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**CRISIS OF THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY VALUE SYSTEMS.
TRANSFORMATION OF THE MODERNIST ETHICS: RATIONALITY AND CRITICISM?**

Although social mythology has insisted from the ancient times that there is some eternal struggle between good and evil in the world, it could rather be said that such a struggle is in fact a myth. Those who take the side of evil are in fact very few in human history, and even they must draw on an already existing moral construct to make such a choice. It would be more accurate to say that everyone is fighting for the good, but they understand it in substantially different ways. In order to determine which of the confronting

positions is more “good” than another, an external criterion would be required; transcendence into a meta-position that could be called divine. For centuries people have appealed to this position with absolute certainty, relying on their belief in the good and declaring the opposite position to be evil. Even if there were doubts, they were rather that we could learn this meta-position than that it existed.

The rationalist criticism of the Enlightenment put an end to this hope. Kant’s call to “use one’s own reason” and not to rely on “guardians” who know what the extrinsic absolute moral law is, and his emphasis on the internal basis of morality, which draws its principles exclusively from the conscious freedom of the subject, made the metaphysical criteria for evaluating moral action ephemeral. This has helped acknowledge the plurality of moral positions and the right of the Other to his opinion, has led the culture to the

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possibility of a dialogical state, the principle of intersubjectivity, rational and emotional communication, strengthened the values of humanism and pluralism, opened the way to the recognition of differences of opinion, and moved ethical disputes into a horizontal dimension. Although Enlightenment ethics was eventually criticized for its total rationalism that overlooked emotion and feeling, it did open the way for emotion and feeling to freedom from its former metaphysical slavery.

By the mid-twentieth century, the humankind seemed to realize that it no longer had the right to build rigid systems of distribution of good and evil, to ignore the individual inclinations of individuals, to be inattentive to the multitude of different voices announcing their presence in the world. Rationality was subjected to severe criticism and accused of condoning construction of a rigid system of moral definitions in search of a single criterion of evaluation. In the preface to Deleuze and Guattari's famous work "Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia," which he described as, first, an ethical and, second, a radically anti-fascist work, M. Foucault stated that just as once "Christian moralists sought traces of flesh lurking in the recesses of the soul," the authors of this book "explore the smallest traces of fascism in our bodies."¹

Fascism is understood here in a very broad sense. One can compare this reading to that of S. Bauman in his book "The Relevance of the Holocaust."² Fascism is not aggression, not rallying in the face of the opposite forces, but construction of a complete system that behaves rationally, coherently, under a common leadership, according to a single principle. It is the construction of an intelligent system with a single set of rules, finding the law for it, systematizing, shaping, uprooting the deadwood to arrange a beautiful garden, destroying pests to arrange a coherent and harmonious world, cutting off the superfluous to create a magnificent statue...

Everything that leads to harmony is simultaneously contaminated with this overly rational thought of holistic meaning. The authors of Anti-Oedipus see this danger and try their best to avoid it in their own presentation, making it almost unreadable, disintegrating, torn, as if the "body without organs" of this text is desperately struggling with the rational structure of the text as a coherent organism: "There's an apparent conflict brewing between the machines with desires and the body without organs."³

Critique of the rational, final for the development of the rationalist project of modernist thought, became its internal self-deconstruction. It was willing to admit that the excesses of systematization were a heavy burden and the fault of the rationalist project that had once defeated the conventionality and total rigidity of the traditionalist society. And now it was ready to take humankind to a new, unexplored path, to a new level, where reason would willingly give way to the renewed feeling, bypassing all limitations, now understood and overcome. This was seen as almost a new chance to attain the realm of God, a new, post-secular kingdom of human freedom.⁴

The only disconcerting element of the beautiful post-modernist era was probably the fact that in the economy,

it coincided with an increasing strengthening of the very principle that this new thought was trying to oppose in every way: the principle of capitalist production and consumption that increasingly enslaved human desire and feeling, which in fact was the main subject of the "anti-fascist" criticism by Deleuze and Guattari and other, even more pessimistic postmodernists like J. Baudrillard, who saw absolutely no way out of this manipulative and simulative social dead end. In politics of that time, there was a division of the world into two camps: communist and capitalist. And up to a certain time, it seemed that the existence of the communist camp was a kind of an excess, a false path, a mistake, a misreading of those leftist values that formed the basis of the economic critique of the consumer society, an aberration not meant to exist. They shouldn't have forgotten that the communist project was the very flesh and blood of the modernism and its rational critical reflections, the other side of what became the foundation of consumer society itself, with only minor shifts of emphasis. Nevertheless, they had forgotten.

The fact that Fascism was also only a shift of emphasis in the rationalist principles of the Enlightenment was also ignored. How could the same ideas that lead to humanism and equality end up in the totalitarian dictatorship? It seemed to be a mistake. But the project collapsed. First fascist, then communist. And perhaps in the end it was already clear that the root of the troubles had not even been touched in their destruction, which ultimately led to the complete transformation of all former ideas and values and their mutation into an exact opposite.

Of the three ways of rationalizing the social order generated by critical thought of the modernism, two have shown their propensity to move from the principle of rationality to totalitarian dictatorship. In further transformation, accompanied by the abandonment of the principle of dictatorship, they also abandoned rationality, essentially returning to the old metaphysical beliefs. Thus, fascism, having abandoned its claims to totality, was transformed into traditionalism, trust in archaic values and foundations, while communism, as a real state ideology, came to accord with religious faith. At the same time, the remaining liberal project, with all its pluralistic and anti-systemic sentiments, suddenly transformed, appealing to the prevalence of feeling over rational scheme (the outcome much coveted by anti-fascist and postmodernists), into a new system of confrontation between good and evil, where everything that is not liberal is on the side of "evil," thus transforming this project from recognition of the right of the Other into a rigid dictate.

This dictate is somewhat paradoxical. Recognition of the right of the Other, whatever it may be, and the plurality of voices is the result of the development of only one system of thought: the critical rationality of modernism, which opposed the metaphysics and the traditional way of life. Thus, this recognition as an ideology was imposed from the outside on everyone else. Now the Other, having acquired the imposed right, is forced to "undo" the authority that imposed it in order to assert this right in full. As a result, in essence, we end up with the inevitable dictate of the Other.

The liberal position of recognition turns against its own foundations and must ultimately, in order to ensure its realization, be destroyed and transform into a total assertion of

¹ Делёз Ж., Гваттари Ф. Анти-Эдип: капитализм и шизофрения. Екатеринбург : У-Фактория, 2007. С. 8.

² Бауман З. Актуальность холокоста. М. : Европа, 2010.

³ Делёз Ж., Гваттари Ф. Указ. соч. С. 24.

⁴ See, e.g.: Ваттимо Дж. После христианства. М. : Три квадрата, 2007. С. 65.

extra-liberal, extra-rationalist, extra-critical values (which are, in relation to it, the Others). This is a very precarious position, in which criticism of any irrational fundamentalist beliefs in itself leads to new irrational fundamentalist beliefs, only on a new level. And this is exactly what we get instead of the promised “reign of liberty,” the flourishing of humanism and universal diversity. In essence, the liberal project in the modern world has arrived at the same end as its more totalitarian brethren somewhat earlier: a dictatorship, harsh censorship, a struggle against “vermin” and everything that opposes it (because it stands for evil), a rigid distinction between black and white, a new, quite archaic, system of thought under cover of what remains of the old humanist slogans.

The question is, what went wrong, in all these cases? And in response to this question, there is suspicion. From the Enlightenment onward, the origin of the modernist transformations was rational criticism, a critique of all customs and foundations. It was also the basis of scientific research, breaking through the boundaries of the old worldviews, and of art, which was striving for free expression of human individuality. Nevertheless, all ideological systems that were eventually constructed have used the practical principle of rationality, exclusively to construct new, more reasonable (at a first glance) sets of rules, a new substantive ethical basis for the future society. But it all boiled down to what Deleuze and Guattari suspected with horror in the new world, analyzing with equal suspicion both Marx with his utopia of universal equality and Freud with his domination of the unconscious over conscious (and Foucault amazingly managed to reduce it all to fascism).

In the pursuit of practical results, that which lay at the heart of the whole worldview revolution and which was emphasized by I. Kant was, apparently, successfully and forever forgotten afterwards in the attempts to construct a new beautiful world driven by a free outburst of subjectivity. They have actually forgotten the *critique*. Rationality has always been inherent in man. But critical rationality is the achievement of modernism, through which it secured total domination over all other worldview systems, and also sig-

nificantly humanized people’s perception of the world. Nevertheless, without criticism as it was understood by Kant, which limits the reason’s claim for absolute knowledge, without the constant questioning, weighing, rational discussion in public space between all possible voices of one kind or another, rationality would be nothing but the basis for the most successful construction of a new and ever more perfect system of total control. Yet criticism is so alien to feeling, disposition, emotional response of a traumatized, damaged man, yearning for assertion of his right and receiving it from the new humanistic morality, that it is constantly left out, as if it were some violation of true humanism, a relic of collaborationism with fascists, an inability to take an honest stand. But if we ignore this critical constituent of the modernist project, we will also have to move away from all the humanistic values it asserted.

Back in 2008, when it seemed that the chance of entering the “kingdom of freedom” through strengthening and development of the ideals conceived in the last couple of centuries had not yet been lost, famous Slovenian philosopher S. Žižek in his work “Violence” warned against asserting too explicit and direct action against evil (which itself turns out to be only a disguise of violence exerted by the system), wrote that in today’s world, perhaps the only thing that can save us is theoretical analysis. He recalls the problem posed by J.-P. Sartre in “Existentialism Is a Humanism.” The young man who came to Sartre with a question did not know what to do: to join the Resistance and fight fascism, and thereby abandon and condemn his own mother to death, or to stay with his mother, but betray his homeland’s freedom and the movement against fascism? Žižek says, recalling the famous anecdote about Lenin: “An unseemly third solution to the dilemma would be to advise the young man to tell his mother that he has joined the Resistance, and to tell his friends in the Resistance that he will take care of his mother; while he himself should retreat to a secluded place and pursue sciences...”¹ In 2008, it seemed possible at least as a joke. In today’s world, it seems no longer possible. But it may be more acutely necessary than ever...

¹ Жижек С. О насилии. М. : Европа, 2010. С. 10.