

“From Top Down” and “from Bottom Up” Factors of Inversions in Russian History*

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Abstract

Explanation of inversions in Russian history causes major conceptual problems. The traditionally used conceptual apparatus and its theoretical schemes does not seem to really “grasp” this reality, at best, it only describes the Russian reality to some extent. It simply fails to capture the nature and mechanisms that lie in the specifics of Russian society and its dynamics. Hence, there are widespread conclusions about “pathology,” historical “rut,” constant matrix, and endless reproduction of the “predetermined” characteristics of social life in Russia. However, expanding the conceptual apparatus with a constructive approach, combined with a specific historical approach, makes it possible to single out more than one agent of modernization processes (political elite, merged with state authorities), but at least two – authority and society taken discreetly. From this point of view, the inverse nature of Russian modernization has two causes. One of these is social, associated with the peculiarities of Russian society, where underdeveloped social forces are dominated by the imperious will. The second cause is related to modernization attempts based on external historical experience. However, due to the former cause, these attempts turn out to be premature and ill-conceived, giving rise to new conflicts and deformations in society. Both causes are complementary and intertwined. At the same time, there are general civilizational processes, such as urbanization and formation of a mass society, modernization processes in Russian society, including the formation of national identity. This creates prerequisites for a qualitative change in the development of society. If the main factors of inversion “from top down” are hasty and imitative, then doing things “from bottom up” presupposes slow development of the middle class, which, nevertheless, creates conditions for real mediation.

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Факторы российских инверсий «сверху» и «снизу»*

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Аннотация

Объяснение российских инверсий сталкивается с проблемами концептуального характера. Традиционно используемый концептуальный аппарат, набрасываемая на реальность теоретическая сетка, похоже, «не ловит» эту реальность или в лучшем случае пытается ее описать. Не улавливаются природа и механизмы, лежащие в особенностях российского общества, его динамики. Отсюда – заключения о патологии, колее, константной матричности и прочей безысходности и обреченности на воспроизводство «предрешенных» характеристик общественной жизни. Расширение концептуального аппарата конструктивным подходом в сочетании с конкретным историческим подходом позволяет выделить не одного актора модернизационных процессов (политическую элиту, связанную с государственной властью), а как минимум двух – власть и общество, причем конструктивно не связанных. В этой связи можно выделить две основные причины, обуславливающие маятниковый (инверсивный) характер модернизаций в России. Во-первых, это социальный фактор, т.е. особенности рос-

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сийского общества, слабое развитие социальных сил при доминировании власти. Во-вторых, это вторичный характер модернизационных заимствований, их неукорененность в российском социуме. Однако, в силу первой причины, эти попытки оказываются поспешными и не-продуманными, порождая новые напряжения и деформации социума. Обе причины взаимно дополняются и переплетаются. Вместе с тем общецивилизационные процессы, такие как урбанизация и формирование массового общества, изменяют характер российского социума, втягивая его в модернизационные процессы, включая формирование гражданского национального самосознания. Это создает предпосылки для качественно нового характера развития социума. Если главные факторы инверсионности со стороны «верхов» – поспешность и заимствование, то со стороны «низов» – это замедленное становление буржуазии, которое тем не менее формирует условия для реальной медиации. Анализ способов объяснения инверсивной модернизации российского общества обнаруживает особые возможности в плане методологической рефлексии и выявления перспектив конструктивистского и исторического подходов.

Ключевые слова: инверсии, конструктивизм, модернизация, объяснение, Россия.

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Introduction

In Russian history, we can clearly observe a certain alternation of periods. The relatively short-term attempts of radical changes (aimed at activation of the country's economic and social life, public administration) later replaced by relatively long-term “stabilization” periods associated with a return to familiar established practices. This process is most thoroughly described in an in-depth study *Russia: A Critique of Historical Experience* by A.S. Akhiezer. His analysis of the development of Russian society, since the very onset of its sovereignty, made it possible to draw reasonable conclusions about the “pendulum model” of Russian society's development [Akhiezer 1998].

According to A.S. Akhiezer, inversion cycles are manifested as a unity of direct and reverse inversions. Each of them can be accompanied by social tensions and conflicts that arise at the peaks of their polar phases. Moreover, the swing of the "pendulum" accelerates as it bypasses the country's "median" way of development. However, it is extremely difficult to institutionalize the results of inversions, and ultimately, as a rule, the inversion will turn against the government [Akhiezer, Klyamkin, & Yakovenko 2008]. Therefore, the country's history acquires the form of institutional fluctuations with a wide amplitude between the states of institutional easing and of "tightening the screws."

Such wave-like pendulum fluctuations can be traced in the development of any society, including relatively stable and well-developed liberal democracies of today, where fluctuations usually alter elements of economic and social policy without a radical change in the institutional environment. In contrast, in Russia such inversions are accompanied by a change of elites and radical redistributions of property: in the recent two centuries alone, this has happened five (!) times. And such redistributions are accompanied not only by radical replacement of elites but also by suppression or even violent repression of any dissent.

Many authors have written about this "obsessive repetitiveness," and many attempts to explain that were made.

Inversions of Russia's development: breakthroughs, swinging pendulum, historical rut, or matrix?

Most often, Russian inversions are associated with ill-conceived or hasty reforms. In principle, such an explanation suggests itself, as it catches the eye, showing in the historic developments as such. Almost all modernization attempts in Russian history (Peter I's reforms, Alexander II's reforms, Soviet industrialization, Gorbachev's perestroika and the Yeltsin-Gaidar reforms) were essentially breakthrough cases of "catching up development" based on borrowing experience or on "newly revealed laws of historical development" (how Marxism-Leninism claimed). In a crisis situation, the elite strives to "make it quick," using ready-made schemes developed in other societies, where issues of property are settled and social institutions are well established. But such transplantation either does not take root, or is adapted, transforming elements (sometimes just renaming them) without reforming the essence of the old institutions. Then, reform hopes are not turned into reality, and the pendulum goes in the opposite direction, returning to

“stability,” or “stagnation.” This will last until the next confrontation between society and state authority and the next attempt of a modernizing breakthrough (“acceleration,” “perestroika”).

It is significant that such different researchers as Y.S. Pivovarov [Pivovarov 2006], S.G. Kordonsky [Kordonsky 2009], A.P. Zaostrovtssev [Zaostrovtssev 2017], S.A. Nikolsky [Nikolsky 2018], R. Pipes [Pipes 2015], S. Hedlund [Hedlund 2011], O.E. Bessonova [Bessonova 2015; Bessonova 2018] and S.G. Kirdina [Kirdina 2014] claim the existence of a certain self-reproducing essential specificity of Russian society (“matrix,” or historical “rut”), which makes all attempts of modernizing relatively short-lived and followed by relatively long periods of reproduction of the “old system.”

The aforementioned Russian analysts, relying on different approaches, in fact, refer to the same features of Russian society that actually look at different historical stages:

- dominance of authorities as a key agent in social change;
- due to this, relative weakness of economy and property as compared to the authority that generates and redistributes property;
- weakness and underdevelopment of civil society and of the rights of an individual, who remains completely dependent on the state;
- public rejection of liberalism and of the capitalist methods of modernization;
- as a result, all attempts at modernization are deeply concerned with redistribution of authority, first and foremost.

In this regard, S.A. Nikolsky even introduced the idea of “constants” of Russian culture that determine the essence and possible horizons of its development [Nikolsky 2018]. One cannot but admit that, in general, this idea corresponds to the results of the well-known studies by L. Harrison and S. Huntington, according to whom “culture does matter,” that is, it determines the nature of development of a particular society, as a system of generation, selection, storage and translation of its historical experience, which defines the limits of modernization [Harrison & Huntington 2000]. Moreover, the ideas of “constants,” “historical ruts,” and “matrix” are quite consistent with neo-institutionalism, which distinguishes between societies with institutions of limited and open access to resources [North, Wallis, & Weingast 2009]. In this regard, Russian society definitely belongs to the former category. And it should be noted that historically such societies form the majority, although modern times convincingly demonstrate pessimistic prospects for them.

According to A.S. Akhiezer, inversion processes can be opposed by "mediation," as a reduction in the scope of inversions, reduction of radical polarities, search for and construction of appropriate meanings and institutions, which involves intellectual efforts, broad exchange of opinions and building up a consensus. In this regard, mediation is similar to deliberation. It is possible that institutionalized deliberation (mediation), if implemented over a relatively long period of time, can create conditions for cumulative rather than intermittent development of Russian society. However, we need agents possessing political will in order to launch such a process.

From the point of view of management theory and practice, such accelerated "transitions" are compulsory innovations, such as "revolutions from top down." Imposed innovation has an undoubted advantage, as it can ensure a gain in time, when either there is no time left at all or the authorities want to "do it quickly." Since such a path is the essence of enforcing the power of the authorities, insofar it will always be associated with some form of resistance (personal, organizational, conscious, or spontaneous). People (including executors of the authorities' will) may resist the very idea of a reform, they may either fail to understand what is happening or misinterpret things. Therefore, forced innovation requires fullness of authority that is necessary for structural changes, control, sanctions, punishment or violence against opponents of the administrative changes.

History shows a few successful forced transformations (Japan, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, China), when within 10–15 years the institutional environment radically changed and the respective country was transformed, moving from the "third world" to the first. Such a path looks especially attractive to authoritarian and totalitarian political regimes, but it does not give guarantees of success. Ill-conceived and hasty action will lead to a collapse and loss of legitimacy. Moreover, in such cases lack of planning and time pressures often complement and provoke each other. On the one hand, haste often leaves no choice and then simplistic decisions are made without taking into account long-term consequences. Alternatively, the decision makers consciously choose such simple decisions, based on their ideological utopias¹. On the other hand, the danger of ill-conceived and

¹ In this regard, the reliance on economy (typical for Marxism) as the main force is very similar to the concept of the invisible hand of the market, which will put everything into order. In both cases, the approaches are utopian and anti-historical.

hasty action and implementation of “primitive ideas” lies in the fact that such reformers usually promise a lot, breeding unjustified hopes. A collapse does not hurt only the reputation but also the legitimacy of the initiators of such reforms. In both cases, their failure is ascertained *de facto*, either due to lack of the necessary political will or to insufficient basis for the decisions made, including the basic concepts and models.

In general, we can admit that, despite existing original generalizations, the essence of the specific mechanisms of modernization inversions in Russia remains unclear. This is due to the nature of such generalizations: they lack specificity and rather rely on metaphors. As a result, the analysis of the interaction of specific social forces, which determines the dynamics of social development, boils down to the role of the authorities and the ruling elite, their mistakes and failures. In other words, we need new instrumentation that will expand the typology of inversion factors.

Methodological remarks

Earlier [Tulchinsky 2017], we drew attention to the fact that in analysis of modernization it is important to take into account the role of intentions, aspirations of social forces, active agent groups as well as the content and direction of their efforts.

Reforms are an algorithmic process. The right steps taken in the right sequence will lead to success. But even correct steps, if taken in the wrong sequence, will not do the thing. A procedural algorithmic explanation opens the way to treatment of reform and modernization as a game of chess. All moves are familiar from the theory, the game rules and the players’ previous experience. But the specific moves are made based on analysis of the specific disposition on the chessboard, existing here and now. The choices may be successful or not. It is this experience that gives rise to the “plurality” of modernizations (S. Eisenstadt [Eisenstadt 2003; Eisenstadt 2017]). Or, as S. Hedlund noted, “history matters” [Hedlund 2011].

And the reasons for Russian inversions are that culture matters because history matters! Russia has a long historical experience of anti-market management, in the context of which motivation is formed and consolidated not in order to create added value but to seek, seize and (possibly) provide an annuity. Moreover, Russia has rich experience in successfully overcoming its crises (1598, 1861, 1917, 1991 and 1998) by changes made “from top down,” with the population remain-

ing passive. The "Great October Revolution" (1917) also consisted in seizing political power and carrying out subsequent transformations "from top down." It was precisely due to their relative success that their experience was "recorded in the matrix." As for absolutist government, they see reforms tempting great temptation for yet another manifestation of their dominance. However, this temptation of power turns out to be temptation *by* power.

Formally, in 1917–2017 Russia experienced a European type of modernization: urbanization and mass society, social roles revolution and new social elevators. But, from a constructivist point of view, the content of this change was fundamentally important: agriculture was undermined, industry and science were challenged to mostly serve military needs. The new class of bureaucratic nomenclature looks like an agent in a "managerial revolution," but it is not capable or motivated to create a competitive environment or conditions for emergence and support of innovation. Even the historical background was perceived by the elite in a different way. Abroad, the 1960s were perceived as the peak of the resource development of civilization, and there emerged awareness of the need for a transition to sustainable growth strategies, qualitatively new technologies (which gave rise to the current technocratic post-industrial civilization). In the USSR, the rental benefits of the 1960s confirmed the success of "the bright building of communism" and gave rise to completely inadequate goals articulated at the XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. What this led to is well known. Moreover, the inertia of rental resource illusions still persists, giving rise to the anti-Midas effect².

But, as the historical (including recent) experience of a number of countries shows, the development of cultures can be controlled and radical success achieved within 15 years. And this is not a linear process. Real changes in society require real forces, that is, social groups that recognize and articulate their interests, and plans for their implementation, and also have not only financial and organizational

² In the ancient myth, Dionysus taught King Midas a lesson, literally granting his wish, so that everything the king touched would turn into gold. Thus, Russian modernizations, especially in the last decades, tell a story of King Midas' antipode, who turns "objects of gold" into their opposites. Thus, in Russia, the "business cooperation" practices of the perestroika years only accelerated inflation, democratic elections turned into manipulating the public opinion, the anti-corruption laws only increased corruption, and so on. As it has been observed elsewhere, whatever party the government forms, the result is a new version of the Communist Party.

but also informational and symbolic resources for that. And Russian society is exhausted, or rather, weakened by its authorities: the key issue for Russia so far is not the economy, but the government. Throughout Russian history, it is not property that has generated power, but vice versa, power generates property and constantly initiates its redistribution. Until now, the key issue of Russian economy and Russian society is the issue of property and the guarantees of its immunity.

The introduction of institutions without motivated reliance on real interests undermines the meaning of transformations, giving rise to the use of new institutions in consolidating multilevel schemes of gaining profits and privileges. And ignoring the inertia of human capital, socio-cultural memory, desire to supplant it with symbolic politics and propaganda, hasty political decisions breed popular resistance to reforms, their deliberate (at least partially) rejection. And this turns into a vicious circle.

Is it our historical “rut”? The eternal swinging of the pendulum? To some degree, yes. But this may cease when manifest and reasonable political will for modernization is expressed, if such will does not only come from above but also from below.

Factor of the lower classes

The cause of the pendulum-like inversions and returns of Russian reforms to the historical rut cannot be just the ill-conceived haste of the initiators. And the failure and rollback of these attempts is largely determined not only by the “constants” of the Russian social “matrix.” It seems important to take into account not only the role of the upper class initiating the reforms but also the lower class, or rather, the long-term evolution of the Russian lower class from peasants to citizens. In this regard, it is useful to recall that the word “citizen” (citoyen, Bürger, bourgeois, burgher) originates from the word “city dweller, townsman.” And the mass entry of townspeople into the historical arena (bourgeois revolutions) was a necessary stage in the development of civilization: since the Neolithic era, when the first settlements began to form, the population gradually, but more intensively, flowed from the countryside to town environment.

The Marxism-Leninism was fully and fundamentally right, linking nationalism with bourgeois society. The phenomenon of the nation is a product of modernity and the formation of bourgeois society. In Antiquity and the Middle Ages there were no nations, there were peoples (ethnic groups) and subjects. However, with the growth of

cities, where, especially due to factory production and subsequent industrialization, people of different nationalities, ethnic groups and religious beliefs migrated, a demand for new legitimacy arose. And the cities already practices powerful socio-cultural technologies: a single administrative language, a minimum educational standard, media, entertainment, theater, literature, other arts, the humanities, especially history and philosophy... This demand was politically declared and pursued in bourgeois revolutions that led townspeople (*tiers état*) to the forefront of political life. Burghers already possess civic identity, and it is implemented as civil (bourgeois) nationalism.

And from this point of view, the Russian situation looks paradoxical. Russia's entry into the modern era, the formation of the nation began in the period between 1905 (first Russian revolution) and 1914 (beginning of World War I). In Russia, these processes were implemented as the results of the Great Reform and the subsequent start of real modernization. The political expression of Russia's early bourgeois revolution was the October Manifesto of 1905, following which the Duma (parliament) and political parties appeared in Russia. All this happened in parallel with the "Russian Renaissance," the formation of urban culture of the "Silver Age" (exceptionally creative period in Russian culture).

However, not all sectors of society accepted the prospect of capitalistic modernization. This way was rejected by peasants who were labeled as *kulaks* (the term designating the richer part of peasantry, later destroyed during Stalin reforms) or "world-eaters." Not only the aristocrats but even the intelligentsia, who called to "listen to the music of the revolution," rejected the new class of bourgeois merchants. However, the First World War raised an unprecedented wave of national patriotism. Even the name of the capital city was altered from Petersburg to Petrograd (the former sounds more German, but the latter sounds more Russian).

The February Revolution of 1917 was the next step in this process. The Russian bourgeoisie came to power largely due to the mistakes and general weakening of the tsarist regime during the war. But the bourgeoisie itself was politically immature. The country was so exhausted that the results of this stage of the bourgeois revolution were swept away by the October Revolution of the Bolsheviks, who actually led the peasantry in this revolution. Russian Marxism gave new life to the revolutionary democratic movement in the phase of the theoretical and political crisis of *narodnichestvo* (protest movement

of the Russian middle class in the 1860s and 1870s). By that time, the *narodniks* had mastered Marxism, which justified not only individual but also mass terror. The capitalist modernization of the country as well as the private property as its foundation were completely rejected. As usual in Russia, the latest Western doctrine was understood as a guide to practical action. The glove of Marxism fitted the hands of under-educated seminarians and graduates of university externship programs, who followed the way of socialist revolution.

The nation was seen by these internationalists as an archaic remnant of the bourgeois epoch, so they labeled European Social Democrats who voted for military budgets in their parliaments as “social traitors,” and Lenin’s followers openly wished military defeat to Russia in the First World War and did their best for this. However, their international proletarian utopia did not materialize. The supposedly “proletarian” uprisings in Germany, Hungary and Finland were suppressed, and then the Soviet militarist bluff against Poland failed. And, gaining power within a capitalist environment, the Bolsheviks were forced to look for allies both at home and abroad, and they found them in various national liberation movements. The result of their desperate bargaining with local elites was the ethnic-federalist “nesting doll set” of the state system (when the Soviet Union was composed from the “union” republics, which, in their turn, were composed from “autonomous” republics) as well as reckless campaigns in foreign politics.

The so-called “Great October Socialist Revolution” and the Communist regime that came to power as a result of the bloody Russian Civil War (1917–1922) were a historic spasm that plunged the country into foregone archaics. And further events continued the paradox of Russia’s entry into the modern era... The 1925 elections showed a precarious nature of the Bolshevik positions, a prospect of resistance from the peasantry and the new middle class that was raising its head. Therefore, the Stalinist Great Breakthrough of years 1927–1929 aimed at defeating the social base of the opposition: ruin of the peasantry in collectivization and nationalization of industry. At the same time, a course was taken toward socialist industrialization, which inevitably led to accelerated urbanization of the national lifestyle.

One can argue for a long time whether this was full-fledged modernization or quasi-modernization of the nation... But the result is obvious: contrary to Marxism, under the flag of which the reforms were carried out, real socialism did not bring a higher level of labor productivity, which was to have been provided by this “more advanced” social system.

Instead, practically all technologies, equipment and entire enterprises had to be purchased from abroad and were operated on the basis of borrowed experience, sometimes under direct supervision of foreign experts. Socialism did not bring a new level of freedom promised by Marxism. On the contrary, it rather secured a fallback into archaism, actually building a society of state-run feudalism or even a caste society (suffice to recall the status of "the deprived" strata of population). The peasants were forced to work, to earn so-called "sticks" (workdays) and, as they were deprived of passports, they could only leave their residences after official new employment.

However, as we noted, industrialization stimulated intensive urbanization and required improved levels of education, both secondary and higher. A new Soviet intelligentsia was formed. And all of these led to growth of the urban population, accompanied by an increase in literacy, a general interest in science and technology, and gender equality. And all these are classic steps of modernization. Massive repressions, which destroyed whole strata of society, generated additional social elevators for the survivors. Slave-like labor in the GULAG system of camps provided additional opportunities for the economy. Against this paradoxical background, a wave of enthusiasm arose, consolidating the society and opening new horizons. By the late 1930s, this wave had subsided. But the tragedy of the Great Patriotic War (Soviet war with Nazist Germany in 1941–1945) and the post-war reconstruction, and then the Khrushchev's "Thaw" (period of limited liberalization of the political regime in 1955–1964), with its achievements in space exploration, consolidated society in a new format.

By the 1960s and later, in the Soviet Union the urban population outnumbered the rural population more and more. Thanks to the media and cultural sphere in general, the urban way of life became dominant even in rural areas: the way of life, the interior of the residences, the style of clothing and behavior were based on urban patterns. According to a number of characteristics, a mass society developed in the country. They called it convergence of the two systems, rather appropriately. Even the Soviet nomenclature reflected more and more the results of the "managerial revolution," which was studied by D. Burnham [Burnham 1941], M. Đilas [Đilas 1957] and M. Voslensky [Voslensky 1984].

The USSR was a historically unique experience of an empire of positive action: supporting its ethno-federalist design, it formed national political elites, transferring territories and resources to those areas, helped them with literacy building, training local intelligentsia,

promoting writing in local languages (sometimes semi-invented), supporting local traditions, and by all means forming and developing national cultures and political nations. Nobody took federalism seriously, since all decisions and their implementation were carried out by the imperial structure, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. And the Communists understood everything perfectly well: it was not by chance that the Communist Party of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (a constituent part of the USSR) never existed as a separate political body in the Soviet times.

Curious in this regard is the fate of Gorbachev's perestroika (1985–1991), which was enthusiastically supported by townspeople, the intelligentsia, state employees – those who lost the most as a result of the same perturbations, especially the hasty and unfair privatization (appropriately labeled by people as *prikhvatization* “grab-it-ization”). Yes, this next “revolution from top down” that would lead to a collapse of the USSR in 1991 was initiated by the ruling elite and the party's economic nomenclature who wanted to convert their authority into property. The system of urban values is also manifested in legal consciousness, a demand for equality before the law, for identity that is not only and not so much ethno-cultural but *civil*.

It seemed that it was already the dawn of a liberal-democratic society... But the ethno-federalist design of the state, which no one had taken seriously before, ethno-national policy, interpreted as formation of culture (ethnic in form but socialist in content) of the Soviet people (as a “new historical unity of people”) led to an unexpected result. And, by all civilizational standards, the society became more nationalist are market-oriented. In fact, the country paradoxically returned to the general civilization trend, entering the next phase of its bourgeois revolution. No wonder that the former Communist party of internationalists was transformed into many parties with national and even religious confessional aspirations.

Moreover, these new townsfolk had a very natural need to be proud of their homeland. In this regard, it is impossible not to note the drama of liberalism and human rights in modern Russia, as its adherents did not understand the cause of this completely natural demand for nationalism, obviously bourgeois in its essence. The internationalist USSR declared protection of ethnic minorities, women and children; in fact, there acted a number of civil rights institutions. At the same time, internationalism and the new historical “community of Soviet people” were actively declared and eulogized. In present-day Russia,

the ideas of human rights and liberal democracy are far from popular. On the other hand, the state authority has taken a firm stand in support of "stable regimes," distancing from supporters of secessionism. And a new wave of bourgeois nationalism rose exactly one hundred years later, at the peak of the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation in 2014.

Was this a new stage in bourgeois modernization? Partly and undoubtedly, yes. There emerged new entrepreneurs and proprietors. During the decade of the 2000s ("years of fat cows"), as noted above, especially in big cities, the foundations of a new identity were formed. In this regard, Russia remains in the civilizational trend: continued bourgeois revolutions, collapse of the colonial system (while maintaining control of the local national bourgeoisie over territories within old colonial borders), further collapse of former Austro-Hungarian Empire (Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia), present-day Catalonia, Scotland, Belgium, northern Italy: the townspeople (the bourgeoisie) protect their "boutiques" (cf.: [Calzada 2018; Dalle Mulle 207]).

The same civilizational tendencies operate in Russia. Of course, the new proprietors are interested in guarantees and respect for their rights, in "living by the rules." Formerly, it would be hard to imagine that at night motorists would stop at an empty crossroads and wait for the green light of a traffic light! And quite massive protests against fraud in the 2011 election to the State Duma (Russian parliament) and in the 2019 summer election in Moscow as well as protests against corruption cases in 2017 are not so much political as civil demands and protests.

Here, we can observe a certain semantic discrepancy. In fact, the new middle class flooded the streets in acts of civil protest. But the authorities, claiming to protect the whole citizenship, remained archaic [Miller 2016, 142]. As a result, modern Russian society does not accept the idea of civic identity, on which bourgeois nationalism is based.

A definition of the nation based on ethnicity impedes the formation of civic identity. Ethnic federalism hinders optimization of the state system. The Communists, who fought against nationalism, paradoxically created primordialist barriers in the foundations of legislation and in people's minds (e.g., line number 5 in Soviet passports, where ethnicity was designated as nationality).

And bourgeois nationalism is more frequently manifested in forms of passive consumerism: wearing emblems and other paraphernalia (commercial products), consumption of TV propaganda programs (see, for example: [Zhang 2015; Navarro 2015; Gurova 2019]). Moreover, in this reality, all spheres of social life are permeated with mistrust. The

basis of identity consists in controversial interpretation of historic facts; there is no image of the future on the public agenda; thus, social forces do not seek consolidation for its realization.

Conclusion

As a result, it seems that Russian national identity is “not entirely national” but rather like imperial or post-imperial self-consciousness, pride in the imperial past and phantom pains related to loss of the empire. Russians were and remain a “tribe of power” (M. Gefter, G. Pavlovsky) [Pavlovsky 1995]. However, until recently, Russian liberalism, stemming from the reforms of Peter the Great, was surprisingly superficial and unrooted in society; but now it is acquiring a solid social base.

But all this goes beyond the scope of the present research. The result we can formulate so far is that the Russian bourgeois revolution has not yet been institutionally finalized.

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