам декоративный вид в отличие от мрачного, грубого вида стен обычных крепостей. Слабая военная функциональность псковской крепости подчеркивается тем, что нигде с внутренних сторон крепостных стен первоначально не было открытых лестниц для быстрого подъема на боевые площадки. Доступ на них происходил через башни с тесными и неудобными для подъема деревянными лестницами. Внешние лестницы были сооружены позднее, когда Внутренний город и строения в нем уже потеряли представительское предназначение*⁹.

Семикаракорская ставка каганов не могла быть постоянной при такой слабой фортификации. Она использовалась лишь эпизодически, вероятно, во время весенне-летних поездок каганов. В связи с этим стоит обратить внимание на то, что она расположена

⁹ Рашев Р. Плисковският аул // Плиска–Преслав. Т. 7. Шумен, 1995, 20.

на самом западе «хазарского домена» в примечательном местеслиянии с Доном его притоков Северского Донца, Маныча и Сала.

Предложенная гипотеза о назначении Семикаракорской крепости, в отличие от многих встречающихся в литературе о хазарских крепостях, в перспективе может быть проверена при последующих раскопках.

Описание крепости будет неполным без упоминания *двух сооружений: кольцеобразного и подковообразного* северной стеной крепости (Илл. 1: 2). Их контуры просматриваются в виде валов высотой в пределах 0,5-1,0 м при ширине до 15 м. Их можно рассматривать как парные, хотя они отстоят от крепостной стены на различном расстоянии.

Кольцеобразное, восточное, находится примерно в 35-40 м от крепости. Его диаметр по внешнему контуру 75-80 м. Вокруг вала ровик шириною около 10 м при глубине 0,5 м. На плане С. А. Плетнёвой «кольцо» соединено с крепостью двумя «стенами», что, на мой взгляд, является ее «реконструкцией»¹⁰. На плане А. А. Миллера 1926 г. кольцеобразный вал ничем с крепостью не связан¹¹.

Не увидел и я «стен» Плетнёвой; не отразились они и при инструментальных съемках 1972 и 2014 гг. Раскоп площадью 16 кв. м, заложенный на северной вершине кольца в 1972 г., оказался мало результативен и дал только шесть фрагментов амфор.

Еще менее понятно *западное подковообразное сооружение*, плохо просматриваемое на современной поверхности. Оно заметно ближе к крепости, чем «кольцо», примерно в 15-20 м. Трудно определить его размеры. Ориентировочно, с севера на юг 50 м, с запада на восток 70 м по внешнему контуру. Совсем не просматриваются концы «подковы», обращенные к северной стене крепости. Более

осторожный А. А. Миллер, в отличие от С. А. Плетнёвой, не соединил их с крепостью. Стоит обратить внимание и на то, что на крепостном «валу» против подковы Миллер наметил «проход», которого нет на плане Плетнёвой. Не располагая более полными данными, трактовать оба сооружения не представляется возможным. Менее всего допускаю их хозяйственное назначение (напр. загоны для скота).

Правобережная Цимлянская Крепость. Не стоит повторять все данные о ее фортификации, изложенные в данной книге. Кратко перечислю главное:

Площадка под строительство выбрана целенаправленно-отсечена от прилегающей местности двумя глубокими балками.

Рвы. Был ли ров со стороны Дона остался неизвестным. С. А. Плетнёва упоминала ров перед короткой северо-западной стеной, предвратной¹². Если он и существовал, то сегодня не заметен.

Строительные материалы, конструкция стен. Строительный материал-блоки белого известняка со свойством легко раскалываться и большим влагопоглощением. Размеры блоков от 38×23×11 до 120×40×?? см. Большинство же в пределах 65-70×30×40 см.

Под стены в один слой устроено *основание из плит* ракушечника и песчаника. Щели между ними заполняли крошевом известняка и мелкими, до 10 см, окатанными «голышами», что делало основание стен монолитным.

Толщина внешних стен крепости-4,20 м, но основание было несколько шире, выступая иногда с внешней и внутренней сторон на 20-25 см. Аналогичную конструкцию стен зафиксировал И. И. Ляпушкин¹³.

¹⁰ Плетнёва С. А. От кочевий к городам. Салтово-маяцкая культура / МИА. № 142. М., 1967, 37, рис. 9: 1.

¹¹ Миллер А. А. Археологические работы Северо-Кавказской экспедиции Академии в 1926 и 1927 гг. // СГАИМК, П. Л., 1929, 104, рис. 15.

¹² Плетнёва С. А. Правобережное Цимлянское городище. Раскопки 1958-1959 гг. // МАИЭТ. Вып. IV. Симферополь, 1994, 273.

¹³ Ляпушкин И. И. Памятники салтово-маяцкой культуры в бассейне р. Дона // Тр. ВДАЭ. Т. I. / МИА. № 62. М.-Л., 1958, 135, рис. 25.

Башни. Их не менее восьми. Расстояние между ними – от 15 до 62 м. Минимум две имели узкие проходы – башни IV и VI на восточной крепостной стене. По числу башен Правобережная крепость сравнима с Саркелом, учитывая, что площадь последнего почти в четыре раза больше, соответственно – 0,68 и 2,58 га.

Структура внутреннего пространства крепости. Крепость разделена двумя стенами с проходами на три сектора: 1) северо-западный предвратный; 2) северо-восточный основной и 3) южный треугольный. Их конфигурацию предстоит уточнить.

КАМЫШИНСКАЯ КРЕПОСТЬ на берегу Цимлянского водохранилища, соседняя с Правобережной (Илл. 5). По всем показателям аналогична ей. Также расположена на треугольной площадке между двумя глубокими балками, впадавшими в долину Дона до образования Цимлянского водохранилища. Судя по размерам, Камышинская по площади в несколько раз превосходила Правобережную. Ее стены сложены из блоков белого известняка, но без раскопок невозможно было определить, лежали ли под стенами плиты песчаника и ракушечника¹⁴. На поверхности крепости нет возвышений, которые могли бы указывать на остатки больших сооружений и внутренних стен. Нет и следов культурного слоя, по крайней мере в центре южной половины крепости, где был заложен шурф 2.

Даже при скудости информации о крепости, не вызывает сомнений её принадлежность к одной строительной традиции с Правобережной Цимлянской. Это нашло неопровержимое подтверждение, когда в 2009 г. у подножия городища был обнаружен большой обломок блока, сплошь покрытый на торце врезным декором, десятки образцов которого представлены на блоках Правобережной крепости (Илл. 5: 2). В

¹⁴ Ларенок П. А., Семёнов А. И. Саркел, Саркел, еще Саркел... // Донская археология. № 3-4. Ростов-на-Дону, 1999, 27.

результате появилась возможность говорить и о культурном единстве населения соседних крепостей.

САРКЕЛ. Ему посвящена книга С. А. Плетнёвой¹⁵, но я предпочитаю пользоваться сведениями непосредственных исследователей Саркела М. И. Артамонова (1958) и П. А. Раппопорта (1959)¹⁶.

Природная защита. Крепость стояла в пойме Дона с заболоченными низинами на небольшой возвышенности между двумя старыми протоками. Удобный подход к ней был только с северо-западной стороны (Илл. 3: 1). При разливах Саркел оказывался на острове, как и Семикаракорская крепость.

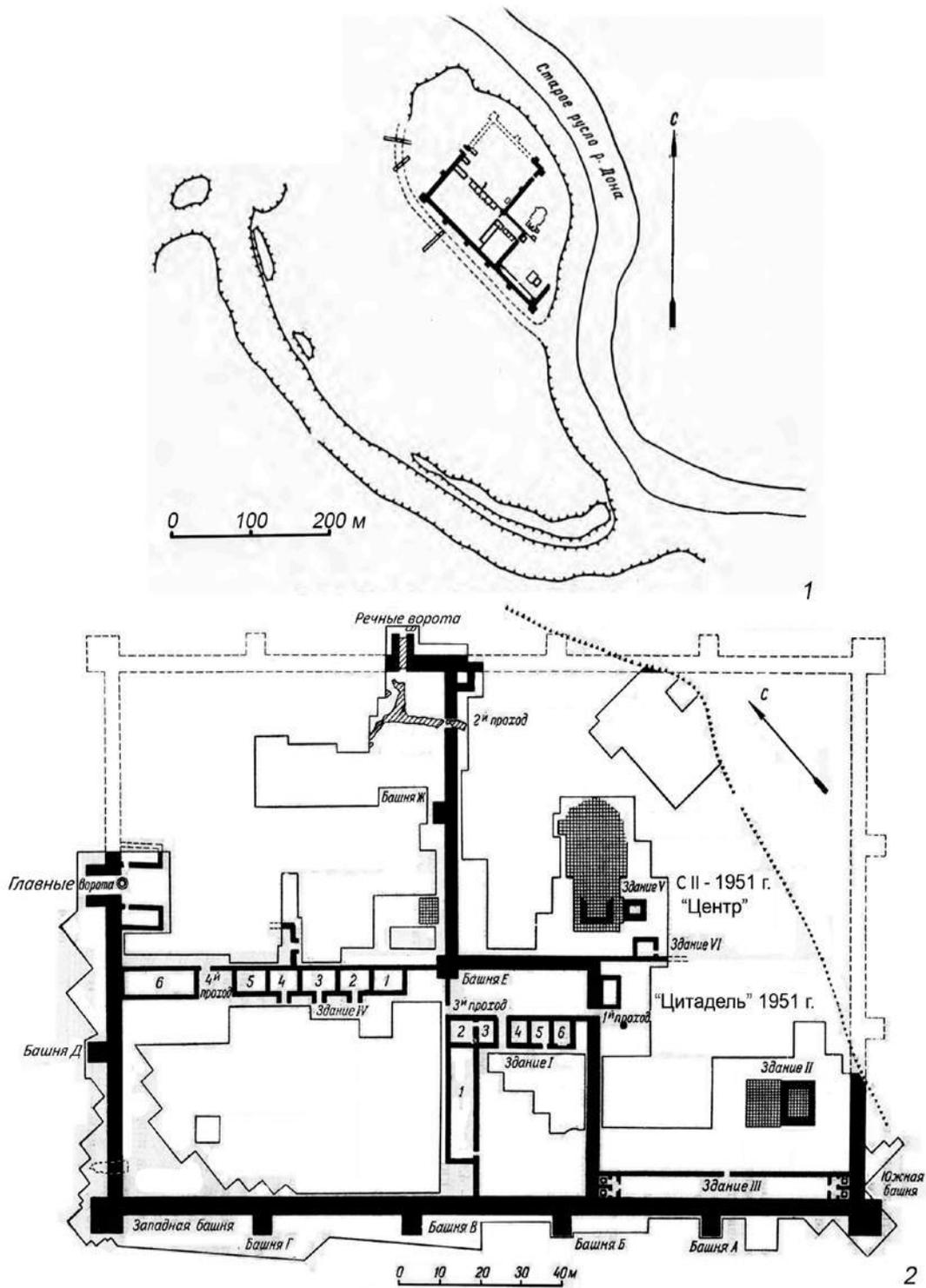
Ров. Непосредственно перед юго-западной стеной проходил ров шириной до 9 м при глубине около 4 м, впадавший в протоку (Илл. 3: 1). Таким образом, крепость оказывалась окруженной системой протоки – ров. В целом же рвы остались малоисследованными и вызывают ряд вопросов¹⁷.

Стены. Очертания Саркела строго прямоугольные – единственный случай среди крепостей каганата (Илл. 3: 2). От крепости остались лишь обрывки кладок (Илл. 4: 1), но ее план восстанавливается по отпечаткам на грунте стен всех ее сооружений, в т. ч. внешних крепостных с башнями (Илл. 4: 2).

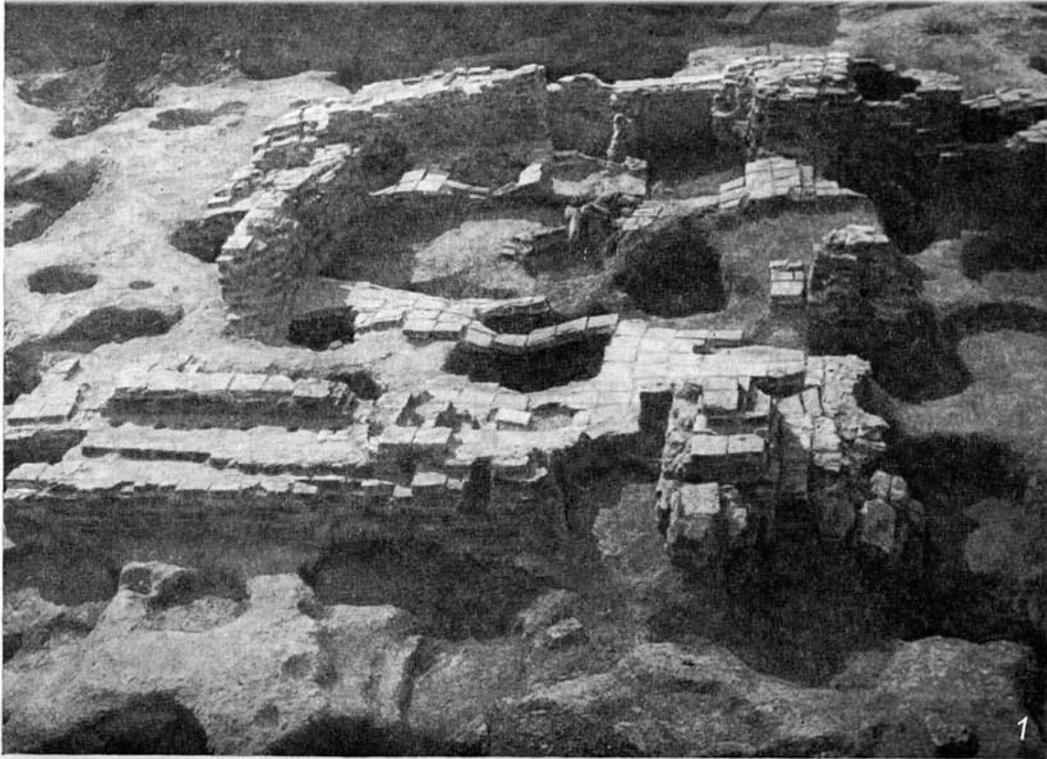
¹⁵ Плетнёва С. А. Саркел и «Шелковый путь». Воронеж, 1996.

¹⁶ Артамонов М. И. Саркел – Белая Вежа // Тр. ВДАЭ. Т. I / МИА № 62. М.–Л., 1958, 7-84; Раппопорт П. А. Крепостные сооружения Саркела // Тр. ВДАЭ. Т. II / МИА. № 75. М.–Л., 1959, 9-39.

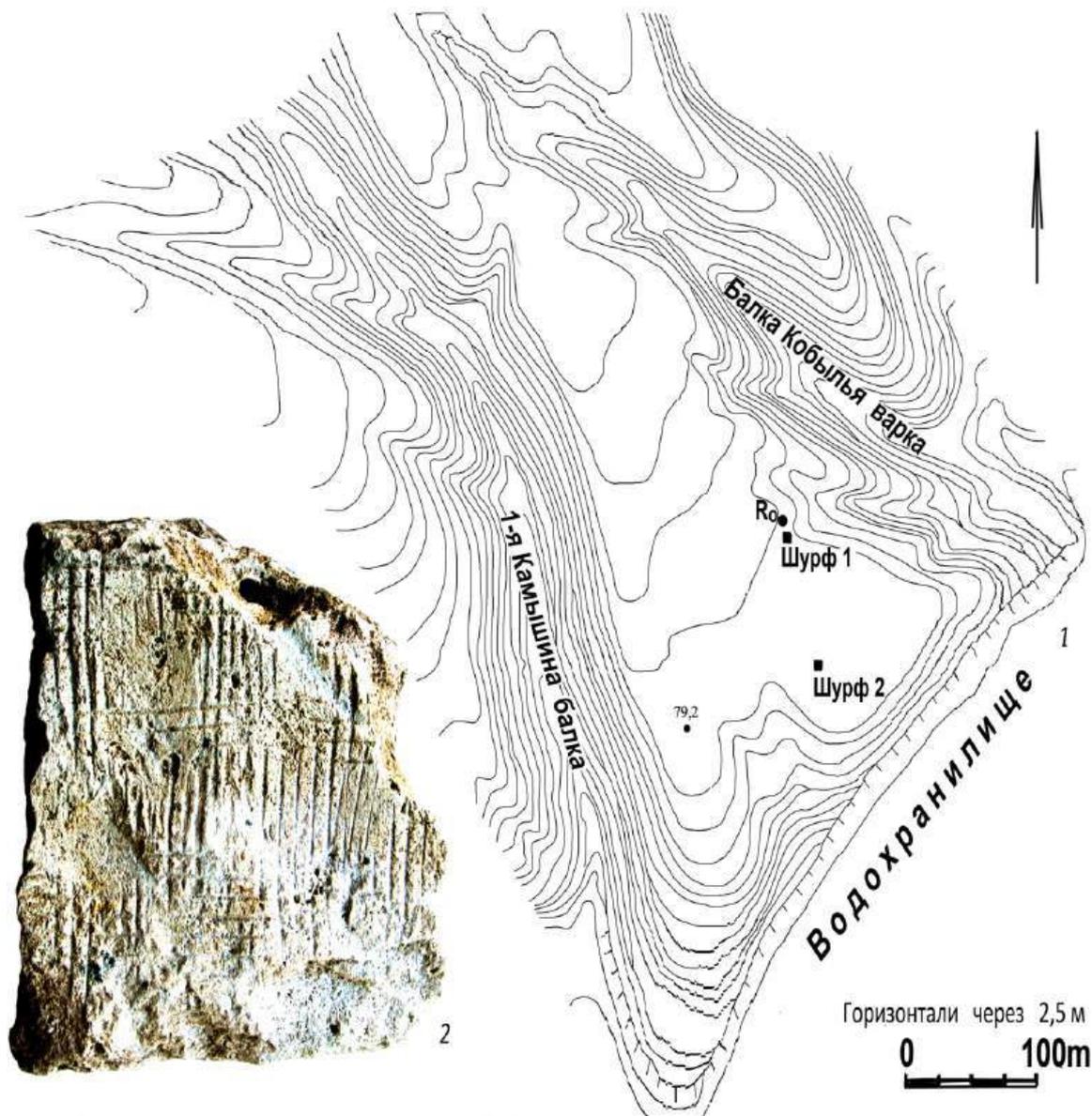
¹⁷ Раппопорт П. А. Крепостные сооружения..., 12.



Илл. 3: Саркел: 1-ситуационный план; 2-план крепости (по: Раппопорт, 1959, рис. 4, 5)



Илл. 4: Саркел: 1 – здание II, вид с северо-востока; 2 – отпечатки на грунте кирпичей крепостной стены (по: Раппопорт, 1959, рис. 3, 27)



Илл. 5: Крепость Камышино: 1 – план, съемка В. В. Ключникова;
2 – блок с врезным декором, найден в 2009 г.

Судить о высоте стен не представляется возможным. Во всяком случае, не менее 5 м; толщина 3,72-3,76 м при общей их протяженности в 654 м. Отпечатки кирпичей на грунте показывают, что снизукладка сплошная. Никто, однако, не ставил вопрос об их монолитности на всю высоту. Если «нет», то из чего состояла забутовка? Постановке вопроса о забутовке противоречит отсутствие в развалинах Саркела обломков ракушечника или песчаника. Если стены были монолитны, то объем необходимого для них кирпича (без учета выступов башен) составит 12 230 м³.

Нетрудно подсчитать, что при размере кирпича 25×25×5 см, 1 м³= 320 кирпичам. Всего же на стену должно было пойти 3 913 536 кирпичей (12 229,8×320).

Второе значительное сооружение Саркела-внутренняя стена (см. ниже) длиной 145,86 м, толщиной 2,95-3,00 м (в 12 кирпичей). При предполагаемой высоте не более 5 м, ее объем 2210,60 м³, что равно 707 392 кирпичам. Итого на внешнюю и внутреннюю стены требовалось 4 620 928 кирпичей. В это число не входят кирпичи для выступов башен за

линию стен и всех построек внутри крепости. Грубо доведу потребность в кирпиче до 5 000 000 штук. Как показали расчеты по Семикаракорам, изготовить их можно за два-три сезона, *но проблема заключалась в обжиге этой массы!* Печи для обжига кирпичей не найдены, хотя были обнаружены обычные гончарные диаметрами около 2 м¹⁸.

Башни. Всего их 16, включая привратные. Поражает единообразие квадратных башен на куртинах. Их 12 с размерами сторон 4,63-4,75 м. Размещены на почти одинаковом расстоянии: на юго-западной стене через 30,82-30,85 м, на северо-западной стене через 30,25-30,30 м. Крупнее угловые башни, 7,88×7,95 м, выступающие наружу на 4,25 м. Неизвестно более всего нас интересующее – внутреннее устройство саркелских башен. При интервале 30,30 – 30,85 м башни обеспечивали прицельную стрельбу из луков, метание дротиков и пр.

Структура внутреннего пространства, Цитадель, Донжон. Саркел поделен на две почти равные половины поперечной коленообразной стеной. Не могу объяснить выбор такого маршрута стены, но он не мог не быть мотивированным, в том числе назначениями размещением всех строений в крепости. Надо полагать, ее проект был тщательно продуман.

Обе половины крепости в свою очередь были разделены на сектора вереницами зданий; всего в крепости их образовалось пять. В северном устроены широкие *Главные ворота* и узкие *Речные*. Остается под вопросом – имелись ли ворота в восточном секторе, угол которого не сохранился. Назначение южного сектора исследователи определили, как *Цитадель*. В ней ближе к южному углу стояло «Здание II» с внутренними размерами 6,46×4,96 м при толщине стен в 1,80 м, т. е. в шесть с половиной кирпичей 27×27 см. Пол вымощен кирпичами, как и большая площадка перед ним¹⁹. М. И. Артамонов, отнесший Здание II к

«загадочным», предположил, что оно могло быть *донжоном* в три и даже четыре этажа. Лежавшей в низкой пойме крепости донжон, действительно, был необходим.

Обратил внимание М. И. Артамонов еще на одно сооружение – *Здание V* столбиною стеной в пять с половиной кирпичей (примерно 1,6 м), стоявшее на более обширной площадке, чем площадка у Здания II (Илл. 3: 2). В результате он был вынужден написать: «...если здание с кирпичной вымосткой возле него в южном углу крепости имеет все основания рассматриваться в качестве донжона, то такое же назначение следует признать и за сооружением на площадке» (т. е. Зданием V – В. Ф.)²⁰. Была ли в Саркеле необходимость в двух донжонах, расстояние между которыми 55 м? Как бы то ни было, существование одного допустить можно.²¹

В статьях П. А. Раппопорта и М. И. Артамонова почти нет информации о технологии строительства. Отмечу использование в Саркеле значительных объемов известня для заливки больших площадей.

Предлагаемые выводы. Сравнить три ниже-донские крепости оказалось сложнее, чем мне представлялось вначале. Некоторые их признаки вынесены в *Таблицу*.

Семикаракорская и Правобережная Цимлянская возникли в кон. VIII – нач. IX в., и погибли одновременно в первые годы существования Саркела, вероятнее всего при крупном внутреннем конфликте в каганате в конце первой трети IX в. Но будучи синхронными, они построены в разных традициях. Более архаичной выглядит Семикаракорская, но обратим внимание: использование обожженного кирпича появилось в ней раньше, чем в Саркеле, т. е. до прибытия на Нижний Дон Петроны Каматира.

¹⁸ Там же, 19, 20.

¹⁹ Там же, 28.

²⁰ Артамонов М. И. Саркел – Белая Вежа..., 21, 22.

²¹ Раппопорт П. А. Крепостные сооружения... 28, 31, 32, 34 и др.

	Семикаракорская	Правобережная Цимлянская	Саркел
Использование природных условий	разливы р. Дон; петля русла р. Сал	две балки, отсекавшие крепость от окружающей территории	разливы и старица р. Дон
Размеры (м)	205×190×232×210	105×130×135×25	193,5×133,5
Площадь (га)	4,35	0,68	2,58
Рвы	<i>нет</i>	перед воротами-? с восточной стороны –?	+
Эскарпирование		+	
Толщина стен (м)	1,45-1,60	4,20	3,72-3,76
Фундамент	<i>нет</i>	<i>нет</i>	<i>нет</i>
Строительный материал стен	сырцовый кирпич с бессистемными вставками обожженного	основание из плит ракушечника; блоки белого известняка	кирпич обожженный
Связующий материал	грязь-основной; раствор извести-маштабы использования не ясны	<i>нет</i>	раствор извести
Черепица	+	+	30 фрагментов
Башни	«башня»-мастерская	9 (10?)	16
Донжон	встроен в восточную стену крепости	?	+(?)
Структура внутреннего пространства крепости	обособленная цитадель	<i>три сектора</i>	<i>пять секторов</i>
Строения внутри крепости, материал	в цитадели из обожженного кирпича	небольшая постройка из блоков	кирпичные разного назначения
Жилища	?	юртообразные	полуземлянки юрто-образные?

Самый Слабый Конструктивный элемент Семикаракорской крепости-стены из сырцового кирпича. Ненадежность такой стены заключалась даже не в ее значительно меньшей толщине, чем у стен Правобережной

и Саркела, а в нестойкости сырцового кирпича в условиях отнюдь не засушливого климата Нижнего Дона (для сравнения: в условиях Средней Азии сырцовый кирпич оставался

традиционным материалом для крепостей до конца XIX в.).

Второе, на стенах крепости не было башен, при том, что они самые протяженные во всем бассейне Дона-Северского Донца. Не обороняли их и рвы.

По каким причинам фортификация ставки каганов получила такие изъяны? Не буду скоропалительно строить предположения²²; ими и без того перенасыщена хазароведческая литература. При любом обращении к Семикаракорской крепости будем помнить о том, что моими раскопками затронута мизерная часть ее площади. То, что сегодня представляется в ней необъяснимым, прояснится при будущих исследованиях.

Разительно отличается от Семикаракорской Правобережная Цимлянская, сооруженная из другого материала, тоже не лучшего для фортификационных объектов, как уже говорилось, ломкого, с сильным водопоглощением²³. Но белый известняк обладал важным практическим качеством – удобен в обработке, хотя не такой уж легкой, как принято считать. Блоки укладывались без раствора извести, что характерно, впрочем, для всех белокаменных крепостей каганата в бассейне Дона. Не думаю, что сухая кладка ослабляла стены.

Принципиально иное, нежели в Семикаракорской, членение внутреннего пространства крепости, поделенного на три сектора. Этот же прием использован в Саркеле, но здесь уже пять секторов. В этом их основное сходство, равно как в прямоугольных башнях и даже в устройстве привратных помещений у главных ворот²⁴. С другой стороны, Правобережная имела с Семикаракорск Им Общую черту: двухкамерные мастерские, пристроенные к крепостным стенам. Таким образом, Правобережная Цимлянская

²² Из сырцового кирпича, но иного формата, сооружены крепости Красная и др., на р. Тихая Сосна, Воронежская обл., в регионе залегания белого известняка.

²³ Сохранены несколько блоков и обломки в музее г. Цимлянска; обломки – в музее г. Волгодонска.

²⁴ Плетнёва С. А. От кочевий ..., 38, рис. 10: 2.

крепость занимает промежуточное положение между Семикаракорской и Саркелом.

Сегодня не все объяснимо относительно Правобережной крепости. Трудно решить, какой ее отсек считать цитаделью, северо-восточный или южный. Да и сама постановка такого вопроса не совсем корректна, поскольку мы не знаем, предназначали ли эту функцию одному из них сами строители крепости. Имелось ли у них само понятие «цитадель»? Есть другие остающиеся без ответа вопросы, в частности о зубцах на крепостных стенах. Широкое распространение получила моя и художника О. Фёдорова реконструкция стен с зубцами²⁵, которые, однако, не были найдены при раскопках. За основу были взяты зубцы Маяцкой крепости²⁶. На допущение аналогии подтолкнуло умение правобережных каменотесов выделять не только прямоугольные, но и блоки с вырезами на торцах²⁷.

Превращение в XVIII в. крепости в каменоломню оставляет мало надежд найти остатки донжона. Каменная «палатка» площадью 5×5 м у прохода между северо-восточным и южным секторами слишком мала и не могла быть донжоном. Нельзя исключить, что его остатки будут найдены у западной стены южного сектора. У западной, потому что в этом, напольном направлении обзор дальних подступов к крепости был ограничен: крепость лежала в основании высокого водораздела, который сокращал обзор до нескольких километров. Но и без донжона по основным признакам оцениваю фортификацию Правобережной несравнимо выше крепости Семикаракорской.

Самой совершенной из донских крепостей каганата, безусловно, был Саркел. Отмечу то,

²⁵ Флёров В. С. Донские крепости Хазарии. Былое и будущее // Восточная коллекция. 2006. № 2, 68.

²⁶ Афанасьев Г. Е. Исследование южного угла Маяцкой крепости в 1977–1979 гг. // Маяцкое городище. Труды Советско-Болгаро-Венгерской экспедиции. М., 1984, 48, 49, рис. 27, 28.

²⁷ Флёров В. С. Правобережное Цимлянское городище в свете раскопок 1987–1988, 1990 гг. // МАИЭТ. Вып. IV. Симферополь, 1994, 496, рис. 5: 4-5; 497, рис. 6: 7.

что выделяет его на фоне Семикаракорской и Правобережной крепостей. В первую очередь это касается строительного материала – обожженный кирпич в сочетании с известью. Сложенная из него стена превращалась в монолит. Показательно, что при разрушении казаками, она зачастую распадалась не на отдельные кирпичи, а на целые массивы из десятков кирпичей²⁸.

Различия в строительном материале Правобережной крепости и Саркела не должно затушевывать сходство между ними в планировке внутреннего пространства, делении его на части. В треугольной Правобережной оно было рассечено внутренними стенами на три отсека; в прямоугольном Саркеле – на пять не только внутренними стенами, но зданиями со стенами толщиной до метра. Другими словами, в обеих крепостях применен один и тот же прием фортификации.

Не всё понятно и с Саркелом. Так, о назначении внутренних помещений в длинных зданиях можно только гадать, как и о прямоугольных ямах внутри них, «колодцах» по П. А. Раппопорту²⁹. На полах помещений сохраняется известняковая заливка. Не разделяю предположение С. А. Плетнёвой о том, что столь мощная и тщательно распланированная крепость первоначально предназначалась для караван-сарая³⁰.

О ЗАЩИТНИКАХ и ОСАЖДАЮЩИХ: Конкретные обстоятельства прекращения жизни ниже-донских крепостей неизвестны. Именно конкретные: что происходило в дни захвата крепости непосредственно под их стенами и на них, о соотношении осаждавших и гарнизона, а главное, о том, насколько эффективными оказались все элементы фортификации.

Находки останков погибших в Семикаракорской и Правобережной Цимлянской крепостях указывают лишь на

факт их захвата и не более. Сдались ли они в силу каких-либо конкретных причин (например: долгая осада и как следствие голод; исчерпаны запасы воды в колодце) или были взяты штурмом? Нет следов пожаров. Среди находок ни одна не указывает на тех, кто захватил эти крепости.

Оценить обороноспособность каждой из трех рассмотренных крепостей без знания конкретных обстоятельств их гибели невозможно. Тактическая ситуация в момент угрозы каждой из крепостей может быть только смоделирована в зависимости от вводимых исследователями исходных данных (вид военных игр). Весьма приблизительный результат может быть получен только для Саркела, численность гарнизона которого по источнику 300 человек³¹, но к этому числу надо добавить значительное число из населения. Казалось бы, для успешного штурма нападавших не должно было быть меньше. На деле же все зависело от их тактики и опыта. Более чем сомнительно, что в степях какие-либо местные или пришлые племена имели такой опыт, тем более стенобитные и метательные машины. Минимум осадных средств, который можно допустить, – это лестницы. Даже в Первом Болгарском царстве, соседи Империи, освоение осадных машин и устройств начинается только в самом начале IX в. Рашо Рашев подчеркнул, что даже неизвестно, как звучали в праболгарском и славянском языке наименования осадных устройств³².

Весьма неопределенное известие о действиях Святослава «и град их и белу вежу взя» не содержит информации о том, как взят: штурмом, осадой. Правда, в Саркеле есть две находки времени его падения. Первая – клад в слое хазарского времени, состоявший из украшений и дирхемов, свидетельствующий, что жители не были уверены в удачном исходе обороны. Вторая – подкол изнутри крепости.

²⁸ Раппопорт П. А. Крепостные сооружения..., 11, рис. 2.

²⁹ Там же, 32, рис. 29.

³⁰ Плетнёва С. А. Саркел и «Шелковый путь»..., 143; Флёров В. С. «Города» и «замки»..., 32.

³¹ Константин Багрянородный. Об управлении империей. М., 1989, 171.

³² Рашев Р. Прабългарите и Българското ханство на Дунав. София, 2001, 96, 97; Рашев Р. Българската езическа култура VII–IX век. София, 2008, 172.

«Вблизи западной башни под северо-западной оборонительной стеной открыт подкоп, явно вырытый изнутри крепости, по-видимому, для вылазки или какого-либо другого предприятия гарнизона, которое надлежало произвести втайне от врагов, осаждавших, очевидно, крепость и блокировавших обычные выходы из нее. Подкоп довольно широкий, но низкий, 2.2 м ширины и 0.70 м высоты; снаружи он суживается и заканчивается острым углом на расстоянии 4.5 м от стены. По миновании надобности подкоп был плотно забит кирпичами, камнями и землей. У наружного конца подвала под завалом кирпичей на дне оказался скелет человека.... По-видимому, человек погиб во время вылазки и был спешно зарыт при засыпке подвала. Особый интерес захоронения в подвале, свидетельствующего о какой-то драматической странице истории крепости, заключается в кусочке бумаги, найденном среди костей кисти руки скелета и сохранившемся только благодаря консервирующим свойствам краски (хны), которая была в него завернута.... Никаких признаков письма на этом обрывке нет, но изучение технологии бумаги показало, что она самаркандского происхождения, где в VIII–IX вв. (до 810 г.) бумага изготовлялась из местного материала...»³³. Я не случайно почти полностью, воспроизвожу описание подвала, т. к. в прочих крепостях каганата подвалы не обнаружены.

Поставленная мною задача решалась бы легче и с более надежными результатами, если бы мы располагали оценками современников относительно хазарских крепостей. Даже простое упоминание в источниках их названий свидетельствовало бы о том, что им придавали хоть какое-то значение (имею в виду восточных или византийских авторов).

О НАЗНАЧЕНИИ КРЕПОСТЕЙ: В мирное время нижне-донские крепости могли быть административными пунктами, а также базами небольших военных отрядов. Вскоротечных столкновениях местного

значения и при благоприятных обстоятельствах каждая из них могла отстоять себя сама. Но попробуем представить их в широкой оперативной обстановке. Небольшие, затерянные в необозримых донских степях, они не только не могли повлиять на общий ход военных действий, но со своими небольшими гарнизонами оказывались в полной изоляции. Спасти их могла только помощь извне.

Подробнее остановлюсь на ставшем хрестоматийным вопросе *против кого построены Саркел и Правобережная крепость?* Среди предполагаемых противников не только этих крепостей, но всего каганата часто упоминаются венгры. Так, Правобережную крепость привлекала история отношений венгров с Хазарским каганатом французский историк К. Цукерман, в равной степени не согласный в этом вопросе с С. А. Плетнёвой и мною: «Атрибуция С. А. Плетнёвой идеи о разрушении городища венграми является с моей стороны досадной ошибкой. ... Анализ памятника, данный С. А. Плетнёвой, оспаривает В. С. Флёров». Тут же К. Цукерман сетует на то, что его и мои хронологические построения не совпадают³⁴. В свою очередь с трактовками К. Цукермана не согласился украинский историк А. В. Комар: «Не помогает модели [Цукермана-В.Ф.] и «гражданская война в Хазарии», поскольку ее датировка М. И. Артамоновым 20-30-ми гг. IX в. (Артамонов 2002, с. 346-347) была основана на датировке разгрома Правобережного Цимлянского городища, в свете работ С. А. Плетнёвой и В. С. Флёрова (даже несмотря на противоречия между этими исследователями в части трактовки стратиграфии памятника), случившегося однозначно не ранее постройки Саркела (Плетнёва 1995; Флёров 1995)»³⁵.

Будучи археологом, настоятельно обращаю внимание историков на то, что ни одно из событий времени пребывания венгров в

³³ Артамонов М. И. Саркел–Белая Вежа... 53-55.

³⁴ Цукерман К. Венгры в стране Леведии: новая держава на границах Византии и Хазарии ок. 836-889 г. // МАИЭТ. Вып. VI. Симферополь, 1998, 674, ссылка 31.

³⁵ Комар А. В. Древние мадьяры Этелькеза: перспективы исследований // Археологія і давня історія України. Вип. 7. К., 2011, 30.

Северном Причерноморье и на Дону не может обосновываться обращением к Правобережной Цимлянкой крепости-однослойному памятнику, датируемому в широких рамках конца VIII– середины IX вв. Находки из крепости не дают возможности выделить в ее истории более узкие периоды. Нет ни малейшей возможности уточнить в конце ли VIII в. или в начале IX в. строится крепость. Археология не в состоянии определить продолжительность ее существования. Малочисленностьклада дирхемов из одного из жилищ, младший из которых (786-809 гг.), делает его не слишком надежным хронологическим репером гибели крепости³⁶. Он лишь не противоречит керамическим и иным артефактам из нее. Нужен минимум ещё один синхронный клад.

Посмотрим на проблему с другой стороны. Могла ли столь незначительная по масштабам крепость остановить венгров? Отсюда уже не в первый раз делаю вывод: строительство Правобережной крепости связано с внутренними проблемами в каганате: с междоусобицами вождей, их центробежными стремлениями и пр.

Принципиальный вопрос к историкам. Почему они при обсуждении появления венгров на Нижнем Дону, вспоминают только Правобережную крепость? Объяснить это могу, только предположив их незнание существования в регионе известной археологам с XIX в. Семикаракорской крепости, четверть века назад открытой крепости Камышино, а также недавно обнаруженными на р. Егорлык (левый приток Дона) памятников Башанта I и Башанта II³⁷.

К сожалению, сегодня прометчиво забыто сказанное М. И. Артамоновым при описании цитадели Саркела: *«Замечательно, что в структуре крепости предусмотрены*

*не только удары извне. Она спланирована с учетом внутреннего членения ее населения. Оборонительные сооружения цитадели направлены не только против внешнего врага, но и против населения в остальной части крепости, они предназначены от врагов, находящихся хотя и за стенами цитадели, но в самой крепости»*³⁸. Но ведь в крепости находилась только мизерная часть того населения, которое могло в любой момент противопоставить себя центральной власти. Вся же масса ненадежного населения жила в степях.

Постановка вопроса в форме *«против кого»*, по моему убеждению, должна быть заменена на *«с какими целями»* строилась та или иная крепость Хазарского каганата.

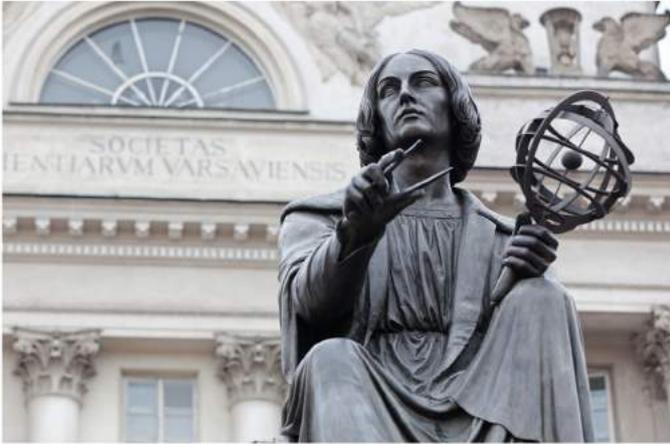
³⁶]Плетнёва С. А. Правобережное Цимлянское городище. Раскопки 1958-1959 гг. // МАИЭТ. Вып. IV. Симферополь, 1994, 331.

³⁷ Флёрв В. С. О первых публикациях местонахождения Башанта. Неизвестная византийская миссия в Хазарию? // Хазарский альманах. Т. 15. М., 2017, 281-295.

³⁸ Там же, 18.

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