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Ryszard Wraga, *O rewolucji*¹

An interesting but a bit primeval work is a booklet of 1945 unaffectedly entitled *O rewolucji*. Because of its small size it cannot be analyzed by division it for bigger or smaller composition parts. The work is a thought whole, but – what is important – it is not written in line with the western European tradition of objectivity and rationalism but in predictive afflatus terms. The author does not analyze the reality of Europe after the end of World War II but he tells us what he seems to identify himself with. His creed, like in *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego* by Mickiewicz, reflects his own faith and the future of Poland, and maybe the future of the whole world. Wraga's thoughts are not proposals, they are a clear assessment of the past and a vision of the near future.

After this introduction so important for further understanding, let us move to the booklet itself. So, Wraga comes from the obvious for him the conclusion that the European capitalism has been in a stage of agony for a long time, while the American capitalism is an ideological follower of the time because it was born when the capitalism had been already a relic in a social and political sense. The author writes: (...) *that decadent time of capitalism (...) is already completely not creative any more. (...) With its last legs it tries to keep as much as it can and with breakneck concessions it tries to regenerate its old organism.*²

The author draws a conclusion national in color from that premise. He writes: *Poles (...) cannot be condottieres of capitalism, but – as free men – they have to take full part in the worldwide changes leading to the victory of general slogans of the peoples freedom and the man's freedom.*³

Wraga explains immediately what he understands under the terms of the peoples' freedom and the man's freedom. The two terms belong to the socialist thought that (...) *gave human thoughts a vast dynamic of a potential revolution as omni-human and attractive social doctrine.*⁴

According to the writer, his 'potential revolution' could be felt in all Europe, and he uses Lenin's thought that after the revolution in the West wins, the Soviet Russia will lose its position of a socialist leader and will become a backward country again in a Soviet and socialist meaning.

When the political war in Western Europe transfers into a victorious and revolutionary struggle, the revolution will inevitably move also to the Central

¹ Rome 1945, Biblioteka Orła Białego.

² R. Wraga, *O rewolucji*, Rzym 1945, Biblioteka Orła Białego, p. 10.

³ Ibidem, p. 9.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 11.

Europe⁵, that will follow the European resolution, experienced because of the 19th and the 20th-century events.⁶ Admittedly Wraga sees the difficulties referring to the worldwide revolution but he perceives them mainly in a weak theory, as a result of hampering activity by... the USSR and the Comintern.⁷ Author sees in the USSR a distortion of a true socialist revolution, which is a result of skewing the revolutionary ideas by the imperial tradition of Russia. Citing Lev Trocky, Wraga points out that it was not socialism that won in the USSR but capitalism, only that of the state nature and the Russia itself does not carry out the flag of the revolution but it became a reactive element that throttles revolutionary tendencies in the name of party interests understood as class interests. But he adds quickly: *Calling the revolution a reaction I do not intend to deny its positive role as a constructive factor for the vast part of the Eastern Europe and Asia (...) as an intermediate factor in a growing or arousing worldwide revolution.*⁸

Continuing that thought, despite being disappointed by the lack of achievements in a socialist building in the USSR, the author writes: (...) *sheltering with freedom and struggle flags its icy interior, it (i.e. the Soviet Russia – M. Ś.) preserved for the world a flag of revolution, despite hits of the dying capitalism and its bizarre bastards, the flag that waits for another flag bearer.*⁹

In his prophetic afflation the writer predicts not only the victory of the revolution among *bizarre bastards of capitalism* but also its transfer to... the USSR. However, what is important, mainly to (...) *introduce the basic corrections to what had already been created and what it wants to save inflexibility and uncompromisingness.*¹⁰ The author justifies this with a debt of gratitude for Bolshevism and writes that the worldwide revolution (...) *will originate and win only due to that October Revolution.*¹¹

But Russia, that will be affected by the growing revolution, in fact weakens it so that (...) *it will not able to come to its borders and interior to fast.*¹² The Soviet Russia weakened development of the revolutionary thought of its neighboring countries, mostly Poland, by its reactive activity and by (...) *keeping them from those natural transitions in a left direction, which would undoubtedly take place as justified by natural economic and social conditions.*¹³

Wraga saw the coming revolution and reached a high in political journalism. He writes that *the world, Poland and the Polish nation are and for centuries have been connected, goes to the left. Only Russia goes to the right.*¹⁴ His idea of the necessity

⁵ Ibidem, p. 14.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 14.

⁷ Ibidem, p. 15.

⁸ Ibidem, pp. 24–25.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 25.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 25.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 26.

¹² Ibidem, p. 26.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 30.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 30.

of Poland to take part in a worldwide revolution, the author justifies with the Polish fiasco before the September 1939, its *abstractness and a-sociality* and (...) *huge discrepancy between international omni-human slogans and a shallow nationalism that was egoist, narrow and turgid*.¹⁵ The lack of Poles in a revolutionary movement is explained by the author by the ignorance and the sciolism of his generation (i.e. people who were rebuilding the Second Polish Republic): *My generation is so much poor that each remarkable intellect, each character with knowledge, full of content and thought, seem something extraordinary and instead of trust it rises concern and mistrust and instead of friendship jealousy and the need of destruction*.¹⁶

Wraga saw the post-revolutionary Poland clearly before his eyes but warned before inevitable problems and gave at the same time the recommendation to eliminate (...) *in the future the narrow and obstructive nationalist chauvinism, religious, cultural and economic intolerance, massacre tendencies, class exploitation and too much national bureaucracy*.¹⁷

He also claims that revolution in Poland does not, however, have any real premises and instead of the Belvedere assault under red flags, hard reconstruction work would be done instead. Some consolation after that bitter confession seem to be a concept of an ideological fundamentalism, i.e. reversion to the middle European theoreticians like Kautsky, Bauer, Liebknecht, Bernstein, Luksemburg and to the Jewish Bund works in socialist and communist literature.¹⁸

The Polish nation, equipped with the above-mentioned theories, must *defend the classic Marxism*¹⁹. Although Wraga quickly adds that He does not deny (...) *the relative value of Leninism and Stalinism for the Great Russian nationals as well as for several nations of the Eastern Europe and Asia*, however he states (...) *Leninism and Stalinism Remains In contradiction to the interests of the working class of Poland, and primarily - peasants*.²⁰

In the ending part of his booklet the author made some concessions in favour of the Polish chauvinism, which had been criticized by him before: *Revolution in Poland – if not to bring destruction to Poland and the Polish nation – has to be European in the spirit and idea, but Polish in the form and content*.²¹ He does not explain though how to link this Polish in form revolution with the necessity of mentioned earlier reconstruction. Wraga is committed to his ideological affiliation and is not involved in tiring analyses of facts. Due to the Marxist dialectics he could freely combine theses with antitheses, go to Hegelian synthesis, not be troubled by the Aristotle logic.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 33.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 39.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 43.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 46.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 47.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 50.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 54.

To be able to fully understand the content in the relatively small booklet, a few words about the author should be said. Ryszard Wraga was the alias of the Polish Military Capitan, Jerzy Niezbrzycki, who had served between 1921 and 1939 in the II Division of the Polish General Command. He gained recognition there as an expert on the eastern matters and, what is more important, as the chief of the office 'East' in the Intelligence Division in the period 1931–1931 he had influence on the politics of the Second Republic of Poland towards the USSR. His activity in this field was not limited to the work analyses but was visible in journalist works, cited up to these days as an example of the Polish Soviet thought.

After World War II J. Niezbrzycki was working as a consultant for the British and French intelligence, and after he migrated to the USA, also for the CIA. He influenced also Western analytical centres introducing in the West, inter alia, the basic concepts of the Soviet disinformation.

To sum up, J. Niezbrzycki was at the beginning undoubtedly a co-author of the intelligence threat assessments as far as the USSR is concerned. In 1939 these assessments and the concepts by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs caused the 17 September catastrophe. Then he shaped the interpretations of the Soviet reality by the biggest intelligence services of the western world due to his extraordinary intelligence and the knowledge of the Soviet paradise.

To be able to understand the motives of intelligent people, a thorough analysis is needed because the intelligence *ex definition* contains self-reflection which helps to control efficiently the projected pictures. So, in the process of understanding it is necessary to take keen senses to weaknesses coming from alcohol, excitement, euphoria, fear or – what important – from the creative ecstasy, which often reveals hidden thoughts of the author. So, we can talk about the psychology of creativity, including a journalistic one, which allow to look into the soul of the writer.

J. Niezbrzycki was undoubtedly an intelligent person, so it is worth to understand how he perceived the reality, using his texts to reconstruct his hierarchy of values. The above cited thoughts by Niezbrzycki, although taken from the booklet are not only a classic manipulation with the use of excerpts taken out of the context which change their meaning. His author, who had been creating the Polish view on the threats from the USSR for more than 10 years, was infamously known for claiming major Jan Żachoń a traitor (which cost Żychoń his life, while he was trying to prove his innocence and patriotism on a battlefield) and for other numerous and brutal accusations before September 1939 and afterwards, when he predicted a Marxist worldwide revolution with, as one may suppose, a great belief.

But, although he was referring to the very intelligent thinkers from the Bund and to Róża Luksemburg, he never cut ties with the much less intellectual October coup, which was called a revolution by the propaganda. Fighters of the coming worldwide revolution were perceived by Niezbrzycki as debtors of the Bolsheviks.

He, indeed, admitted reluctantly that Russia is not a socialist paradise, but – as the text seems to indicate – mainly because it stepped off the revolutionary path.

The author, like Lew Bronszajn, calls Russia a representative of the right reaction and contradicts it to the truly revolutionary Europe. At the same time, his text – even for a moment – does not change from the sermon-style of writing, preached by the passionate preacher burning in his passionate faith in a Marxist utopia.

Such faith, which is acceptable in the case of Marxist writers, artists, factory workers, who joined the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR) after the Second World War en masse, is understandable, even if the assumptions of the ideology are rejected. The grey eminence of the pre-war intelligence can raise justified concern and raise many questions.

Theses by Niezbrzycki provoke thought on considering the accusations by col. Władysław Michniewicz on the alleged cooperation of Niezbrzycki with the Soviets and to think more on the professional and private life of the author. His first wife declared that as one out of the five POW members caught by the Czekists refused categorically the cooperation with them, the second wife was a representative of the ‘white Russia’ working for the CIA, i.e. was a part of the intelligence resource in the Soviet intelligence, even if she did not realize it at that time.

How did Niezbrzycki run the intelligence operations while in Kiev, obviously at the interface with the Russian agents? How could he, as an alleged expert on Russia and expert on the strategic Soviet disinformation, let the government of the Second Republic of Poland believe that the Soviets would stay inactive in case of war between Germany and Poland? Even if the Polish generals were intelligence-ignorant with a limited geopolitical knowledge, it was Niezbrzycki who had been studying the Trust operation for years and who should have known that Russian politics uses huge lies as a tool and that it is never like it is created/like might think.

Naturally, it should be accepted that after WWII, in the atmosphere of a common disappointment among migrants a significant number of people wanted to believe in the Soviet utopia and that could lead to dangerous tendencies and attitudes. The circumstances in which the booklet was written were not known as well, because they could shed some light on him.

Nevertheless, taking all that was written above and based on the text of the booklet, one can claim that the author deeply believed in what he had written, i.e. – trivializing a bit – he was probably a devout fighting Marxist, although rejecting Leninist and Stalinist deviations.

In his text one can find fascination with Lev Trocki and Lenin’s thoughts, particularly from the period of writing his socialist and utopian work *Państwo a rewolucja*.

It is hard to assume though, that the chief of the most important cell in the II Division got the Marxist illumination only during World War II, knowing the terrorist methods of the Russian intelligence, the Comintern parties, the Great Hunger and gulags, mass graves in Katyń, being a witness of the Soviet and German partition of Poland, and knowing the scale and the brutality of repressive measures against Poles, whose only guilt was their nationality.

Niezbrzycki – unlike the artists and writers of the lyric left – was an intelligence officer. He knew (the author remark) the reality of the socialist USSR. He knew it from the stories told by the refugees from the starving Russia, from the reports of officers from the external service and from the reports of services cooperating with the II Division.

For intellectuals like Tuwim, Szymborska and Kapuściński a mix of the fear from the Security Office (UB) and the faith in the utopian socialism by Fourier was probably the key to psychological motives of the apostasy from the ideas of the civilized world. For a high intelligence officer in the USSR who came into contact with the true about the paranoid brutality of the Soviet regime, there is no such explanation.

Undoubtedly intelligent analyst like Niezbrzycki, could not suddenly convince himself – even because of his migrant loneliness and disappointment of his life lost due to geopolitical circumstances – that social Marxism with the mass graves, the hunger and disdain for an individual is a solution to the world.

From the psychological perspective people who have true information are not able to accept lies, even if they praise them publicly. It is different with people who believe in something deeply. In this case we deal with the mechanism of cognitive dissonance reduction, that makes the people to re-interpret facts, to seek evasions and to build complicated justifications only to keep the faith.

An example of such phenomenon referring to the Marxist quasi-religion was the Western left, which had been making juggling acts for decades not to confirm that the admired Marxism had reduced the developed societies to ancient Asia satrapies. Making it simpler: if anyone had believed in the Marxist utopia before it became a nomenclature, gulag and mass executions, could have defended the faith using the inborn properties of the human brain. But somebody who saw the crimes could not become its admirer. The proof of the utopian nature of the ideology was a mass dash of the people from the territories taken by the Red Army even despite a mass propaganda of the new better world.

The results of the cognitive psychology are clear-cut, you can believe in a lie until it appears to be a lie. So we can risk a hypothesis that threat assessments for Poland from the USSR before September 1939 were created by a man, who – from different reasons, truly believed that the Bolshevik ideas are an intermediate factor in the growing or arising worldwide revolution.

In this context a basic question should be asked: who you really were, Capt. Niezbrzycki?