

THE POSTMODERN PICTURE OF BEING AND COGNITION¹

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Abstract. *Postmodernism, which we still tend to call “era”, is giving way to the next “era” now seen as “after-postmodernism”, now badged “post-post-mo”, now viewed as Neo-Renaissance. The author belongs to the last point of view.*

In order to appear in this last hypostasis, the new paradigm must be largely opposed to the former postmodernism, as in its time the classical Renaissance contrasted itself with the classical Middle Ages. In this article, classical postmodernism of the twentieth century is considered as the New Middle Age with all characteristic features of the classical millennium, and main traits of the coming New Renaissance are outlined.

Keywords: *postmodernism; postnonclassical subject; nominalism and realism; irony; relativism; return of metaphysics.*

Circumstances are such today that no one was left with the opportunities and hopes to inspire the whole Republic of scholars, the more so – the whole community of people of culture, intellectuals, and even less – *all* the reading people by any one and common program. There is no one sole and exclusive goal, there is no single absolute value, there is no such almighty category as the Absolute Idea, Communism or the Kingdom of God – there is only willingly or involuntarily received pluralism.

The axiom of the postmodern, which has grown from literary criticism, is a rejection of natural sciences’ claims on their *natural scientific* privilege of owning authentic (objectively true) knowledge, and proclamation of the existence of the tight shield of culture, in particular, *language*, placed between the subject and the object.

The roots of postmodernism are deep. They go to the relativism of the Sophists and the teachings of the first skeptics. There is also a direct relationship of postmodernism with the medieval semantics; but the basics of this paradigm are (neo)Kantian. The double helix plot (“Möbius strip”) in this case includes the following. 1. Kantianism was a classic rationalist doctrine – and postmodernism, feeding on Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Freud, is very far from the classical rationalism, and even from classical rationality. 2. Middle Ages, defending the absolute truth, being restored in our

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days, would be supposed to dogmatically drain the basic syntagma; namely, dogmatism would not have allowed any relativistic discourse. That did not happen.

From my unsent letter to (late) Professor Portnov, Alexander Nikolayevich.

As far as I remember from the school course of English literature, in Victorian age, the first registered, albeit semi-conscious, attacks of beauty and freedom on the bourgeois world of property (and those were that of Irene and Bossini versus that of Soames Forsyte) had already been undertaken. As I remember then, from literary critique, that appeared to be not really an attack but rather a slight protest. Still it was all in earnest. This time my contemporary writers, trying hardly not to sound pathetic, are never pretending to be great or at least capable of solving problems. They are simply educated and ironic enough to play mocking-birds.

“No fog, [that is to say] no mysticism in philosophy! The mind is allowed to dream only in a sleep!” – rationalist Fichte exclaimed. “Don’t you see with absolute clarity, Mistert rationalists, that you are dreaming?” – a postmodernist remarks condescendingly over his shoulder. Postnonclassical subject – sorry, the Text – postulates the conditions of the fight with the classical subject not at loggerheads of logical (rigour) argumentation, but Kara-te (bare hands). With bare hands is the pyramid of Platonic ideas scattered, starting with the mystical crown – Good [Bliss].

I like postmodernism. I like that it was put together by people, who owned the word and pen, and I like French Style. I like collage, pastiche, rebus, labyrinths of libraries, mirror and echo chamber, playful sincerity and sincere game. J. Barth’s “Chimera” is a masterpiece, and “Dictionary of the Khazars” by M. Pavić, of course, and “Portrait painted in Tea”. And the “Chocolate cooked in boiling water”. I only do not like that these preachers of Communications as the goal, the means of action and avoidance, of living-into and empathy, of the Diverse- the Other- the Alien-and-a-that, and all the else excellent things, do not go to the communication and contact with me. No way. Though not really hostile, just rather skeptical about it. Just as my Christians; and maybe my Muslims, too? With those you can flirt in any mode, saying, I admit everything – that religion is the oldest form of culture, and that there was Jesus, and he was a hero and a great guy, and he thought about us when he died, and that he died with the consciousness of the not-in-vain sacrifice – and the power of organ mass, and expression of paintings with images of Testament events, and the political might of the church, and the compelling role of faith, and that I believe in the mind and good, and in the philosophical Absolute – in a word, I admit all but the medieval tale – and at this point there comes No-o-o-o. No. That’s when you really are count out play.

To the contact with me, philosopher woman, a poet, a writer, a prophet, a preacher and confessor, et cetera, et cetera – for my (irrational, apparently), idea that life is cognition and I would like it to be most right and, moreover, true, and

our thoughts, of course, be merry, witty and original, and our experiences be vivid, intense, impulsive ... – in short, they do not go to the contact. In any...

If not Hegel, then Marx? Not at all. It is Kant. If criticism of bourgeoisie – then communism? Not in the least. This is a New Middle Age: without God, logic, metaphysics, and realism. Without its economic characteristics. Remember the Austrian joke: *Gekocht heute I nischt, aver guk mal, wie I da lej!* Only his majesty Discourse...

...This letter reminds of a postmodern text. However, I'm an atheist, materialist, rationalist and sensualist; Yes, we are four, as Tavi says. I remind myself of the rider, who, with prohibited speed, still fits in in the gate, not slowing down, but not paving a new road, either...

The post-Soviet period in Russia, the post-socialist period in Europe is the transit time, and not just to the next century or millennium, but also to other Russia, a different Europe and a diverse history. However, we do not know today – to what, to which history the transition will lead. We do not want American global consumerism (or we do want it?), we do not want totalitarianism (or...?), we do not want the scientism – it was recently discovered to be inhuman; But humanism, Renaissance inheritance, as it recently turned out, we do not want either. However, we do not have any non-utopian picture of the future, except alarmism. And in light of the collapse of all metaphysics – last grand system [“big narrative”] was Marxism in the Soviet, Maoist and neo-Freudian options – it is unlikely today that in the social sciences there will be found minds that are vouchsafed to create a new model of the majestic worldview of great explanatory power, which had Aristotle's system, the German classics, the French Enlightenment, the English epistemology, the Russian Social-Democrats. The era of modern times, and the latest thinking, came to an end, somewhere never having happened for real, but only sent to all edges its useful, entertaining or dangerous gifts: cars, computers, herbicides, synthetics, weapons. Science and technology, the basis of our civilization, having deserved both respect and disbelieving fear, became integral parts of practical life. At the same time, the classical ideal of science as a complex set of values, such as objective truth, fundamental solidity, rationality, today has lost ground and passed the position. However, science has taken the responsibility for social progress!

Educating, “enlightening” the masses, this noble goal of all the finest and best of people, starting with the Sophists and Socrates, today is realized, in general. Never before in history have there been, either in Europe or in the world as a whole, such a lot of educated people, so many adepts of culture in strict and highest sense of the term, as many people with a university education, such a number of professional scientists. However, education as a lens, increased and made it possible to see everything: talented, and moderately gifted, and valueless, and fruitless, and raff. Never before the XXth century the creators of scientific and artistic works had such qualified and prepared public, as never existed, in such a frightening number, both creators and the public. Never the ordinary everyday language had

come so close to the scientific and literary, by virtue of which the so-called linguistic turn only became possible. Culture never has had so many channels, and consumers – such broad choices. Never it was written so much and so cool, and before the advent of the computer with its hypertext, the phrase “ocean of ideas and images” remained only a trope. Today there happened a change not only of scientific and literary functional styles. The human being changed himself, or the circumstances changed us. The image of the author is changed. And of the recipient.

Plato is author of idealism, Heraclites – of dialectics, Aristotle – of physics, metaphysics, logic and sociology, Newton – of mechanics, Kant – of transcendental deduction, Husserl – of phenomenology, Marx – of Marxism, Freud – of Freudism.

The author and the recipient of contemporary screen culture is this postnon-classical subject with thousands of names and faces. This mythical creature of carnival procession with masks, firecrackers, symbolic figures brings irrational fantasies alive, mixing times and manners and an endless debate, a roll-call. Here are extensive information, rhetorical devices, citation, annotation, plagiarism, multi-layer comment and self-refinement, generation, construction, deconstruction and destruction of senses, garlands of allusions and allegories without beginning or end. “πολυμαθίη νόον (ἔχειν) οὐ διδάσκει”: “The learning of many things teacheth not understanding.”¹

You could say that erudition, blowing up with creativity, can be either critique or “*Kapellmeister*” music. In the “post-nonclassical post-structuralism” there are both. “The consciousness of the original fragmentation took shape, of the fundamentally un-synthesizeable scatteredness of the human experience of the last third of the twentieth century, coupled with an almost instinctive desire to achieve the artistic comprehension of life, exemption from logocentrism, rationalism, dogmatism and duties to strictly distinguish between reality and fantasy”.¹

It is this perception of the world that has a common name – postmodernism. It was a leading, or certainly the most interesting paradigm of the last decades of the twentieth century, its cultural background. The conversion of existentialist-phenomenological currents in postmodernism coincided with the transformation of logical semantics in postpositivism, and as a result these two seriously competing contemporary philosophical trends came together. Today, though, the view has established that the only discipline in which neopositivism transformed into postpositivism is philosophy of science. The symbolic event, the manifest of this double conversion is a so-called “linguistic turn”, which, I think, today can already be called a “linguistic pirouette”.

Many humanities got involved in this turn – sociology, philosophy of science, political theory, history, philology and literature, cultural theories, philosophical anthropology, communication theory (as explication of modern social philosophy),

¹Heraclites, Fragment 40: Diogenes Laertius, IX, 1.

etc. For the existentialist-phenomenological-hermeneutic line this turn became a new impulse to investigate human existence in cultural discourse, more precisely, in language. The boundaries of language were finally brought to philosophers as the boundaries of the world.

The first impulse has likely come from the famous early work of Heidegger “*Being and Time*”. For positivism this turn was the transition from one stage of development of analytic philosophy, logic, to the other, linguistic. There was an opportunity to stop studying, with the aim of further accomplishing, the ideal logical *Koinē* for the Republic of scholars that uses the concepts of “sign and meaning”, “propositional function”, “truth value”, etc. or the language of science, i.e., a special functional artificial style, and to begin to investigate ordinary, everyday human language as a natural universal system of signs that could be meta-language for interpretation of any other system, including philosophy. For the science of signs and symbols, it was a transition from intense development of *semantics* as of both the most abstract and “theoretical” part of semiotics to exploring *pragmatics*, which is much less abstract, more “interesting”, and which studies the relationship of signs to a person. In it language appeared as a particular behavior and often as a game or a ritual, modeling communication.

L. Wittgenstein taught initially that *logic* is the essence of philosophy, and it doesn’t confirm anything about reality. What is common and inherent in being and thinking may be indicated with the help of symbols, but it cannot be expressed. Approximately 10 years after the publication of the “*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*”, the “linguistic turn” in the narrow sense of this expression took place in Wittgenstein’s worldview. Language appears in an unusual role, and it is no longer the functional style of science, but natural spoken language, for which research in a new way required new terms like “language game”, “anatomy of reading”, “family resemblance”. What do they mean?

– Language game: 1) a strictly defined model of communication; 2) the constitution of such a text in which the words are used in a strict sense.

– Hence follows the consistency of a context and some important features: 1) *to describe* a fact or phenomenon though arbitrarily, but still *strictly*; 2) to build a *model of behavior* on the basis of this knowledge; 3) *to specify the method* of reading the text.

– Anatomy of reading: the situation where one language game is read in fundamentally *different ways*.

– Family resemblance or similarity means that communication is not based on an abstract “essence” of language or the world, but on the real *diversity of ways to describe something*.

It is clear that the new approach of Wittgenstein, the author of the “turn” is controversial and poses new problems. The description of *what* a language game is,

¹I. Ilyin. Poststructuralism, deconstruction, postmodernism. M.: Intrada, 1996. P. 64.

is obscure because it says nothing about reality. Why, in striving for language therapy, does Wittgenstein maintain “*moire*” formulae (author’s term.-*E.T.*) for anatomizing reading? It looks like the set of phenomena corresponds to one word, one concept; one phenomenon corresponds to the set of readings. Does it not agree, in defiance of any neo-Kantian, with the dialectic formula “many causes – one consequence, many consequences – one cause”? However, these problems are at least apparent. Worse is the fact that many scientists of the twentieth century got involved in the “turn” without quite mastering proper linguistics and began to explore language not entirely responsibly, which fact makes me speak no longer just about the “turn”, but a “pirouette”.

Of course it was impossible not to react when all of them, analytical philosophy and semiotics, aesthetics and hermeneutics, sociology and poststructuralism = postmodernism, and the last representatives of a branch of Hegelian-Marxist discordant chorus proclaimed language to be the center of the philosophical circle. Most of them did not come to the conclusion that a natural conversational human language is the primary, if not the only, object of research interest on their own but received this message from the others. “The process of understanding in general is an event of language, even when it comes to extra-linguistic phenomena.” (Gadamer).¹ Such a reaction to the situation is quite natural. As it is impossible to be a foreigner in one’s own country, not perceiving the changing realities and not caught in the stream of time, so it was impossible for many philosophers of different trends, regardless of professional orientation, not to draw eyes on such a high-profile intellectual event.

However, unlike the media of social and humanitarian knowledge, for which the linguistic turn was a logical growth and a reasonable approach to their subject, philosophers-naturalists had the benefit of a good understanding of *logic and methodology of science*, through which examples of disasters of physical theories of the world evolved and in which, at the same time, there took place their own “turn”, local, but radiating into all other areas of knowledge. This was the *change of the scientific ideal*.

In the twentieth century, the evolution of positivism, which was a philosophical background for the logic and methodology of science, was connected with disillusionment in the very possibility of unifying scientific knowledge, reformulating scientific language so that this knowledge emerged entirely from experience. This program proposed by Carnap, was supported, by the way, by the “early” Wittgenstein. “Stubborn” language, seemingly neutral and transparent before, attracted the

¹Other famous aphorisms: “What cannot be spoken, must remain silent” (Wittgenstein), “The unconscious is structured like a language” (Lacan), “Language is the home of being”, “Language speaks by the man” (Heidegger). These expressive aphorisms became fetishes.

attention of neopositivists, and transformation of the “third” positivism into the “fourth” began.

At the same time in the field of humanities and even social science, there rooted an opinion that rich linguistic pragmatics does not allow, in principle, to know things “for themselves” and “*an sich*”, that there is an impenetrable screen of signs and symbolic forms of culture between subject and object. Postmodern critique of classical theory of knowledge appeared incidentally, replacing the latter with a Kantian “theory of understanding”. The construct “language picture of the world” came into universal use and gradually gained a solid status, along with the “scientific picture of the world” and “style of thinking”.

“Philosophy of science” and “philosophy of life”, which formerly opposed each other, began to converge. This should not be too surprising if we recall the common Kantian underpinnings of both. As the patriarch himself Kant, unlike Hegel, for example, was not specifically involved in language studies, a wide field of activity was opened to contemporary thinkers.

However, even this is not the point. Not only were both linguistically trained and linguistically unprepared scientists included in the “turn”, and the latter, as has been said, even fashioned language problems, ahead of philologists, in bold new constructions. Those who were trained but *not* on Kantianism still might not have realized what occurred with such terms as “paradigm” or “discourse”, continuing to hold a paradigm as an “example” and “discourse” to be reasoning, and the thesis of the “death of the subject” plunges them into shock. This is what happened. The ideographic approach, pushing away the traditional universalistic one, is a momentous event of our time. It is an indication of *victorious methodological nominalism*.

The following statement extends and explains this thought.

For a long time there existed a generally accepted notion that the medieval dilemma of realism and nominalism, like the thousand-year dispute about universals, was exhausted, even became simply boring, and in recent times these approaches were replaced with empiricism and rationalism. However, whether rightly or wrongly, publicly or privately, empiricism is viewed in some way as a successor of nominalism and rationalism – of realism. This position can be defended convincingly on the basis that both realism and rationalism are similarly oriented in the “universalistic”, “essentialistic” way. This is the very philosophical orientation that Popper attacked in his “*Open Society*”, namely a conscious search for a single origin, or common principle, and even if the philosopher recognizes the plurality of sub-aspects as Leibniz did, it is still essentialism. And both nominalism and empiricism are oriented not so much towards search of the poor in content and single in number deep essence, but rather towards a rich filling of knowledge, that is well illustrated by Umberto Eco in his “*The Name of the Rose*”.¹

¹In fact, the classification is much more complicated. Reading Ockham and Thomas Aquinas, you can clearly understand that it is one and the same scholastic

On the other hand, positivism, especially logical syntax and logical semantics, is often mistaken by non-specialists in the field of modern Western philosophy to be a *rationalistic* direction, although it would seem that commentators had long ago and convincingly qualified it as empiricism. Why is this happening?

It is not only because this area is created by philosophers who are representatives of natural sciences, and not of humanities that makes them speak about their “scientism”, associated with theoretical, physical knowledge *par excellence*. Weber, Parsons, Merton believed that science was a consequence of the rationalization of mind in the XVII century. There is another reason that the empiricism of the positivists since Comte was not foreign to universalism. This was an attempt to find the basis of unity or unification of knowledge, however such a foundation has turned out, such as the projection of the principles of *mechanics* into the *society*; or such as *social action* or as *experience*, etc. It is noteworthy that they were all initially critical of the *ad hoc-hypotheses*, those typical manifestations of the situational approach. Ad hoc-hypothesis is the explanation established for this specific case. Since the critical experiment requires discarding unconfirmed theory, while the author of the theory wants to save it, the situational *ad hoc* hypotheses are introduced in a “protective belt”¹ for this purpose.

According to the positivists and Popper, these are very *harmful*. For example, from the history of science it is well known that in 1897, Michelson and Morley attempted to make an experiment to detect the ether, being an elastic medium and the carrier of electromagnetic oscillations. They did not succeed. Without knowledge of the Michelson-Morley experiment, in 1905 Einstein performed a critical experiment that forced rejection of the concept of ether, on which classical mechanics and field theory, electrodynamics were based.

Having learned of the results of the experiment, two other scientists, Lorentz and Fitzgerald, offered a hypothesis intended to save the theory of ether. Popper considered the “reducing Lorentz/Fitzgerald” a typical *ad hoc*-hypothesis. Trying to delve into the explanation of the corresponding formula of bodies passing through the ether would be for me a “philosophic-linguistic pirouette” – a risky step, fraught with the discovery of significant incompetence. So it will not be attempted, although the formula itself is available: $l = l_0 \sqrt{1 - v^2/c^2}$. But in this case, something else is far more important. Popper was the first to state that the nature of scientific knowledge lies not in *essential differences* between science and non-science but in the *methods, means of work of the scientist*. This was, of course, the softening of objectivism. Historians should analyze not knowledge as achieved but the evolving science.

Besides, with the help of Popper’s philosophy, the idea of the “scandal in philosophy” associated with Plato’s seeking of the *essence* and the two and a half

discourse, and that nominalism aims at essence as realism, and the difference between them is absolutized for didactic purposes.

¹Famous, initially Lakatos’ term.

thousand years' story of the failures of this search resurfaced. As is well known, Popper found the alternative in "methodological nominalism".

Referring to the realism of "methodological essentialism", Karl Popper clearly describes his nominalist position in contrast to the old mainstream¹. Methodological nominalism tends not to comprehend *what the thing actually is* and not to determine its true essence/nature but to describe *how a thing behaves* in various circumstances. In this case, words are only ancillary tools and not the *names of the essences*. The methodological nominalist will never believe that the questions "What is energy?", "What is movement?", or "What is the atom?" are important for physics. Instead they attach great importance to issues such as "Under what conditions does an atom radiate light?" "How can we use solar energy?" "How do the planets move?" And if some philosophers-essentialists would try to convince them that, not having received the answer to the question "what?", they cannot hope to obtain a precise answer to the question "how?", then they could answer, if they found it necessary, that they preferred the modest degree of accuracy they can achieve by using their own methods to that pretentious nonsense at which their opponents, the "methodological essentialists", arrive, using theirs.

This means that the fruitless, because no answer arises, question of the nominative case about essence – *What is it?* – has to be pushed aside and replaced by questions in oblique cases, namely the genitive, dative, accusative. If Popper spoke any of the Finno-Ugric languages, where there are about three dozen cases, the opportunities of replacing the nominative would multiply more. The irony is that not only the dogmatic philosopher but nor can the "critical negativist" construct even one proposition without using the nominative case, as in fact, any other critic of "essentialism", "eidetism" etc. does.

[Oh yes, words are just "tools". I forgot. But not after the late Wittgenstein.]

Nowadays, in the philosophy and methodology of science, if not complete, there is a change of views on scientific criteria taking place. Instead of objectivity, intersubjectivity is needed, referring to the general field of meanings adopted for the given school, the scientific program, the team of scientists. Instead of truth there stand sense and meaning; instead of search for the truth, it is respectable to talk of clarity, or recognition of the doctrine, or the sincerity and veracity of the scientist. Instead of naive credulity of the "first navigators", who believed that the object is cognizable "from/out of itself" solely with the know-how of accurate measurement, careful monitoring, responsible comparison, there appeared the "third navigators" concerned with the braided network of subject-subject relationships in language signs and about linguistic signs. In social networks, there was spontaneous generation of a new world. The main concept and the main concern, now, is not the truth, but *communication*, and *ability to solve problems* has become a "megacriterion", the touchstone of "scientificity".

¹Popper K. The Open Society and Its Enemies. M.: 1992 /in Russian/. In 2 vol. V. I. P. 64–65.

Here is just one quote from the monograph recommended as a textbook for the course “*Philosophy and methodology of science*”. In the chapter “The ideals of scientificity” its author A. Kezin writes:

“The ability to solve problems, pushing away fundamentalist justification, is put forward as the leading value of the new, emerging scientific ideal”.¹

You do not need a detailed demonstration, to see that it is also a manifestation of the nominalist approach.

And although Popper’s own invention – falsification of the principle put forward as a criterion of demarcation of scientific and non-scientific – could not stand the test of time, methodological nominalism itself survived and won. It seems that in the era of after-postmodernism for the foreseeable future, it will remain the main method, if not the trend of thought, in philosophy, even if some of us take heroic efforts to establish, or at least declare, a Neo-Renaissance, called upon to revive the strength and attraction of realism-rationalism, more precisely, methodological essentialism. In the longer term, this could even be universalism because it is the main way to develop the Greek-type “*prote philosophia*”, “the first wisdom”, philosophy itself. The new term chosen for this is existential materialism.

Being a realist, the author of this book takes the state of affairs as it is, trying to comprehend the advantages of the change in scientific ideal against the background of turning natural science into socially valuable, humanitarian issues. No discipline could find its subject outside the ideographic, nominalist approach. For example, linguistics itself, in the form of comparative linguistics, was originally separated from the general philosophical bed and stood apart thanks to the interest of W. Humboldt in the unique and single, as opposed to the common and general.

Interest in the general gave rise, however, to philosophy, as well as logic, semiotics, the science of management, etc. But the Father of logic, of semiotics, as well as of management, and many other sciences, Aristotle put the single in the first place in his “*Categories*”. This is the first entity/essence according to Aristotle, the beginning of the ascent to the cognitive *eidos*, according to Plato, and to the Truth – this unfashionable word.

Postmodernism now, at the beginning of the XXI century, is still widespread. This is a common cultural background, and yet, this phenomenon is esoteric. Originating, as already mentioned, in line with the original French literature studies, postmodernism entered practically all the humanities, but its texts are addressed exclusively to the erudite, prepared reader. This is an attractive, elegant, ironic, artistic paradigm oriented against every single one of the classic postulates and categories, values and criteria, including such pathetic as objective Truth, Reason, Essence, rationality, activity, objectivity, fundamental principles, absolute meanings and heroic social projects, the “big

¹Philosophy and Methodology of Science. M.: 1994. Author’s translation from Russian. In 2 vol. V. I. P. 293.

narratives”, including history itself as a chain of short stories, in no way different from fiction. The revolutionary, the rebel impulse, as well as a brilliant literary style are a traditional French familial wealth. But postmodernism quickly covered the so-called *whole* of Europe and the United States, starting with the Yale School, and to ignore it is something anyone maintains. Postmodern criticism aims “in a circle” at positivist thought, especially analytical philosophy, as well as at structuralism, whence it grew up, and in general at all “metaphysics”, that is, at every teaching that suggests some +9*/absolutes. “I take the view that the irony of each generation... becomes metaphysics of the next generation”,¹ says Rodolphe Gaché, one of the most outstanding authors examining postmodern thought and opponent of Richard Rorty. Postmodernism is armed with semiotics and hermeneutics; it has worked out procedures for interpretation and deconstruction. It praises artistry but does not believe in originality. In social science, it prefers theory of communicative action to theory of activity, expertise to science, practice to theory, an example over the law, common sense to Project, a joke to dogma and liberty to everything else. Except, of course, not in the sense of Marxism.

Liberty is freedom of interpretation *ad libitum*, and a free man, *homo ludens*, is a “human playing” *par excellence*. The tools of these games are symbols and signs, including language. The screen of culture that is placed between man and so-called objective reality is impervious to any perception or thinking, and therefore the signs, words, art forms are indexes and symbols of ideas rather than things. “Reason, theoretical and methodological principles are not a measure of solvency... in the world of simulacra... Dive in a world of copies without the original is accompanied by an appeal to the logic of the myth and irrational... logic of simulacra is built from... aspirations, desires, perceptions, and even dreams and hoaxes... And there are no criteria, neither of truth nor error”.² Talk on objective reference is not at all possible; it is qualified as funny and naive. Postmodernism does not ever dwell on the object level, keeping to the critical one. Noteworthy is the irony of one of the pillars of this criticism pointing to another pillar, and not just any, but specifically to Derrida:

“How does one decide whether he is really a much-misunderstood transcendental ‘philosopher of reflection’, a latter-day Hegel, or really a much-misunderstood nominalist, a sort of French Wittgenstein? Not easily. Derrida makes noises of both sorts. Sometimes he warns us against the attempt to hypostatize something called ‘language’. ... But, alas, he immediately goes on to talk in a grandiloquent, Hegel-Heidegger, ‘destiny of europe’ tone about how a ‘historico-

¹Rodolphe Gasché. *The Tain of the Mirror*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1986. P. 8.

²Bilalov M.I. The criteria of truth and error // *Philosophy and the future of civilization*. Proc. to the IV Russian Congress of Philosophy. In 5 vol. V. I. M: “Sovrem. Tetradi”, 2005. P. 66.

metaphysical epoch' *must* finally determine as language the totality of its problematic horizon".¹

Of note is that all texts other than postmodern seem either naïve, virgin fresh or both after immersion into the texts of postmodernists.

The thrice imaginary world of culture is really organized right now in a new way, not like in the Renaissance, not like in the era of Enlightenment and not as in Nietzsche's world, now referred to as "late modernity". But how? What is the novelty of this news?

First of all, the lexicon of postmodernism is extraordinarily rich and colorful; it exposes the hard creative work of thought, the miraculous power of imagination. As an Indian fakir, postmodernism extracts before our eyes from silk sleeves the whole constellation of exciting seductive stuff. Here are, for instance, the working concepts of Lacan, Derrida, of the "Tel Kel" group: mirror, mosaic, kaleidoscope, collage; archive, encyclopedia, library, catalog; decentration, dissemination, floating signifier, erotic text, social body; hymen, hora, rhizome, doxa, stricture, abject; echo chamber, amalgam, pharmon, pastiche; map, travel, etc. But there is a key word, a password, by which the insiders are recognized and outsiders excommunicated, namely the word *Discourse*. In the famous "*Explanatory dictionary of language theory*" by Algirdas Greimas and Joseph Courtes, *eleven* articles are devoted to the explication of this word. They use hyper-references to the other seven not-weak articles, such as Transformation, Narrative, Writing, and even the inclusion of Semiotics itself. One can imagine the difficulty of entering into the hermeneutic circle, if, for example, the reference to semiotics calls, from the first lines, for a full understanding of what the *presupposition* is, in the terminology of Louis Hjelmslev, rather than of, say, Boethius and William of Ockham, and includes forty-five articles regarding semantics. However, in the first approximation, discourse is writing, i.e., *text*, though this is not really true etymologically.

The text – and not the text. Not just text. It is the world itself, a place full of sense-fishing. How to live in this world? Clearly by understanding meanings. After the "derridean turn", the term "text" became the number 1 concept for postmodernism. The specific sensitivity of any adept with this paradigm consists in feeling that the whole world is a constructed world, shaped in semiotic code. Man is no more or less than the product of Gutenberg civilization; its mentality is also a text in the vast space of texts, i.e. *culture*.

Culture is tradition and writing, a series of messages. The written text, *grammè*, is preferable to postmodernism than speaking, *phonè*, because the latter claims to be in intimate relationship with the thinking, if not to be, in fact, the reincarnation of thought; whereas graphic notation is not as pretentious, it is free of this role, as well as from the heroic role of the Cartesian "cogito". A person is free to choose the graphics system, although not free from the choice of life in the text, just as a

¹Richard Rorty. Is Derrida a Transcendental Philosopher? // Derrida: a Critical Reader. – P. 243.

free-lance is not at liberty to choose or not to choose a sovereign. A person can accept or reject *this* graphics system. Signs are free from means of aggressive enforcement of ideological meanings. The reader is free in his/her interpretations of the author's intention, and free of the first in a succession of readers, as well as free of his/her contemporary readers and critics. But both the text and writing are at the same time social institutions; they are normative and as such will organize communication. Permanent atrial flutter between invariant writing and variables of individual speech characterizes the approximation, the approach to the understanding of the other. The Other. This is the credo of postmodernism.

One must be constantly aware of the absence of an absolute highest sense. And one must fight the aggressiveness of a particular concept that is determined to fulfill this tyrannical role. It is better to keep and to hold to those meanings that are out of focus and on the periphery of consciousness, those that make up the backcloth, background, underground, premise, deviation, hum of unconscious or implicit, hidden, vague, tacit, oblique marginal knowledge. It is necessary to carefully examine the images on the margins of the fields of the main text. Then culture will be in Roland Barthes' term a *text-pleasure*.

Referring to the problem and procedure of interpretation, composing, so to speak, the soul of postmodern paradigmatics and syntagmatics,¹ we could say again that for the humanities it is the only method for the obtaining and organizing knowledge. Interpretation in them is related to aestheticization. However, this fact in no way means extreme subjectivism to the detriment of all and every kind of objectivity. In our view, subjectivity and objectivity are connected in knowledge and not in reverse but in directly proportional relationship, as in communicating vessels, the more subjectivity, the more objectivity. This is true both with respect to natural science, e.g., looking for maximum objectivity, studying their subject, an elementary particle, with instruments of increasing powers of resolution and the increasingly hard radiation, the physicist "interrupts" it, so that they are always watching not a thing-in-itself, but the results of their interaction with it. And in relation to the humanities, the more sincere, the more "earnest" the humanitarian zeal is, the closer they are to the subject – *their own* gnoseological object, posited as *their* object or as the object of *their own* thinking. This selective approach is already the start of creativity, but it is not merely this. The pictures that the philosopher paints are always and essentially aesthetic, axiologically tinted, their content and "brushwork" are to the highest extent dependent on the personality of the one who paints, on the accepted style of thinking, and on the central explanatory abstraction inherent in a particular historical and cultural epoch (Cosmos, God, Human being), as well as on the language used, on the tradition, on all that which philosophers of Kantian profile call today "premised", or "personal", knowledge. Such pictures are always "only" interpreta-

¹There are innumerable sources on the problems of interpretation. Here we name only the classics of Hans Lenk, e.g.: Lenk H. Interpretation und Realität. Frankfurt a.M., 1995; Schemaspiele. Über Schemainterpretationen und Interpretationskonstrukte. Frankfurt a.M., 1995, etc.

tions. However, since the universe encompasses *everything* (the ontological argument), and knowledge, no matter how creative and artistic and aesthetic it may be, is, in essence, a *reflection* (gnoseological argument), then for *this concrete* painting, like for any other, there is always an historical basis. And this is not the relativism of Protagoras on my part, but classical Marxism. For agnoseologist, it is clear that all depends on the quality and degree of similarity between image and object, with the explication of the category “objective” and the category of “resemblance”. However, a more detailed theoretical analysis of these items will be presented in the following Essays.

My reasoning about the philosophical inventory of Postmodernism is as follows. Let us assume that objective idealism is the mainstream of philosophy, which it is also in fact. This is the way of metaphysics, on which path there were designed the systems of the Upanishads, Plato and Hegel, Thomas Aquinas and William of Ockham. Let us introduce, here and now, a new concept – the *basic principle of delight* or content. The main pleasure of the philosophers of this trend is the idea that *everything* that exists in nature *is one*, i.e., that, truly, the variety of things is reduced to a universal base, whatever it may be called – *Apeiron*, *Tao*, *Pyr technikon* (creative fire), or the Absolute. On the other hand, the best enjoyment of philosophers who are opposition-minded with respect to the main stream of thought just mentioned, namely “*pleasure of essence*”, is the opposite principle – how remarkably well and delightful that there is *such a variety of things* in the world. Indeed, the world is plurality, the unity of which is not quite obvious, but it does not matter much. Great that there is such wealth of content, richness of proximity, brightness of display. As to the poverty and immobility of essence, well, God bless her. Nominalism, hylozoism, pantheism, empiricism, pluralism, anarchism, relativism, artistry, “cheerful science”, hermeneutics, theory of communication, the latest sociology, post-structuralism and deconstruction, in spite of dissimilarity and multi-level organization, practice this very, second principle – “*pleasure of content*”.

So, what is written on the fields of margins in the sacred texts?

Umberto Eco. “*The Name of the Rose*”.

“The other pages... were already finished, and as we looked at them, neither I nor William could suppress a cry of wonder.

This was a psalter in whose margins was delineated a world reversed with respect to the one to which our senses have accustomed us. As if at the border of a discourse that is by definition the discourse of truth, there proceeded, closely linked to it, through wondrous allusions in aenigmate, a discourse of falsehood on a topsyturvy universe, in which dogs flee before the hare, and deer hunt the lion. Little bird-feet heads, animals with human hands on their back, hirsute pates from which feet sprout, zebra-striped dragons, quadrupeds with serpentine necks twisted in a thousand inextricable knots, monkeys with stags’ horns, sirens in the form of fowl with membranous wings, armless men with other human bodies emerging from their backs like humps, and figures with tooth-filled mouths on the belly, humans

with horses' heads, and horses with human legs, fish with birds' wings and birds with fishtails, monsters with single bodies and double heads or single heads and double bodies, cows with cocks' tails and butterfly wings, women with heads scaly as a fish's back, two-headed chimeras interlaced with dragonflies with lizard snouts, centaurs, dragons, elephants, manticores stretched out on tree branches, gryphons whose tails turned into an archer in battle array, diabolical creatures with endless necks, sequences of anthropomorphic animals and zoomorphic dwarfs joined, sometimes on the same page, with scenes of rustic life in which you saw, depicted with such impressive vivacity that the figures seemed alive, all the life of the fields, plowmen, fruit gatherers, harvesters, spinning-women, sowers alongside foxes, and martens armed with crossbows who were scaling the walls of a towered city defended by monkeys. Here an initial letter, bent into an L, in the lower part generated a dragon; there a great V, which began the word "verba," produced as a natural shoot from its trunk a serpent with a thousand coils, which in turn begot other serpents as leaves and clusters.

Next to the psalter there was, apparently finished only a short time before, an exquisite book of hours, so incredibly small that it would fit into the palm of the hand. The writing was tiny; the marginal illuminations, barely visible at first sight, demanded that the eye examine them closely to reveal all their beauty (and you asked yourself with what superhuman instrument the artist had drawn them to achieve such vivid effects in a space so reduced). The entire margins of the book were invaded by minuscule forms that generated one another, as if by natural expansion, from the terminal scrolls of the splendidly drawn letters: sea sirens, stags in flight, chimeras, armless human torsos that emerged like slugs from the very body of the verses. At one point, as if to continue the triple "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus" repeated on three different lines, you saw three ferocious figures with human heads, two of which were bent, one downward and one upward, to join in a kiss you would not have hesitated to call immodest if you were not persuaded that a profound, even if not evident, spiritual meaning must surely have justified that illustration at that point.

As I followed those pages I was torn between silent admiration and laughter, because the illustrations naturally inspired merriment, though they were commenting on holy pages".¹

James Krüss. "*Timm Thaler, or the Sold Laughter*".

"Faces on the icons, with big eyes, still laden with a single point, and with long noses, dividing them into two half-oval, were stateless smiles. In this they were like the pale faces in the portraits of Dutch artists which Timm saw in Palazzo Candido in

¹The narration is ascribed to Adso, Willam of Baskerville's student. See in: Umberto Eco. *The Name of the Rose*. https://royallib.com/book/Eco_Umberto/The_Name_of_the_Rose.html

Genoa. For Timm, they seemed alien and strange. He even began to mutter to himself an English proverb: *Teach me to laugh, save my soul*. And strange to say, he suddenly saw the icons with different eyes. He noticed that monks who painted the icons, were allowed animals and plants depicted on them all what was denied to people: to rejoice, blossom, laugh. While Lefuet admired the discipline of the holy icon painters, Timm opened the small world that lived secretly on these boards: smiling little dogs, vultures winking, happy birds and laughing lilies. Here it was all the other way round: animals laughed, and man looked at the world sternly and grimly.

“...Timm suddenly remembered a remark of Jonny and repeated it aloud:

– Laugh is inner freedom.

“This phrase produced on Lefuet a completely unexpected effect. He stamped his feet and yelled:

– The helmsman told you so!”¹

These lovely, lengthy quotations are cited here intentionally. Approaching the keyword in this section from a distance, I want to maintain in good traditions of postmodernism avoiding straightness, having not logical proof and not rational argument, but the chance to give the audience an opportunity *to experience the state* of those who have chosen multiplicity, marginality, art, symbolism, fairy-tale existence as principle of the main pleasure.

Now we come to a philosophical self-assessment of postmodernism. This is opposition to realism *par excellence*. Richard Rorty, in the cited article “*Is Derrida a Transcendental Philosopher?*” depicted this creed “spectacularly well”.

“Nominalists like myself, – those for whom language is a tool rather than a medium, and for whom a concept is just the regular use of a mark or noise – cannot make sense of Hegel’s claim that a concept like ‘Being’ breaks apart, sunders itself, turns into its opposite, etc... The best we nominalists can do with such claims is to construe them as saying that one can always make an old language-game look bad by thinking up a better one – replace an old tool with a new one... But this need for replacement is *ours*, not the concept’s... We nominalists think that all that philosophers of the word-disclosing (as opposed to the problem-solving) sort can do is to fluidize old vocabularies... Nominalists see language as just human beings using marks and noises to get what they want”.²

Actually, we dialectic-materialistic philosophers do agree with the assessment that one *concept* or even all human *minds* cannot posit, then deposit, then “*aufheben*”. All these logical operations are *our* activity. I could agree with Rorty, too, when he says that we cannot make sense of the notion of discovering a ‘condition of the possibility of language’, “nor, indeed, of the notion of ‘language’ as something homogeneous

¹ James Krüss. “Timm Thaler, or the Sold Laughter”. M.: 1975. P. 120–121 /In Russian/. See also: <https://www.docs-engine.com/pdf/1/timm-thaler-novel.html>

² Richard Rorty. *Is Derrida a Transcendental Philosopher?* P. 241–242.

enough to have ‘conditions’ (ibid.)” I also appreciate the claim “...if, with Wittgenstein, one starts to think of vocabularies as tools, then totality is no longer a problem (ibid.)” Indeed, this phrase could serve as a very brief and convincing introduction to explain a “linguistic turn”. But the following passage makes me think that Rorty’s irony concerning classics can be used, in reverse, against himself.

“For we nominalists think that the realm of possibility expands whenever somebody thinks up a new vocabulary, and thereby discloses (or invents – the difference is beside any relevant point) a new set of possible worlds... One of the things we want to do with language is to get food, another to get sex, another is to understand the origin of the universe... and maybe to create oneself by developing one’s own, private, autonomous, philosophical language”.¹

Wow! Is this not a world-building claim? But it is clear that *one* Language is not likely to meet all these different desires; hence it is useless to search for discovering a ‘condition of the possibility of language’.

Without pretending to be innovative, postmodernists are not merely imitators, commentators, and interpreters, because they destroy the tradition of argumentation and reject classical ways. To praise, say, Derrida for the strength, richness, and even “rigor” of his philosophical arguments, as Jonathan Culler, Christopher Norris, Rodolphe Gaché do, is likely to offend him. Insiders would consider it a “flattening”, “acclivousing”; as already mentioned, they appreciate their flagship not for solidity and seriousness, but for a funny, charming and touching account of esoteric things, for the ability to transform, to “beat” old classics into charming new forms and images.

The novelty, therefore, is present in the style, glossary, hyper-critical manner. This neonominalism is new in its “splendidly ironic” way, and it is aimed against scientism, an enemy which classic medieval nominalism, of course, did not have. To say that this is a new paradigm because it came later than all others, literally “after” modernity, and therefore is contemporary to us would be a banality. The impressive novelty of the arrival of postmodernism is not in this fact. This paradigm is a perfect example of dialectical withdrawal, the *Aufhebung*, that is, the return of a grand era on a new basis to the forefront of history, namely that of the Middle Ages. Postmodern culture embodies and manifests the New Middle Age, and perhaps ages. And the direct interest of modern man to *that* millennium is only the most obvious, the external trace of discourses’ resemblance. True, the economic basis of a New Middle Age is different. Political orientations are alias, too. But it is impossible not to see the phenomenal similarity – pervasive symbolism, the world as a text, hermeneutics as a method, semiotics as a methodology, endless debate, mysticism and fantasy, scholastic commentary, witty rhetoric,

¹ Ibid., p. 242. I, for one, appraise of the statement reminiscent of Habermas’s distinction: “...one will be more willing to accept a private-public split: using one set of words in one’s dealings with others and another when engaged in self-creation”.

blossom of the humanities, volition and intuition against rationality. And this carnival night of the New Middle Ages wishes to do *without* the tragic lament and severity of the “Truth”. Teach me to laugh; save my soul – Middle Ages without God, metaphysics and logic. It is a curvy and eerie confirmation of Hegel’s law of negation of the negation.

However, it is not even *that* important: that Hegel was *right* about the *spiral* symbol representing emblematically the thing called *development*, being the last “big” word to survive the *Offertoring* of postmodernism. The fact is that you cannot hit any of our scientists who passed through the Soviet Marxist School by criticizing Hegel, nor by criticizing dogmatism, scholasticism and metaphysics, nor rationalism and mechanistic materialism. Still neither, incidentally, via criticism of skepticism, naive realism, empiricism, empiriocriticism, pansemiotism or religion. and critical laughter, for us, is downright normal. But why don’t postmodernists take us to play? Or, do they?

Ideas that seem amazing and revolutionary innovative to Western thinkers, overthrowing the Enlightenment project of modernity and the “bourgeois century”, are able to surprise none of our sociologists, cultural studies investigators, literary and theater critics, let alone philosophers, with particular novelty. This applies also to the appeal to practice, stubbornness of the facts, common sense, etc. None of our Russian philosophers is hampered to say, on the spot, a dozen of such phrases as:

- Human being is not an abstract, somewhere outside the world dwelling creature. Human being is a human’s world.

- The question of whether or not do our thoughts possess objective truth is not a question of theory but is a practical question. In practice man must prove the reality and power, i.e., this-sidedness, of his thinking.

- Against the “symbol in general” one cannot have anything. But against all symbolics it can be said that these sometimes serve a comfortable path to agnosticism.

- Human practice, repeating billions of times, is fixed in the mind of a person with figures of logic, etc.

- There lies a curse on the spirit of man from the very beginning, burdening it with matter, which appears here in the form of moving air layers, sounds, words, i.e., in the form of language.

- Human knowledge is not a straight line but a curve, which endlessly approximates a series of circles, a spiral.

And here is an aphorism against logicism:

- Human practice, repeating billions of times, is fixed in the mind of a person with figures of logic, etc.

None of us, even if s/he tried, could see the originality in purposeful irony, oriented against absolute idealism, *glorious ontos on*, belief in the immutable foundations of being, in history as the linear unfolding of the reasonable and rational project of the world, in continued, certainly a brilliant spiritual human essence, and if not human, then at least someone else. We, the heirs, having accepted or despised

it, of Decembrists' atheism, commoners and the Marxist-Leninists, are not shocked at the news of the death of Nietzschean God, whether the news is on its way or has already been announced. We are not even able to build on this news as Nietzsche, Heidegger and Gianni Vattimo, first-class thinkers, did with hundreds of pages of philosophical texts enunciating that God is actually sound and alive, and it is not He, but just man that is unwell. There is the same difference between the Western and Russian thinking in these respects as between the Western and Russian counter-culture – different enemies.

And yet, this time of forty years, the time of our youth and maturity, was shared by us and Western Europeans. Our struggles against the system – we have ours, they have theirs – were struggles for freedom for a human being, it being something else that we have failed again. However, despite criticism of the system, apology for communication, attention to experience and practice, discoveries in the field of philology, the creative intelligentsia marginality, or other traces of similarity, our man is still an outsider in relation to Western postmodernism, – either because s/he is lagging behind, or because s/he ran ahead, or maybe because s/he does not refuse to recognize the person as the fifth element.

I refer here to the opinion of my Russian colleagues.

“Firstly, in the Russian reality, all important life problems often could not be solved in a practical way, and then the life went the way of idea... Secondly, for Russia, often the most important philosophy was its literature. The West has come to this again only now. Thirdly, in connection with the multinationality, Russia had “got accustomed” to the dialogue, if not philosophical traditions, then, at least, cultures. Here the questions of cultural community, national identity were long been being practically solved... Community, communality, subculture had not only ever went out of the social life of Russia, but also had been firmly planted on the frame of civilization... Moreover, the “post-modern condition” of our reality... constantly deepens.”¹

And most important, in my opinion, is the thought:

“If in the West postmodern philosophy is developing, then in Russia it is being reflected. In Russia, they know about it, ‘why?’ And this is what they do not know in the West”. (ibid.)

It should be emphasized that in the history of gnoseological basic syntagma traveling through time, postmodernism has played a decisive role in ousting from the front of the stage both the “first”, the physical, and the “second”, metaphysical navigations. if not engendering, it then approved the “third” one, putting in place of

¹ Shatunova T.M., Tereshchenko N.A. The End of Russian Idea // Russian Idea: Nature, Content and Development. – Kazan; Kazan State University press, 1997. P. 84–85 /In Russian/

philosophy – philology, in place of discovery – interpretation, in place of invention – criticism, and at the same time, having abolished the classic dilemma of subject and object, paradoxically, it made a bid for *communication*.

Introducing here an overall pre-philosophical evaluation of the communicative act, we shall proceed from the following assumptions.

1. Not every statement is genuine authentic cognition. In authentic statement or uttering the grammatical and actual subject definitely coincide. Further, an authentic statement should present new knowledge.

2. Inauthentic knowledge generally is such because of the lack in a statement, uttering or judgment of objectively new knowledge.

3. Situations of discovering something new are rare, and subjectively new knowledge is incomparably bulkier the objectively new knowledge.

4. Finding subjectively new information still simulates true knowledge.

5. Transfer of subjectively new information will be considered a communicative act par excellence.

6. Sharing such information is widely distributed; the result of such dialogue, or “polylogue”, cannot be considered true knowledge (information). An exception is the educational dialogue, the so-called “Socratic”.

7. Communicative maximum, the so-called general conversation or small talk is always achieved at the expense of lowering the intellectual level of all participants.

8. Communicative maximum is cognitive, or genuinely informative minimum.

9. Cognitive maximum is “smart ecstasy” (Losev’s term), silence, or the withdrawal from the conventional system of signs.

10. Verbal communication is the form of communicative action.

Actually, the latter is obvious and therefore not-necessary. It is an effect of Pythagorean mathematics magic – 10 commandments, 10 categories, etc.

The term “navigation” was used by Plato in his dialogues “*Phaedo*” and others as an analogy of true authentic knowledge. In ancient Greece, sailing with a fair wind was called “the first navigation”, and in the absence of wind, through the rowers’ own efforts, the “second navigation”. From the point of view of Plato, philosophers of *physis*, or materialists in our terminology, who were studying the object were doing the easier, “the first navigation”, whereas Plato himself discovered “the second navigation”, being the search for intelligible entities, *eidei*, outside the field of observations and inaccessible to the senses. This is the metaphysical world of Hyper-Urania, the object of philosophical cognition, requiring tremendous effort, so to speak, “special eyes” – the eyes of mind. Actually, before Plato, Parmenides and his school made this navigation.

Thus, the “first navigation” is an employment of natural scientists. Intention i.e., voltage and direction, of such navigation is on a physical object called “*prolepsis*” later by Epicurus. The main method is observation. Experiment and simulation will come much later. It is an act of cognition through the senses. The goal of it is

true knowledge of the natural object or phenomenon. Keywords of such navigation are perception, observing and experience.

“Second Navigation” is an employment of metaphysicians, philosophers. Intention, in its own way, is also “outside”, towards Hyper-Urania, on an object, even though it be ideal. Perhaps this is better described as “inside” the object, to its invisible essence “soul”. But it does not change the objective intention of either navigation. The main methods are abstraction, analysis, intellectual intuition. It is an act of knowledge by means of speculation. The goal is true knowledge of the essence, grasping *eidos*, absolute. Keywords are intelligence, authentic being, truth. *Telos* or purpose, completion, “body”, result of the “first navigation” is the phenomenon, in my view, but of the “second” it is *not noumenon*, because it is a “thing-in-itself”. *Telos* of the “second navigation” is *eidos*, as Plato thought, and as a philosophical category, a universal.

Both first “navigations” are cognitive acts taking place except for the “Socratic dialogue” in the situation of intellectual solitude. Systems of signs used to find and fix its interim and final results have the character of private language, the language of the individual, qualified by the acknowledgement that no language is really private.

It must be said in fairness that the “second navigation” is no longer a voyage, so the metaphor here should be different. Rather, it is a soaring, vertical takeoff, *Himmelman*, aerobic figure. Or with the opposite orientation, it is a deepening, hike to the roots but still a vertical movement. The Greeks had the word for both – *βαφος*. Such a motion to the concepts of the highest level of abstraction I call signification elevator or lift, and a way of sublimation of universals, and their liberation from all phenomenal presentation is a prescission.

However, the elevator can move downward as well. After reaching every conceivable height, any other traffic will be decreasing, except for the movement on the surface of a celestial globe, i.e., from one universal to the other. This movement gives us a network or system of categories, universal philosophical language.

But for now, it is not about that. Let’s consider the situation of the communicative act, which I call the “third navigation”.

The “third navigation” is a search for understanding, horizontally circled, trying to find a common language with other people. The intention of it is purely sophistical; it is neither object nor *Eidos*, but the subject-person. The main method of the new sophists is Carnegy’s or Bahtin’s dialogue, the convergence of views, peace, approximation. The key words of this dialogue are understanding, meeting, unanimity, corporatism and collectivism, collegiality and community. People need consensus. The purpose of the “third navigation” is not to reach the truth, but to establish *a common cause on the basis of mutual understanding*.

The tasks that need to be addressed in order to achieve this goal are as follows. Firstly, it is necessary to give the discussed phenomenon or object the desired sense by turning the object, which is basically infinite, to relevant sides. During the dis-

cussion the manifold variations are cut off, as well as nuances of meaning, and eventually a generally acceptable invariant of it is established. On the basis of the agreement reached then interpersonal contacts are being established, and finally the common cause is given a start.

Interaction of the subjects, in principle, is primary in relation to verbal communication. At the same time it is a natural extension of it on a new basis. As in general practice for knowledge, so the “hostel” and interactivity of subjects with respect to speech action are the alpha and omega, i.e., the antecedent or premise, base and consequent or effect, action for both. It should be recalled that etymologically, a word “conversation” is nothing more than a “joint life”.

During the “third navigation” the Universum splits into separate “worlds” or pictures of the world, depending on the general acceptance, in the society, of the existence of some bio- psycho- socially relevant phenomena. Ethnic language, traditions, rules and prohibitions, in short, all kinds of socio-cultural determinants, beginning from the outlook to the aesthetic preferences, can serve as a selective organizing principle. In the communicative act of “third navigation” the concept of objectivity is pushed by the concept of intersubjectivity, the truth – by sincerity, the absolute – by relative, the abstract – by concrete, category – by meaning, knowledge – by understanding, semantics – by pragmatics. In the course of communication, the grammatical and real subject, in Aristotle’s parlance, are definitely not the same. The grammatical can substitute for real, as in: Boats were seen running in the sea. Understanding in this case is not the way of adequate cognition; it is a way of being. It is Being narrated, “picture of the world”, scientific, or artistic, in this case it does not matter. The object itself during the third navigation is taken to brackets or screened. “Third navigation” may mix the sacred with the profane. It is a dance of practices and techniques, a chorus of opinions and ensemble of impressions, and the predominant motive is the motive of interest, use or value.

A cognitive claim to truth gives way in the act of the communication = understanding to the desire to be understood. The opposition of the intention of the communicative act in relation to the focus of the classical scientific “first” and the classical metaphysical “second” navigation *on the object itself* in the epistemological Robinsonade is that communicants try to achieve consistent regulatory embeddedness of the item discussed into the scope of, or a picture of, already existing meanings. Incidentally, it can be fully virtual, fiction, fantasy, deceptive and false, etc., meaning, in this area, that not only the phenomenal side hides, shields *Eidos*, and even more, the unknowable *noumenon* and Kantian thing-in-itself, but also the phenomenon can be referenced as merely apparition.

Magnificent examples of such “navigation” are the performance of Ostap Bender by Il’f and Petrov or *Stainless Steel Rat* by Heinlein, which is a rhetorical, artistic, compelling description of a fictional, heavily armed term and dangerous

political force, the response to which is very real and relevant or also the self-generating discourse of "*Helmet of horror*" by V. Pelevin.

There are varieties and actually countless models of the "third navigation". These are undoubtedly general conversation in the style of "small talk"; dispute, discussion and debate; PR-technologies; the pedagogical educational situation; literary text, considered as a continuous remark in a dialogue; in general, any cooperation. Pragmatics as part of semiotics has as its subject the relation of sign and symbol systems to man, and this area is practically infinite.

Thus, postnonclassical philosophy and postmodernism in general can be seen as the absolutization of "third navigation" to the detriment of the first two. Such a situation is open to philosophical criticism.

Today the notion of absolute truth is extremely unfashionable. Therefore absolutization of the Relative looks comic, because postmodernism stands firmly against all kinds of absolutes, and this cognitive situation was already thoroughly analyzed by the ancient skeptics.

Going further, in favor of the triumph of the human sciences it should be said that it, even if premature, is a welcome, at least for the humanities, since we are talking about the inner world of consciousness or the soul of man. At the same time it is *announced* prematurely. True, unlike the natural sciences, the human sciences, as philosophy demands this, learn the ideal by the ideal, that is "the like with the like". Therefore the previously announced rigor, accuracy and productivity of natural science methods seem questionable, and therefore its findings are not indisputable, compared to the "inexact, imprecise and subjective, i.e., arbitrary ways of knowing" applied by humanities that, as advocates of the *so understood* austerity think, threatens the objective truth.

But postmodern loss, and, in the worst case, the abolition of objectivity and object has led, as already mentioned, to the *death of the subject*, when you cannot take for granted either the position of the author of the text, or the opinion of the first or last reader, or even the text itself, as the discourse fades in its interpretations. The postmodern approach makes history into merely tales of Scheherazade, intercultural communication, a game, and any culture, into a carnival. It's interesting, sometimes delightfully so, but *homo ludens*, on hunches and insights of "postmodern classics" themselves, soon will thirst of vacation and work. He is awaited. Objects of nature and culture are waiting for the intellectuals; universals are waiting for philosophers.

What is our prediction about the future, for what comes *after* postmodernism (*post-post-Mo*)? Nominalism, while it is alive and sound, simply cannot spawn its protagonist: *realism*; it's in the nature of these things. The most profound and subtly perceptive "classics of postmodernism" recognize it now.

Hermeneutics, as *verwindend-andenkend* thought, must also interpret the “messages” of science and technology, and even the messages of mass-media system, which represent a sort of distorted synthesis of the cultural tradition and of modern technology. Of course it is not easy to see what a *verwindend* recollection of the “messages” of science and technology would be: the recollection perhaps of a *Weltanschauung*, of a unified view of the world, of the manifold information provided by the natural and human sciences. ...The construction... of such a unified *Weltanschauung* will reveal itself to be very difficult, or even impossible; but the continuity of experience which the hermeneutic act of recollection aims to reconstruct cannot be reached without some sort of unification of the information provided by the sciences. A theoretical or cognitive reconstruction is needed: this may be the distorted recollection of the ancient idea of metaphysics as the *prote philosophia*, the first science.¹

It is worth emphasizing that the situation of postmodernism that has long gone beyond the scope of literary criticism will be logically completed and transform into its “*Anderes*” no sooner nor later than the postmodern cognitive model will receive adequate reflection in this capacity not only in the theory of knowledge / understanding or – broader – in the theory and history of culture, but also in the philosophy of history, which ideologically and methodologically preserves *the basic gno-seological syntagma*. Unfortunately, sociology, for example, has lost it.

¹Gianni Vattimo. *The End of Modernity*. UK, Cambridge University Press, 1994 (first published in 1985). P. 177–178.

It suffices to recall with what respect Roland Barthes, another classic of postmodernism, spoke about historical science in general. Assuming the office of head of the department of literary semiology at the Collège de France, alma mater of the philosophical paradigm being analyzed, he said: “It is joy for me, to bring the first thanks to prof. Michelet, to whom I owe the discovery – at the dawn of my intellectual life – of a privileged position of History among the human sciences”²⁰. It is this discipline that postmodernism served, perhaps, best of all, as an apology of the subjective. It is Philosophy of history, as its subject, that has an absolutely reliable “marina”, the harbor protecting it against “subjectivity without shores”, namely the historiographical base of chronicles, documents, i.e., *sources* themselves. The duality of the attitude to the sources being the ultimate piety (“this is recorded in the annals!!”) and sharp criticism (“but all this is just a chronicle! chronicles are written by people! they are biased, contain errors and deliberate distortions, it is only the interpretation!” etc.) is understandable. However, the persistent search for sources and dispute on their authenticity testifies to the inherent faith of the historian that the original reconstruction of the events of bygone years is quite *possible*.

Now, the pendulum has gone in the opposite direction. Patient pluralism turned into impatient pluralism. Indifferent tolerance via in forced political maneuver and aesthetic longing for a beautiful and lasting social theory turned into intellectual hunger, in demand of a new and serious and at the same time daring crusade *not* for a heap of interpretations but for the truth in the form of a thesis (a simple judgment) or a whole theory of a *single unified basis* of knowledge (including what is social) and being (especially human).

Or for the *bases*? Plural, again?

Or?

The philosophy of history, apparently, is correct regarding the main issue. Considering its subject as a single object, and otherwise being unable to exist, it gives every historian and every philosopher of history a *basso ostinato*, the basic tone, low organ note, allowing, while all delight with all the side topics and henchmen interpretations, to save the almost naive belief that history, in its essence, is *one* [“*einheitlich*”]. “All is one”, recall, is the first philosophical thought, or at least one of the first. Postmodernism is another phase of movement of the basic gnoseological syntagma. Receding into the past, postmodernism bestows us with hope for new heroic projects. After the New Middle Ages a New Renaissance will come.

But what a pity if it will once again not come to Russia.

Or?..

ПОСТМОДЕРНАЯ КАРТИНА БЫТИЯ И ПОЗНАНИЯ

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Аннотация. Постмодернизм, который мы до сих пор называем «эрой», уступает место следующей «эре», которая порой называется «пост-постмодернизм», «after-

²⁰ Roland Barthes. The Act lecture, read at the inauguration of the head of the Department of Literary Semiology at the College de France. Electr. resource: <http://uchcom.botik.ru/libr/cit/b-lect.coi8.html>

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постмодернизм», иногда выступает под маркой «пост-пост-мо», а временами рассматривается как неоренессанс. Автор поддерживает последнюю точку зрения.

Чтобы предстать в этой последней ипостаси, новая парадигма должна во многом противостоять прежнему постмодернизму, как в свое время классическое Возрождение противопоставило себя классическому Средневековью. В настоящей статье классический постмодернизм XX века рассматривается как Новое Средневековье со всеми характерными особенностями классического тысячелетия, намечаются черты грядущего Нового Возрождения.

Ключевые слова: постмодернизм, постнеклассический субъект, номинализм и реализм, ирония, релятивизм, возвращение метафизики.