Identity of Homo Sovieticus in Retrospective and Modernity: Value and Anthropological Objectivations of Phenomenological and Literary Senses

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IDENTITY OF *HOMO SOVIETICUS* IN RETROSPECTIVE AND MODERNITY: VALUE AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL OBJECTIVATIONS OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL AND LITERARY SENSES

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Abstract. The article deals with the study of Soviet identity, which the authors refer to as Homo sovieticus. The research is developed in the spatio-temporal explications of the successor states of the Soviet mentality and former satellites of the Soviet system, presented by ideological and semantic intentions from different periods of the Soviet Union's existence to the present day. Therefore, *the topicality* of the research is due to cultural and civilizational transformations caused by changes in identification processes in Eastern Europe, as well as socio-political threats generated by them.

The peculiarity of the article is its *methodological basis:* the principles of phenomenology and hermeneutics. The specificity of the use of philosophical hermeneutics was the need to reveal and interpret hidden or sharpened (overly expressive) meanings-expressions of texts, because the authors in their original theses set the task to rely solely on texts of artistic content and journalistic nature. The authorship of texts of these types determines the peculiarity of the phenomenological approach: own experience of a number of problems related to the identity of Homo sovieticus. Important in this context is the topic of time: the combination of retrospective view with modern experiences to meet the future. Based on these guidelines, the authors propose the concept of *utterance* to denote these literary and journalistic experiences in the broadest sense.

The objective of the article is to determine the general image of Homo sovieticus in terms of retrospection and modernity. The peculiarity of this definition are the sources: (1) artistic and journalistic works of those authors who managed to escape from this method of self-identification (emigrant refugees); or (2) victims of violence with such an identity ("court poets"); respectively (3) those who in every way fixes in the past or continue to do so today, thus resisting this value orientation in the outlined region (modern intellectuals-writers). The authors of the article define such *tasks* as (1) the description of the contexts of the existence of the Soviet man as determining factors of the formation of Homo sovieticus identity; (2) formulation of the main constant features

of Homo sovieticus; (3) modern receptions regarding the value matrix of Homo sovieticus in the dynamics of current challenges.

The authors *conclude* that the entire post-Soviet space is experiencing contextual metamorphoses regarding the restoration renewal of the Homo sovieticus identity type to varying degrees. The means of identifying these processes is a clear articulation of the constant features of this type in the comparative context with modern events of cultural and political nature. Finally, the authors argue that the best way to objectify these processes is artistic and scientific-journalistic literature.

Keywords: *identity*, Homo Sovieticus, *ideology, experience,* utterance, *information and propaganda system, "planned aesthetics", fear, decalogue of "New Faith", social acting (ketman), self-alienation, ideal citizen, uniformity, denunciation, bigotry, optical selectivity, "Rodina", political nation, "Russian World", post-colonialism, "quiet occupation".*

Introduction

Self-separation of a person from the totality of the world is an opportunity to answer the questions formulated by Kant about the ability to know, to hope, the need to act correctly. Human self-separation in the global world is the answer to the same questions, but with the concretization of the socio-cultural context. Thus, self-separation is the formation of human identities. The last century was characterized by particularly disturbing connotations of this process, i.e. the formulation of answers to these fundamental questions were extremely radical.

The "Soviet man" is one of these types of identity: it is not only and not so much the population that lived within the borders of the "Soviet prison country", it is a certain way of thinking and worldview, it is in a sense anthropology and psychology. The components of such an identity are also inherent in contemporaries in a wide variety of countries: both the post-Soviet space itself and the entire so-called socialist Eastern block. The concept of *Homo Sovieticus*, which was developed by the philosopher and satirist, dissident O. Zynoviev in his eponymous socio-psychological novel (Zynoviev. 1991), entered the scientific and popular journalistic circulation. It should be noted that the concept was used before him and in parallel, in particular in M. Moel (1968), F. de Cambra (1975), A.U. Florida (1977). Therefore, the objective of this article is to reveal those constants of identity of *Homo Sovieticus*

and contextual peculiarities of culture, which on the one hand characterized at that time or call this type today, on the other hand – correspond to the method – "(stylistics) of introduction" of the proposed term: literary socio-psychological tools. It is an important task for us to operate with the literature that originated or comes from the authors-recipients of that axiology, in particular, and culture in general.

> "Because the work of human thought must withstand the test of brutal naked reality. If it cannot stand it, it is worthless. The only thing that is really worth something is the thing that can exist for a person at a time when he or she is threatened with immediate death" (Zynoviev. [1991]).

Methodological remarks

The peculiarity of being a human is not just having the arsenal of answers to the mentioned fundamental questions or even meeting them once in the life path of the own worldview formations. The peculiarity of being a human means in life-creative way to affirm own ontology with the own self: to distinguish oneself in an original way – to be oneself and to form own attitude to the world. It is about the Self, which is established by its contact with the world in the way of both interpenetrations and differentiations, which form this attitude. "Person's attitude to the world as opposed to all other living beings is characterized by *freedom from the outer world*. This freedom contains the linguistic constitution / construction (Verfaßtheit) of the world. They are interconnected. Rising to resist the attack of the opposite that comes from this world means to have the language and to have the world. […] Wherever there is a language and there are people, there is exaltation (Erhebung) and valorization (Erhobenheit) over the pressure of the world – this freedom from the world around us is also freedom in relation to the names we give to things […]" (Gadamer 1990). This Gadamer's thesis generates a methodological orientation of our research: language as an instrument of free expression of self-identity, a means of resistance, a method of identification, an instrument of differentiation. In

addition, the language of freedom in the exercise of free speech is, on the one hand, the need for a hermeneutic approach: an indication of foresight, which either hides the authenticity or exacerbates it by means of literary description, on the other hand–it is the need for descriptive tools: appeal to the phenomenology of experiences of the reality that became the parameters of identity formation. Accordingly, the focus on the specific typology of identities – "Soviet anthropology" – draws attention to the phenomenon of *utterance*, which captures the mood, idea, experience, possibilities and spirit of those meanings and ideological foundations that characterize the identity of *Homo Sovieticus* and its descendants in various forms. In addition to these components, recorded in the *utterance*, it is important to address the topic of time, awareness of time as a special tool for self-actualization of identity: the actualization of the past in the present and the future. This appeal also highlights the qualitative characteristics of the material on which our research will be based, and indicates the existence of the models of the future that move identity towards it. Fundamental to the phenomenological aspect of the methodology is Husserl's thesis about the awareness of time, which constantly appeals to the inner experience of listeners and readers. It is easy to see that both the future and the past appear to us, thanks to the fact that "every sensation has its intentions that lead from the Now to the New Now" (Husserl 1985, 105). This strengthens our methodology in the place of reference to literary experiences, since the "directly experienced now" in *the utterance* will be the driving force of the constant transition from the Now to the New Now, the movement that also assumes: "sleepless consciousness, sleepless life is life towards (Entgegenleben) [it is a counter-life], the life from the Now towards the New Now" (Husserl 1985, 105).

Contexts of Homo Sovieticus formation

Hundreds of volumes would not be enough to describe the contexts of *Homo Sovieticus* identity formation, but the crystallization of its essence should fit in a few paragraphs. The most general rule of these contexts is the right to life without the right to life. A. Zynoviev, the developer of

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the *Homo Sovieticus* concept, describes it as an allusion to Christian motives of life: "– Where? I asked silently. – To the court! The Voice answered just as soundlessly. – Which one? – The last one. – Why judge me, if every moment of my life was predetermined by you in advance. – For life. – How can I pay for it. – The price for life is death. Your time has come. Pay!" (Zynoviev 1991, 5). In those hints, the author goes on to say that the violation of this rule is "reasoning about all sorts of nonsense" (Zynoviev 1991, 5), that is, a deviation from the official ideological course. A super-powerful *system of information and propaganda influence* worked on the formation of the latter. In fact, this formulation implies the process of education, however, since its main component – free creation (Bildung – according to Gadamer) – is channeled, in particular, the efficiency of the planned economy, as this process has become an exercise "[…] in a very difficult school, where ignorance was threatened not by a bad mark, but by the loss of life" (Milosh 1985. P.47), and "propaganda tries to convince the citizens of people's democracies that the law in the West is a fiction and serves the interests of the ruling classes" (Milosh 1985. P.49). "The school is assisted by the press and literature; it is an illustration of what young people learn at school […]. Painting, cinema and theater are also illustrations of the theses of Leninism-Stalinism (Milosh 1985. P.211). Therefore, *the system of informative and propagandistic influence* as a tool for constructing an axiological field of values of lawlessness was justified by the requirements of planned efficiency. And it is not surprising why in the end the notion of healthy competition in socio-political life and vital rivalry for the development of collective creativity and citizenship of society, and hence responsibility, gradually disappeared from the worldview of *Homo Sovieticus*: "[…]accustomed to living in systems where law does not exist, that is, where it is only an instrument in the hands of the Party, and the only criterion is the effectiveness of action, a person can hardly imagine a system in which every citizen, the largest and the smallest, feels bound by the precepts of law. […]. Hence the delays, absurd decisions, political campaigns based on the mood of the electorate, demagoguery, mutual competition for supremacy, which are incomprehensible to the inhabitants of Central and Eastern Europe" (Milosh 1985. P.47-49).

On the other side of lawlessness was a duty aimed at ideological affirmation, as well as existential security. Among other things, this duty was to affirm the image of the "older brother". In support of this thesis by the receptions of modern Lithuanian writers and publicists T. Ventslov and L. Donskis, that "the traditions of the Russian state, intertwined with distorted Marxism, were clearly visible in the communist USSR" (Ventslova & Donskis 2016, 30), we should pay attention to the whole palette of political and ideological preconditions of forming the mentioned image as the omnipotent best national Russian over "small nations" and the main steps of implementation of such a policy from the standpoint of a conscious contemporary fixed in the speeches of V. Sadovskyi (Sadovskyi 1937). Thus, the image of the overseer created an effect-context of one's own national weakness and all possible dependence: "demonstrative massacres of supporters of the "national path to socialism" in some eastern capitals taught the public what phrases and rebukes can expose people to reproach those pernicious tendencies. The surest way to guard against accusations is to loudly demonstrate at every step your astonishment at Russia's achievements in various fields, to carry Russian magazines and books under your arm, to mumble Russian songs, to applaud Russian musicians and actors, and so on" (Milosh 1985, 76-77). n addition, such coercive praises seem only a direction of ideological affirmation and a means of existential security, but their methodological construction can be called *a planned aesthetic* based on the fear: "fear paralyzes individuals and tells them to be as similar as possible with gestures, clothes, facial expressions to the average type" (Milosh 1985, 81). Hence *the aesthetics of Soviet anthropology* – "short, square men and women with short legs and wide hips. It is a proletarian type, exaggeratedly cultivated by obligatory aesthetic patterns […]" (Milosh 1985, 81). Quite revealing about the fear and contempt as a context of existence and tools of influence are actualized by the background stories of M. Kundera, which do not even describe the Soviet reality, but only the one close to it: "The compromise saved the country from the worst: from executions and mass deportations to Siberia, which everyone was afraid of. But it immediately became clear that the Czech Republic must kneel down and submit to the winner. […]. Days of humiliations have begun" (Kundera

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2019, 32). Such features of existence arose from the first attempts to scientifically develop social problems, made in the nineteenth century. They acquired such specificity, because "[…] fell into the hands of Russians who do not know how to think otherwise than dogmatically, and they raised these first attempts to the dignity of religious dogma. What is happening in Russia and in the countries that depend on it is a kind of madness. Being in the middle of a historical cyclone, one should behave as cautiously as possible, that is, externally completely succumb to forces that easily destroy the opposing ones" (Milosh 1985, 86). Caution in this case explains the Czech compromise mentioned by M. Kundera, which, however, entailed the context of humiliation. First of all, humiliation by the feeling of absence of freedom: "– During the rehearsal, the chairman of the City Council commission came and began explaining what we should play and what we cannot play, and at the end obliged us to give free concert for the Youth Union. But the worst thing is that tomorrow I have to spend a whole day at a stupid conference, where we will be told about the role of music in building socialism" (Kundera 2019, 21); "In this country, children pay for their parents' disobedience, and parents pay for their children's disobedience. So many boys and girls were forbidden to study because their parents fell out of favor! And so many parents have finally come to terms with their cowardice so as not to harm their children! To preserve freedom in this country, children must be abandoned […]" (Kundera 2019, 108). After all, […] a person has probably never been subjected to such pressure before, and has probably never squirmed or writhed like that, trying to adapt and live in the molds constructed according to the book, but not, it seems, to the extent of a human being" (Milosh 1985, 86).

Continuing the topic of bringing ideas to dogma, we should note that the perfection of contexts of polishing *Homo Sovieticus* was necessarily filled with materialist notions of radical and non-alternative dialectical and historical rationalization of thinking on the way to building a new order and a new man. Spiritual energy for human growth from a material of such a low quality drove him or her into the stall of obedience of the historical process, which, under the omophorion of social determinism and party functionaries, determined the quantity and quality of the possible. Thus, "dialectical materialism in Russian

processing is nothing but the vulgarization of knowledge, elevated to the square. [...] Stalinists are alien to the knowledge of the conditions that the human plant needs to survive. They do not want to hear about it, but by banning researches in this direction that scientists and writers would be capable of – because such researches are contrary to orthodoxy – they close to humanity every opportunity to gain knowledge about themselves. The emotional and didactic elements of the doctrine are so strong that they change all sorts of proportions. The method – basically scientific one – applied to the humanities, consists mainly in their arbitrary transformation into instructive stories, in accordance with the needs of the moment" (Milosh 1985, 210). The existence and, moreover, the variability of metaphysical forms of enrichment could not be discussed, as it was either considered politically biased or ideologically degenerate, which was ultimately reduced to each other. We find an interesting reception about the strength of ideological influence in the above-mentioned Lithuanian publicists and writers: "The Stalinists were especially cunning, claiming that they were interested in social justice, friendship of peoples and peace. By no means I think that the devotion of many intellectuals in the West (and Lithuania) to communism [...] was merely moral and political prostitution, a cynical attempt to coexist with another's fascism, if only not to have its own. All this is much more complicated; and, by the way, in addition to Feuchtwanger, Bernard Shaw and Romain Rolland, there were Gide, Malraux, Dos Passos, Auden, who at first succumbed to the spells of Stalinism, but then threw off the darkness. Similarly, Camus, Orwell, and Czesław Miłosz, overcoming their fascination with communism, later became the most insightful and consistent critics of communism and Stalinism" (Ventslova & Donskis 2016, 39). Thus, historical-materialist dogmatism affected the ethical-ideological context, which was rejected by some creators of *the utterance*, because "the ethics of the New Faith is based on the principle that everything that serves the interests of the revolution is good and everything that harms these interests is bad. [...] the ethical ideal of the New Faith is Puritan" (Milosh. 1985, 90). However, "Soviet Puritanism" proceeded from the interests of the revolution, that is, it defined the value matrix of *Homo Sovieticus* by "ideological precepts": "cult of the public" – the erasure of personality; "at the expense of the

neighbor" – denunciation. Such individual ethics creates the context of the struggle of all against all with the idol-game of collective unity. Since the latter is the only correct goal of a bright future, the commandment "at the expense of the neighbor" was immediately replaced by another – the "cult of the public", that is, by slander back to a peaceful stay in the community: to be like everyone else – an explanation-excuse and a safe state. Such logics of the "Decalogue" could only accomplish a "mechanistic way of feeling".

Homo Sovieticus identity constants

The basic constants of identity could not proceed from anything else as the official ideology, and the ideological beliefs of the "Soviet man" are biased beliefs of universal "healthy identity", but rather a clear mask that creates and controls the atmosphere of correct behaviour. "Belief is a property of a Western man, not a Soviet man. The latter has a stereotype of behaviour instead of beliefs, which is compatible with any beliefs" (Zynoviev 1991, 7), O. Zinoviev writes. Such compatibility is a normal state from a psychological point of view, because when you are unable to answer the question "who am I?" with data from one's own history and culture, you find answers automatically in the stories and narratives of others, or they may be imposed by others. Such compatibility is brought up by the actual "stereotype of behaviour" or, more precisely, is trained.

Based on the fact that O. Zinoviev described Homo Sovieticus using not only the tendency markers of the available material, but also from himself, the following theses are interpreted as a characteristic – on the one hand – of inflammatory format of criticism of different (Western / capitalist) values and priorities, which do not proceed from the official ideology – Marxism and Leninism, on the other – as a critique of the concretization of such an ideology by the impossibility of self-change and secrecy: "The presence of human convictions is a sign of intellectual underdevelopment. Persuasion is only compensation for the inability to quickly and accurately understand the phenomenon in its specificity. These are a priori guidelines on how to act in a particular situation

without understanding its specificity. A person with beliefs is inflexible, dogmatic, boring and, as a rule, stupid" (Zynoviev 1991, 7-8). "Despite the fact that this thesis is also addressed to the value type of Western anthropology, let us focus on the polar essence of it: the "Soviet man". O. Zinoviev, criticizing Homo Sovieticus and at the same time the future, finds himself in a situation of "free captivity": the values of "Soviet anthropology" are criticized for the lack of methodological pluralism and boast of the ability of situational adjustment within ideological monism. This theoretical and methodological construct fits well into the definition of the phenomenon of worldview and social acting, which was metaphorically dressed in the category of "ketman" and brilliantly described by Ch. Milosh (Milosh 1985). Its horrifying essence is accurately reflected in the phenomenon of this author's utterance: "it is difficult to name otherwise the kind of prevailing relations between people there, as acting, with the only difference that the place where they play is not a theatrical horse, but a street, a desk, a factory, a meeting room, the room you live in. This is a high art that requires the sensitivity of the mind. Not only every word you say should be quickly assessed before it comes out of your mouth, given the consequences it can have. A smile that appears at the wrong time, a look that does not express what it should express, can be the cause of dangerous suspicions and accusations. Also, the way of behavior, tone of voice, preference of ties is interpreted as a sign of political inclinations" (Milosh 1985, 70). So, Homo Sovieticus is a good actor who honed his skills not so much with long and exhausting training as with the long and exhausting context of his existence. The collection of the most acute moments of existence mostly determined the trajectory of movement in the labyrinth of social hopelessness. More precisely, the ability to cope with acting in the most difficult situations they play in front of everyone and know about each other that they both play. The fact that someone is playing does not blame him and does not prove his unreliability. It is only a matter of him playing well, because the ability to enter his role well is a proof that the part of the personality on which he builds his role is well developed in him. […] in people's democracies, we are dealing with conscious mass play rather than instinctive adaptation. Conscious acting, if played long enough, develops the

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characteristics of the individual, which he uses best in his acting work (Milosh 1985, 71).

The phenomenon of "ketman" is the art of not only playing for the public in the necessary cultural, (anti) religious or political identity, it also applies to professional work. "[...] Ketman's professional work is not at all profitable for rulers. It is a respectable driving force and is one of the reasons for the great drive for education, i.e. the acquisition of knowledge or skills in a special area where you can give free rein to your energy, which can protect against the fate of a functionary dependent only on political fluctuations" (Milosh 1985, 85). However, the "art of play" cannot but exhaust the sense of authenticity and thus perform the auxiliary function of the *information and propaganda system* in the formation of the constant of the absence of the inner center of a man: I am the feeling of inner emptiness; I am only the functionality of social forces centered in a political (communist) party. Thus, Homo Sovieticus is a process of self-doubt, self-alienation. Such a person appeared as an abstract, impersonal construct, which from the very beginning laid the foundations of utopianism. Considering communism as a political ideology and the Soviet worldview, the Belarusian Nobel Prize winner in literature S. Aleksievych emphasizes that he had crazy plans to transform the "old" man "Old Testament Adam" into a separate human type "Homosoveticus" or "scoop man" (Aleksiievych 2014, 5): anthropological turning-point on the basis of historical and dialectical materialism of the Communist Party.

The nourishment of the consciousness of a "Soviet man" took place in a variety of ways, among which was particularly effective influence said in the sublime – poetry: "poetry, which we still know, can be defined as the result of individual temperament, broken through social convention. The poetry of the New Faith can be defined as an expression of social convention, which is broken through individual temperament. Therefore, the most adapted to the new situation are poets endowed with dramatic talent: the poet creates the figure of the ideal revolutionary poet and writes his poem as a monologue of such a figure. He does not express himself, but the ideal citizen" (Milosh 1985, 72). Thus, outside the official border, but in the zone of influence of the Soviet bloc, the Bulgarian adherent of communism, the Stalinist poet N. Vaptsarov defines the image of ideological correctness with the lines of

its awareness: "I know my place / in life / and in vain / I will not give up. / Honestly, it will be dark / worker / painted / for bread and freedom" (Vaptsarov s.a). Within the borders of the country-prison, glorifying the mentioned place, V. Maiakovskyi is proud of documentary proof of himself, affirming besides idea of readiness of the Soviet person to unreasonable punishment – for that the person simply exists: "With what pleasure / gendarme caste / I would be / exhausted and crucified / for the fact that / in my hands / there is a hammer, / sickle / Soviet passport" (Maiakovsky 1958, 68-71). Characteristically, this pride is built, above all, at the expense of the dignity of others: ridicule or exposure for a substantive misunderstanding as a tool of deterrence and assertion: / At Polish – / they look / as a goat at a board /. / At Polish – / they stare / in tight / police elephantiasis – / where, they say, / and what is this for / geographical news?" In this statement, the idea of achieving the best by all also arises, which eventually degenerates into total equality. We find this context of necessity and at the same time a characteristic of identity in P. Tychyna: "Who among us is stronger in the world? / And from which countries? / We are planning creative pursuits – / the columns behind the columns, / And yet as one!" (Tychyna 1943).

> "The 'new man' is brought up in such a way that he exclusively recognizes the common good by the norms of his behavior. He thinks and reacts like others, he is modest, hard-working, satisfied with what the state gives him, limits his private life to nights spent at home, and outside of that he is always among his comrades – at work and when entertaining. He carefully observes the people surrounding him and informs the authorities about all sorts of thoughts and actions of his comrades" (Milosh 1985, 91).

The denouncement is elevated to the dignity of virtue. It is the basis on which everyone's fear of everyone is based: the creation of a network of contented and frightened. The main thing in these processes is not to think too deeply, to reflect, because it can become an obstacle to action. This sentence of thoughtlessness expresses a fanatical attitude towards its "sacred" duty: on the one hand, to affirm its Soviet quality-

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authenticity, on the other, to affirm the context of such existence as the highest achievement of historical progress. After all, Homo Sovieticus is characterized by optical selectivity, and therefore limited understanding: "the optical instrument it uses is so constructed that it covers only a few pre-determined visual fields. Looking at this tool, a person finds confirmation of what he hoped to see" (Milosh 1985, 48). "The specificity of the optics of reflection and introspection determined by the party foresaw the impossibility of reaching deep into the human being, the impossibility of natural formation. "Man" as a generic concept is unfavorably seen there. Anyone who reflects on his inner needs and sorrows will be accused of bourgeois tendencies. Nothing should go beyond describing his behavior as a member of a social group. This is necessary because the party, considering man exclusively as an equal of social forces, is of the opinion that man becomes the type of image he creates for himself. This is a public monkey. What is not said does not exist; therefore, by eliminating the possibility of a certain kind of reasoning, you automatically destroy the inclinations to such considerations" (Milosh 1985, 255).

One who, by the power of his own reflection, as well as tradition or personal and national dignity, what is the most important, the courage to be himself in freedom, rather than an ideological pattern disguised by the party's historical necessity, "falling out" of the parameters and qualities of Homo Sovieticus, or "falling out of life", or acquired a sense of abandonment, became homeless in exile. "Falling out of life" took various forms, and the processes of their heroic incarnations ("critic, psychologist, teacher, student, museum researcher, university professors, artists, scientists" (Chornovil 1968, 13)) were documented by the Ukrainian anti-communist politician and public figure V. Chornovil (Chornovil 1968), who died under mysterious circumstances. And this is just an objective drop from the ocean, which should be addressed and taken as an example of courage in unraveling those clear and undisclosed mysteries. A feature of this need was to cultivate a sense of homeland or, more precisely, fanatical devotion to the system — "forming a sense of family". This terrible feeling of existential homelessness and constant flight was expressed in "Tiger Hunters" (Bahrianyi 1955) by I. Bahrianyi's — a Ukrainian writer and refugee-

emigrant, child of flight, hunting, liberation and new formation is poured out by the author's own experience of flight and political freedom: "I am one of those hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian people who do not want to return home under Bolshevism, surprising the whole world. […] I don't want to go back to my 'family'. […] I take this word in quotation marks, as a word filled with terrible meaning for us, as a foreign word, with such incomparable cynicism imposed on us by Soviet propaganda. At the thought of being caught and returned, my hair turns gray and I carry a dose of potassium cyanide with me as a last resort against Stalinist socialism, against that 'family'" (Bahrianyi 1946, 41).

Homo Sovieticus at the sight of modernity

Homo Sovieticus as a type of identity is alive today. Its characteristic features and behavioral features are trying to overcome almost all countries that in one way or another experienced the influence of the Soviet system and the education of such a way of identification. Its individual and "improved" properties are now trying to develop and strengthen. Two polar visions reflect the essence of aspirations in the development of both value and anthropological constants at the level of the individual – a citizen, and socio-political and cultural vectors of collective development – (political) nation. However, both visions characterize one state in its different qualitative characteristics: the state of post-Soviet turbulence or the postcolonial period. In this context, descriptions of general conditions, special means, and individual contexts are important in order to understand the qualitative changes in identity in the post-Soviet space.

So, today everyone declares the need to overcome the consequences of the "socialist experiment" and, first of all, in the value-anthropological dimension: awareness of one's identity and assertion of identity. However, does everyone equally unanimously create the conditions for this? The answer to this question is the results that have gained global geopolitical resonance and socio-military consequences in the region and do not require additional updating through special studies: the ideological and political movement "Russian World" – context and worldview platform

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for the reincarnation of Homo Sovieticus and new atomization. The Kremlin is the general exporter of this "cultural and political product." Changing the slogans-ideals "Russian World" is similar to the same principles as the previous state of the Russian Empire – the USSR: dogmatization of political leaders and their decisions – Putin's infallibility, creating an anti-dogmatic enemy by means of information manipulation and propaganda, protection from it is military annexations (Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, the unknown is the fate of Belarus at the moment).

According to the interpretation of the modern Polish literary critic B. Bakuła, this is a phase of "colonial nostalgia" (Bakuła 2015, 13-97) – the previous imperial practice, situationally collapsing, is manifested due to the unequal treatment of previously colonized neighbors. To the definitions of the current situation, which to some extent takes place in Eastern Europe and is characterized by sentiments to communist times, we must add the modern studies of Romanian researchers (Sandru 2013), who also have experience in overcoming mental problems of popularity of these sentiments. Their approach is important because all the ideological foundations, i.e. the communist system, are a kind of colonialism, and historically taking into account its value-anthropological quality, it is an anti-human project. On the other hand, the emphasis in their studies is on the post-independent consciousness of modern Romanian and other countries in the region of society, which shows the urgency of the problem – still not fully combated mental characteristic of *Homo Sovieticus*.

As for the context-policy of modern Russia: the characteristic of modern Russia inheritance from the Soviet Union is also called "internal colonization" (Rtkind 2011) in today's postcolonial studies, thanks to research by Russian emigrant intellectual A. Etkind, We interpret this phenomenon with certain clarifications: the colonization of Russians as such (in particular "cultural imperialism") first of other nationalities in the so-called "federal system", the suppression of their cultural differences and values, and then the transfer of this formula of internal colonization to the former Soviet republics unions, which seem as tones of the spiritual and cultural level are their own: a single historical and cultural cradle and a common pop mass space, Russian-speaking population and culturally torn consciousness, the Russian church and a

single spiritual and religious identity. The means are the same –
information manipulation and propaganda. These means, by the way,
point to another form of colonization – self-colonization, which, in our
opinion, is inherent in the modern type of identity Homo Sovieticus –
(Post-) Homo Sovieticus (Mudrakov & Polishchuk 2018, 7-19). This is
described by the Ukrainian literary critic and culturologist Ya.
Polishchuk: "on the other hand, former colonies that have recently been
liberated do not have sufficient immunity to such influences. They do
not notice, do not know how to recognize the subtle mechanisms of
dependence under which they fall. Moreover, sometimes they
themselves show interest in post-dependence, seeing in this transitional
state certain opportunities for self-realization. In this way, instead of the
Moscow center, there is a desire to resemble New York, London, Paris
and other centers, which can be assessed as a result of positioning in the
system of general power" (Polishchuk 2020). However, we emphasize
that the quality of this positioning indicates a worldview-mental
weakness – to be like someone else (still a mental habit), but not to be
yourself (so far qualitative, sometimes – inability, sometimes –
reluctance). In this context, the desire to be likened, often under the
delusion of power discourse "to influence", more clearly fixes post-
dependence – ready (already created by someone else) to have and be:
created narrative, worldview priorities, cultural meanings of self-
presentation and more. Approximately the same theses can be traced to
the research of Bulgarian scientist A. Kyosev (Kyosev 2005, 3-4), who
wrote about it a little earlier. Under his metaphorical use of the concept
of "self-colonization" there is the understanding of the reproduction of
colonial practice in the postcolonial world: the edges of freedom and
non-freedom are fluid, they are not clearly defined. For our study, his
arguments in explaining this fluidity in the process of self-identification
are important: the spread of the system of power and supervision as a
certain narrative of the standard of imperial enlightenment, which
determines the quality relationship with other cultures.

M. Epstein, a Russian intellectual in exile, resorted from a contextual
to a substantive description who in essay form narrates such a revival of
the historically dead, reconstructs the semantic dimension of the Soviet
and post-Soviet models of social consciousness and outlines this

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metaphorical transition from "sovok" to "bobok" (Epshtein 2016, 139-176). The first metaphor denotes a man with psychological and social characteristics that are vivified on the system of myths of Soviet propaganda and are dominant in assessing the real situation. The second metaphor characterizes a frustrated and, consequently, aggressive "sovok" who seeks the return of the lost world. His value picture is determined by the identity of ideological and practical cynicism – the loss of public consciousness of the need for ethical justification for their own actions and the relish of cynicism nonsensical lies. Such a transition, which characterizes these types, is ignorance, inexperience and political reluctance to move to another world – one that is full of good, and which is possible, in this case, a change in human nature – the ability of collective identity with priority national and cultural values, hence the natural socio-political collectivity.

Strengthening "nostalgia", "post-dependence", "self-colonization' and "awakening of bobok", as well as the expansion of their quantitative and qualitative indicators is now possible only by means of "information processing-fertilization". It has long been known that information in the modern world is not only a means of positive change in the most important spheres of life, but also a weapon. However, as it is used very well and in a targeted manner, especially on the territories of the former Soviet system, not much attention was paid – until the manipulative information of the "great and mighty' was followed by thousands of victims of Russian bombs and shelling. Opposition to these processes is possible with a whole complex of humanitarian security (Mudrakov & Polishchuk 2019, 31-36): the adoption of the concept of sustainable development of the UN at the regional level, the updated reception of historical and cultural aspects of collective memory as identity, the security of the information space. After all, "the strategy of self-legitimation of almost all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes is to control their crimes in a controlled way in order to preserve the integration of society and its ability to resist external threats, which are almost always invented or provoked by criminal regimes themselves" (Kebuladze 2016, 34) – as in the essay form the modern Ukrainian philosopher and translator V. Kebuladze reminds. And ignoring the information space today means ignoring the war. In fact, O. Zabuzhko, a

Ukrainian writer and intellectual, notes the unpreparedness for such a war (for the whole world), and we interpret its deployment in the post-Soviet space as an "improvement" of Homo Sovieticus. She characterizes it from the standpoint of the foresight of her philosophical education and literary intuition as a means of ideological opposition: "[…] the writing profession – if only to profess it seriously provides in this war one of the best "review positions": writers are by definition "good dogs". And my philosophical education […] was unexpectedly added by the fact that it turned on my "third eye" on the scale and order of systemic manipulations, which, like "public opinion' and "expert points of view', "flooded' the Ukrainian information space for years. What is deliberate manipulation (read – how "enslaved mind" works, have to prove that "twice two is five"), I was taught on the student bench, and during the 2000-s, I repeatedly involuntarily recognized - in the media, in literature, in political discourse, in academic science – the same "dance of a snake with a pressed head": when people are not looking for the truth – but, as once on behalf of the "ideological department of the Central Committee" search for the way to throw into the audience certain "ready", pre-answered answers to block the search (Zabuzhko 2019, 16-17). These tools – literary and journalistic efforts as predictors and interpretations of the complex by simple and philosophy as critical thinking and insight – in the face of changes in worldview priorities, mental structures, social psychology and, consequently, identity are the most important means. On the one hand, they reaffirm the expediency of choosing the strategy of this research, because they point to the effectiveness and efficiency in the formation or change of fundamental moments of identity: it is the length from Soviet ideological slander of intellectual-humanitarian space and linguocides to "missionary of Russian World", literary expansion of the Russian information product, on the other hand, we can see the weakness of these instruments in Ukraine and almost absence in Belarus, in particular, in the formative principles of identity in the context of the nation's politics, national self-awareness, socio-psychological stability and confrontation, indicating the need to strengthen the humanitarian-security component of the educational and scientific space of all post-Soviet countries. Therefore, philosophical education and literary-linguistic activity are today a mechanism for deterring infection with the identity

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of *Homo Sovieticus*, a mechanism against "silent occupation". "There is an impression that brutally awakened in the winter of 2014 from a heavy 15-year sleep (so many years Russia has been preparing to "swallow" Ukraine back to the USSR-2, filling our space with its propaganda-suffocating mascot), the country first discovered the extent of its cultural robbery – and, spitting back that surrogate chewing gum, in a chorus to the heavens cried out: bread! "Bread, nourishment for mind and senses, for protection of own consciousness: nothing will provide it better than the book…" (Zabuzhko 2019, 62-63). The practical embodiment of such an instrument – a book, is *spoken* by the mentioned writer in the "Museum of Abandoned Secrets" (Zabuzhko 2010), where it unfolds in time forward into the past – to the lost, not yet chipped by the Soviet Union identity, full of desire to fight and defend themselves, and in the future – to the inability to self-interpretation due to sometimes reluctance, sometimes exhaustion, sometimes misunderstanding, identity.

The purpose of the information war in general, i.e. its individual manifestations as aggressive Kremlin propaganda, is not only the merging of the new *Homo Sovieticus* with totally manipulative informing, rigid memory policy and "fabulous Great Russian futurology", i.e. the formation of slave and non-citizen brains, but also the use of old proven methods of self-aggrandizement and intimidation. By educating constant "faith in the adult" as an element of obedience, extracting the image of trust and inferiority from his own life experience, O. Zabuzhko describes the justification of the thesis of Russian paternalism: the best, because self-affirmation occurs through permissiveness, which indulges even religious forgiveness (Zabuzhko 2019, 203). Such paternalism has not disappeared and dates back to the Soviet era, and only "increased its appetite" during the time of preparation for new attacks under the banners of "Russian World", manifesting itself on the reverse side of the medal of Bolshevik hatred of the rich and nationally oriented - Great Russian non-recognition of other nationally-oriented people, saying "We are one nation" (a concept that denies the identity of Ukrainians and Belarusians), and a hidden friendship with authoritarian capitalism – "Putin's friends" (a term that outlines the shadow structure of the oligarchic construction of Russia's political hierarchy). Another factor that knocks people in the head all the "jumpers", like plugs in the power

grid, and it doesn't care to see the obvious even when life pokes its nose into it is fear" (Zabuzhko 2019, 204): intimidation is a Soviet-proven way of building solidarity embodied today by their Russian heirs.

The natural reaction to Russian paternalism in postcolonial societies with a Soviet past is the undulating dynamics of cultural and social brotherhood as a political form of unity. In this sense, it is worth paying attention to the position of the Polish researcher of Ukraine O. Hnatiuk, which expresses the opinion that the peoples inhabiting the territory between Germany and Russia, historians and political scientists usually attribute a special tendency to nationalism (Hnatiuk 2003). However, as the Ukrainian writer Yu. Andrukhovych points out, this is not really too strange and seems to be for the communities that have existed for over 225 years between the German *Massemord* and the Russian *sweep* (Andrukhovich & Stasyk 2005). Therefore, "contrary to the theory, the "barbaric" nationalisms of Europe mobilized the respective communities not so much for modernization as "only" for survival and resistance to *unification* – this Latin word after Yalta in all languages of the region is translated as Russification (Ponomariov 2013, 14)" – successfully sums up the modern intellectual and writer V. Ponomariov.

Conclusions

Thus, *Homo Sovieticus* is a complex value-anthropological and socio-political phenomenon, artificially formed by Soviet ideology. Since this type of identity appears as phantasmagoric-utopian, insofar as the contexts of its formation and value orientations are most clearly expressed by means of artistic and journalistic style, which arise from the own experience of involvement.

   (1) Soviet ideology, defining a new type of man, applied all possible means and methods to implement the ideal model of social experiment. This certainty was so regulated that it provided for almost every step of both individuals and certain groups. The concept of freedom was pretended to be a bizarre falsification of existential interpretations of capitalism.

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Therefore, we fix the main rule of the contexts of formation of *Homo Sovieticus* as follows: the right to life without the right to life. It was brought up in an ideological and disciplinary system of information-propaganda influence and manipulations of public consciousness, which over time "cleaned" human naturalness from the principles and conditions of healthy individual and social progress. An important point in reinforcing the "educational process" was the politics of memory: the commitment to self-humiliation through self-forgetfulness and the "planned aesthetics of the older brother" – the glorification of Russian as such. Such security parameters for other identities could be achieved only by the only "means of solidarity" – fear. Accordingly, for the effectiveness of intimidation and threats, the ideological orientation of the value system was elevated to the status of "religious dogmas of Soviet-dialectical materialism", the violation of which was life-threatening. Therefore, the exclusive focus on the interest of the revolution, the ideal of the "New Faith" became truly socialistically good, and its "commandments" became the "cult of the common good" and "at the expense of the neighbor".

(2) The outlined logic of the Decalogue of the "New Faith" brought up a "mechanistic way of feeling". On the one hand it is reflexive belief, on the other hand – a behavioural pattern. From the standpoint of common sense and the natural development of individual-social constants of man, the "mechanistic way of feeling" in real social life formed the basic ability of *Homo Sovieticus* – social acting or "ketman". Its totality determined the functionality of the system, and its quality – the social hierarchy and the status of a Soviet citizen. The exhaustion of the "ketman" developed, in turn, the constancy of the absence of the inner centre of man, which appeared as a pure functionality of social processes with the "spiritual centre" in the Communist Party. So, it was self-loathing and self-alienation. The accompaniment of these constants had a poetic note of affirmation of knowledge of its definite place, which was reinforced by the idea of the

possibility of unjustified punishment or, in other words, its necessity for the high honour of having a Soviet identity. A characteristic feature of this pride was the instilled sign of non-recognition of the Other: despite the declared international, the dignity of other smaller nations was positioned as a temporary political misunderstanding that would eventually be corrected by the world revolution. In addition, it satisfied the natural-authoritarian intentions of anthropological-political impulses of society and played the role of restraint and generated another constant of Soviet identity – social and individual equality. The equality also provided for a specific social function – the "exercise of political power directly and by all", i.e. to fulfil the historical duty of transmitting information: denunciation. Dedication to this cause generated not only an identification affiliation, but also formed a "sense of family" – "Soviet religious fanaticism". The anti-human conditions of the socialist experiment of the Russian Bolsheviks raised the phenomenon of "denunciation" to the rank of virtue, narrowing human ideological and value optics and person's ability to free socio-political thinking. The expansion of the possibilities of the cultural-ideological horizon and freedom threatened life.

(3) The descriptive-explanatory approach makes it possible not only to better understand the type of identity of *Homo Sovieticus*, but also to trace its "evolution" to the present day. Therefore, the post-Soviet period is also marked by modified features of the post-Soviet man. The postcolonial syndrome is the main weakness for the former satellites of the Soviet Union (Russian domination) – on the one hand, on the other hand – the main tool of ideological and value manipulations of the former source-centre of the Soviet system – Moscow. Current, i.e. the second re-incarnation of the Russian Empire (the first is the USSR) revives the value matrix of the Soviet monster: political idolatry and dogmatization of its decisions, propaganda anti-dogmatization of the enemy, as a result – military actions and annexations of former slaves of the system (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and this time Belarus). Playing on the fluidity of self-

identification, "post-dependence" and colonial nostalgia for the greatness and mythologized reality of omnipotence renews the longing for the past in former subjects and strengthens the desire to renew "internal colonization" of Russia within the "old borders" of the Soviet Union. The toolkit reanimates old methods: the politics of memory – non-recognition of smaller neighbouring nations, the politics of culture – the Russian-speaking population as a Soviet technology of cultural expansion and capture of information space, church politics – religious identity in the service of the state. All aspects are in active phases (at least in Ukraine and Belarus) under the common name of the project "Russian World". In this way, colonial longing is transformed into the aggression of modern *Homo Sovieticus*: its value picture is determined by the identity of ideological and practical cynicism – the loss by the public consciousness of the need for ethical justification for their own actions and cynicism reckless lies. This, in turn, prevents further consensus of the multicultural population on the basis of national values in forming political nation.

Thus, the means of opposing the restoration of *Homo Sovieticus* as a cultural and political phenomenon is a whole complex of humanitarian security: the establishment of concepts of sustainable development of societies and human potential at the regional level, updating scientific receptions of historical and cultural aspects of collective memory as the assertion of identity by means of embodying the renewed social narratives and mass culture, protection of the information space not only by special services, but also by education, progressive cultural product, socio-psychological stability as the embodiment of critical thinking of the population as a whole. Such a set not only hinders or even prevents degenerated or even anti-human types of self-identification, but also creates a framework for projecting the promising progress of identities with the post-totalitarian past. This projection offers clear criteria for the development of postcolonial identities: standardization of national-centric approaches, healthy cultural-political popularization of identity and tolerance of differences of political and cultural varieties.

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