

## “Critical positivism” versus “new idealism” in Russia at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century

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The paper focuses on the situation in Russian philosophy at the beginning of the 20th century. Of special interest is the discussion between the so called “critical positivism” and the “new idealism”. The former is represented by A. A. Bogdanov, P. S. Juškevič, V. A. Bazarov and Ja. A. Berman; the latter is represented by N. A. Berdjajev, S. N. Bulgakov, P. A. Florenskij and others. In a first step, I reconstruct this discussion on the basis of the collected works “Problems of idealism” (1902) and “Landmarks” (1909) from the side of the idealists, and “Essays of realist world view” (1904), “Essays on Marxist Philosophy” (1908), and “Essays on philosophy of collectivism” (1909) published by the positivists. I argue that this discussion took on the character of the struggle of worldviews: it was a struggle of the traditional Russian paradigm of philosophical thinking against the new type of philosophizing which was oriented towards the natural sciences. After that, I briefly characterize the theoretical and practical programs of “critical positivism”. Its main theoretical principle is “realism”, and its core practical principle is “idealism”. However, both the concept of “realism” and the concept of “idealism” received a completely new interpretation. Bogdanov’s “empiriomonism”, Juškevič’s “empiriosymbolism” and Bazarov’s philosophy, which developed the ideas of empiriocriticism, can be seen as different modifications of the realizing these key principles. I promote the view that we can consider the so called “third” wave of Russian positivism (Bogdanov, Juškevič, Bazarov) as “neopositivism”, because, within this currency, the transformation from scientific philosophy to theory of science took place. The vivid illustration of this transformation can be seen in Bogdanov’s general theory of organization or “Tectology”.

**Keywords:** idealism, positivism, critical realism, ineopositivism, empiriomonism, empiriosymbolism.

Two idioms characterize the spiritual situation in Russia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely the “Russian Religious-Philosophical Renaissance” and the “Silver Age”. In spite of recent attempts to question these concepts<sup>1</sup>, they still seem relevant since the epoch they mark was an outstanding time for Russian art and science. Nevertheless, these names appear to be irrelevant in the sense that they give a dissemblance to the conflicting nature of this period, and give the illusion of a harmonic cultural development. In reality, “the hitherto unprecedented pluralism of thought” was accompanied by a struggle of different cultural currents. Thus, the situation in philosophy was distinguished by the debates between G. V. Plechanov’s “*materialismus militans*”, A. A. Bogdanov’s (1873–1928),

<sup>1</sup> Pustarnakov claims that “there were neither a ‘Silver Age’ nor a ‘Religious-Philosophical Renaissance’ at the end of 19th and beginning of the 20th century in the sublime sense that is put into these notions” [1, p. 205].

Ja. A. Berman's (1868–1933), P. S. Juškevič's (1873–1945) and V. A. Bazarov's (1874–1939) “critical positivism” as much as “idealismus militans”<sup>2</sup> of different kinds<sup>3</sup>.

The cardinal conflict in philosophy is that between positivism and idealism where the former is an orientation towards scientific knowledge and methodology, and the latter is an approach to the facts and their description and appreciation proceeding from “transcendental and transcendent”<sup>4</sup> assumptions. Jakov Berman represents the typical point of view claiming (1911) that “the struggle between intellectualism and anti-intellectualism, positivism and idealism forms the principal content of the universal evolution of philosophy” [5, p. 3]. The contemporaries estimated this contest depending on what intellectual party they belonged to. Idealist Nikolai Berdiaev was convinced that “among the Russian intelligentsia, the exceptional predominance of materialism and positivism has ended. A cruel struggle was waged to make this metaphysical and religious turn possible” [6, p. 8]. Positivist Pavel Juškevič argued the opposite: “Humankind is going toward positivism — this is the line of development which is clear to any observer” [3, p. 208]. Neo-kantianist Boris Jakovenko took a neutral position declaring: “Russian Philosophy of the last 50 years can be described with the words: a positivist world view. Meanwhile, along with the contemporary awakening of philosophical thought among us, in Russia, a religious motive also rose with new strength. So there is a danger that we will fall from the hands of positivism into the hands of a religious-metaphysical world view” [7, p. 653–655].

The debates between positivists and idealists are documented in many collections of papers. “Problems of idealism” (1902) and “Landmarks” (1909) were followed with “Essays on the realist world view” (1904), “Essays on Marxist Philosophy” (1908), and “Essays on the philosophy of collectivism” (1909) published by Alexander Bogdanov and his adherents. Careful analysis of these publications permits one to reconstruct the most important topics, the peculiarities of their formulation and the possible resolutions to the complex problems that were touched upon. Until now there has been no objective analysis of these positions. While the new idealism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has traditionally been evaluated as an outstanding achievement of Russian culture, “Marxist positivism” is negatively judged. In contrast to the “significant and developing Role” of idealism, Russian positivism is seen as its antidote, as a “positivist deadlock” [4, p. 187, 190]. This perception should be corrected regarding the role of critical positivism in the history of ideas in Russia. I'll be focusing on some positive aspects of this positivism in my paper.

### **“Problems of idealism” versus “Essays of a realist world view”**

Russian historiography has already connected these two publications with each other. Ivanov-Razumnik noted: “The epigones of Marxism answered the collection of papers ‘Problems of idealism’ with their book ‘Essays of a realist world view’” (1903) [4, p. 192–193]<sup>5</sup>. If not bearing in mind the disparaging tone of this sentence concerning the positivists, it points out the basic fact constituting the polemic spirit of the new

<sup>2</sup> This notion belongs to V. A. Bazarov [2, p. 152].

<sup>3</sup> Juškevič characterizes the situation as follows: “We have already Vjač. Ivanov's and G. Čulkov's mystical anarchism, N. Losskij's mystical empiricism, N. Berdjaev's mystical realism, Mr. Merežkovskij's and Filosofov's special ‘mystical’ syndicalism — not to mention the other forms of ‘mysticism’ not obliged to create a sonorous name for themselves” [3, p. 1].

<sup>4</sup> This notion belongs to Ivanov-Razumnik: [4, p. 187].

<sup>5</sup> Compare [8, p. 202].

philosophical epoch: publishing works of two very different, opposite philosophical currents. The introductions to both books confirm the emergence of two discursive parties in confrontation. The editor of “Problems of idealism”, P.I. Novgorodcev, validated positivism as a system that “is not only too narrow in its perspectives but, moreover, it is dogmatic as well, and it lacks firm foundations and critical caution” [9, p. 235]. He proclaimed the “rise of the contemporary idealist movement” [9, p. 236]. From their side, the editors of “Essays of realist world view” reproached the new idealists for their “metaphysically sick thinking” and opposed it with their own “theoretical realism” based on a wide positivist platform [10, p. v].

The problem of justifying theoretical and practical judgments was central in the polemics between the representatives of this two opposing positions. The idealists strived to understand the “*absolute truth*” about nature as well as morality, law, state, and progress. They sought for an *ideal scale* to measure social reality. The positivists aspired to justify the temporary content of life and looked for immanent but probably meager *relative* laws and norms. These general presuppositions determined their mutual criticism.

The idealists attacked the positivist approach in the human and social sciences including sociology, jurisprudence, history, and ethics. They confronted the established historicism of these disciplines with a normative-formal methodology that rejected the positivist ideals of a “pure description of facts” and a genetic casual explanation, and returned to the traditional metaphysical question of the nature of things, i.e. to a speculative understanding of being. Thus, P.I. Novgorodcev saw the goal of jurisprudence not in an “explaining the origins of a legal theory through the natural development of legal institutions, but in establishing moral requirements that prescribe the ideal paths of development. The aim consists not in an explanation, but in an appraisal of the independent phenomena, and how these phenomena evolved in the past and will evolve in future.” [11, p. 526–527] According to him, “a utopian theory can be more far-seeing than a sober practice” [11, p. 535]. B. A. Kistjakovskij criticized the positivist “Russian Sociological School” represented by N. K. Mihajlovskij und N. I. Kareev. Like Novgorodcev, he contrasted empirical investigations of this school with a “necessity and duty”, claiming that “we are striving to achieve our ideals not because they are possible, but because our conscious of duty imperatively demands from us and our associates their realization” [12, p. 684].

The main issue of “Problems of idealism” is an ethical problem. The criticism of hedonist and utilitarian conceptions of ethics is accompanied here with the working out of a normative scale for analysis of a social reality. Three articles should be noted. S. Bulgakov advanced his theory of progress, which was understood not “as a law of historic development, but as a moral task <...>, not being, but an absolute duty”. According to him, progress is a “realization of goodness” [13, p. 279]. N. A. Berdjajev’s article examined the “ethical problem underlying philosophical idealism” [14, p. 341]. He advocated the ideal person in opposition to an empirical human being. His definition of a person is not a description of a real individual, but a set of normative standards that cannot be, in fact, realized. S. L. Frank synthesized Kantianism and Nietzscheanism in his ethical theory. The architectonic of his theory is a controversy between altruism — “love of neighbors” — and egoism — “love of the farthest”, namely of the absolute ethical ideal. His dialectics implies that a “love of neighbors” offers a moral ideal, while a “love of the farthest” is a form of realization of this ideal. He defined the ethics of a “love of the farthest” as an “ethics of active heroism” [15, p. 411].

The antipositivist background of this collection of papers is unequivocally expressed in the editors' letter to A. S. Lappo-Danilevskij: "We need a paper which would disclose the discontent regarding Comte's sociological outlook. <...> If you find the opportunity, in addition, at least in two words, to refer to impossibility for positivism to raise and solve a moral problem, we will be thankful for supporting the leitmotiv of our publication" [16, p. 264–265]<sup>6</sup>. Needless to say, Lappo-Danilevskij fulfilled this request.

"Problems of idealism" found, in general, a positive response among the contemporary public. Ivanov-Razumnik proclaimed optimistically that the publication of this book was an "event in the history of development of Russian thought "as much as it opened "a new period in the evolution of Russian intelligentsia" [4, p. 187, 190]. In my view, the importance of the idealists' manifest did not advance philosophy at whole, but it merely formed a public consciousness, which had been looking for new landmarks<sup>7</sup>. The authors constructed an ideal, a self-defining individual as a criterion for social practice. "The twelve apostles"<sup>8</sup> of this new philosophical current offered the "metaphysical individualism" to those members of society who were experiencing a so-called "metaphysical need"<sup>9</sup>. This "metaphysical individualism" tried to solve the problems of intercourse between being and what should be, historical reality and an absolute ideal from the perspective of a noumenal, autonomous and orthodox Christian subject. It tried to connect religion, metaphysics and positive science while attempting to place a permanently changing reality into ahistorically ideal moulds. This approach can be described as a *utopia of romantic idealism*<sup>10</sup>. In my view, the positive aspect of this philosophical program appears to be the fact that a necessary consequence of the ethical individualism is political liberalism. According to the latter, the antagonism between individual and society can be removed by enhancing the *conditio humana*, i.e. establishing social conditions for the free development of the person.

The "orthodox Marxists"<sup>11</sup> and the positivists<sup>12</sup> sharply criticized the idealists' attempt to give a religious-metaphysical basis to ethics and politics. Struggling to influence the debate, Bogdanov and his adherents published "Essays of realist world view" that embraced a wide spectrum of problems including the theory of knowledge (S. Suvorov, V. Bazarov), ethics (V. Bazarov), aesthetics (A. Lunačarsky) as well as agrarian questions (P. Maslov, P. Rumjancev) and theory of literature (V. Šuljatikov, B. Friče). M. A. Kolerov characterized this book as "an original encyclopedia of orthodoxy" [8, p. 202]. Indeed, it is an encyclopedia not of the "orthodoxy" but rather of a position identified by its representatives as a "critical positivism".

Three different variants of the Russian "critical positivism" are represented in "Essays of realist world view": Bogdanov's empiriomonism, Jushkevich's empiriosymbolism, and

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<sup>6</sup> Here cited [8, p. 171].

<sup>7</sup> Compare: P. B. Struve wrote on this collection of papers that it "doesn't drive an absolutely new channel of thought" [17, p. 340]. Ivanov-Razumnik admitted that in this book "the old ideals received a new fulcrum, they received slightly different form and changed their centre of gravity" [4, p. 190].

<sup>8</sup> See Ivanov-Razumnik, [4, p. 193]. There are twelve authors in "Problems of idealism".

<sup>9</sup> This expression belongs to Struve [17, p. 332, 338].

<sup>10</sup> Compare: Ivanov-Razumnik: "this return to 'utopianism' is one of the achievements of 'idealism' and a reaction to the fatalist world view of a son of the 1890s" [4, p. 200].

<sup>11</sup> For example, L. Axel'rod, "O problemah idealizma". St. Petersburg. 1905 and "Na rubeže". St. Petersburg. 1905.

<sup>12</sup> See reviews in the newspapers for 1903 in particular *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*. Vol. 67 and *Novyj put'*. Vol. 10, vol. 12.

Bazarov's empiriocriticism. These theories shared a common origin in Comte's as well as R. Avenarius' and E. Mach's positivism combined with Marxism, Neo-Kantianism, and the achievements of particular sciences. They focus on an epistemology which aspired to develop a "general theory of being" in the form of a "world order that was homogeneous and conforming to the law" on the basis of "unity of the knowable" and "unity of the ways of cognition" [18, p. 15]. They orientated themselves toward natural sciences, aspired to work out a "scientific philosophy", and to redefine philosophical concepts according to both the experimental character of modern science and its methodological functionalism (or constructivism), as well as its theoretical dynamism. They denied all forms of ontological monism including materialism and idealism, and proposed instead a *methodological monism* in form of functionalism. According to functionalism, being appears to be a bunch of hypothetical and verifiable laws; it is a mere *model of reality* corresponding with a current state of knowledge. They opposed the "authoritarian metaphysics of the absolute" [19, p. 188ff] with its idea of one absolute truth. Conversely, they stressed the epistemological *relativity* of concepts, laws and theories and pointed out the *normative character* of scientific cognition depending both on "habits of thinking" [19, p. 28] and conditions of a practical and scientific life. They searched for a *universal methodology* that would allow a complete cognition of the world and a planned control over the totality of elements of the world process. This should be not simply a theoretical formula in Laplace's sense but a practical one as well. The Russian "critical positivism" proclaimed the unity of two principles: "theoretical realism" and "practical idealism" [20, p. vi]. The first describes what is, the second rather what should be. Positivism made epistemology a central discipline since it could explain a logical constitution of the world and substantiate social practice on the basis of science and philosophy during a period of a cardinal social transformation. Thus, Russian "critical positivism" demonstrates typical *constructivism* and *pragmatism* concerning knowledge: epistemological theory should become an instrument for reorganizing society.

The analysis of "Essays of realist world view" shows that, consequently, the Russian "critical positivism" tried to apply realistic principles to all areas of culture. It attempted to ground the validity of human knowledge and the correctness of human actions on a metaphysically free basis. According to Juškevič, positivism is capable of overcoming both "restrictions of logicism (rationalism)" and "restrictions of mythologism" (religion, metaphysics) [21, p. v]. It provides "defetishising and symbolizing of the affective individual and collective life as well" [3, p. 209]. It is an indicator of a "world view of an adult man" [*ibid*] and the "Europeanization of Russian life" [*ibid*, p. 81] in an intellectual sphere.

### "Landmarks" versus "Essays on philosophy of collectivism"

The defeat of the Revolution of 1905 and the loss of the Russian-Japanese war changed Russia's social atmosphere. Pessimism emerged from political and moral crisis in the form of emigration, suicide, escapism, and political radicalism. Juškevič described the spiritual situation of that time as follows: "Recently, the ideological axis has shifted noticeably to the 'right'. In philosophy, history, biology and in exact natural sciences — everywhere idealistic and theological conceptions grow and strengthen again. [...] The huge idealistic wave is drawing near to us now. [...] Mysticism has become, to some extent, a universal category of a modern consciousness." [*Ibid*, p. 1] This tendency touched the "new Russian



idealists” as well. Their “regressive evolution” [4, p.200] can be observed in such newspapers as “The new way” (*Novyj put’*) and “Questions of life” (*Voprosy žizni*). Its culmination is a collection of papers “Landmarks” (*Vekhi*).

Conscience-stricken by the defeat of the “revolution of intelligentsia” [22, p.25], the authors of “Vekhi” subjected the intelligentsia to severe criticism. They claimed that it lacked religiosity (Struve, Frank), general education (Berdjaev, Izgoev), and legal consciousness (Kistjakovskij), as well as it retained false rationalist ideals (Berdjaev, Bulgakov, Geršenson, Frank). Its leanings were toward positivism (Berdjaev, Bulgakov, Frank), nihilism, and a revolutionary spirit (Frank).

The *Vekhi*-authors focused their criticism on postivism. It was reproached for its “catholic psychology”, i.e. for its universalism, and its “animosity towards the idealist and religious-mystical currents” including the “original Russian philosophy” [23, p.7]. Additionally, positivism provided theoretical grounds for the “religion of an absolute embodiment of folk happiness” and justified the “revolutionary socialism”. Positivism was seen as a “mechanical-rationalistic theory of happiness” [24, p.190–191]. According to *Vekhi*’s authors, the danger of positivism consisted in its relativist temporary “human” ideals, which had replaced the transcendental absolute values.

The idealists’ criticism of positivism in “*Vekhi*” was connected with the fear that a social dynamism would threaten the Orthodox-Christian values and the traditional social structures based on Christian commandments. The “ethical individualism” propagated in “Problems of individualism” converted by this time into an escapism demanding “Christian heroism” instead of political activity, self-perfection and “service to the ideal values” instead of “service to the people” [24, p.184–185]. The idealists affirmed the “religious nature of the Russian intelligentsia” [22, p.68]. They were convinced that “positivism as *weltanschauung* is impossible in a normal spiritual life” [25, p.82]. V.Bazarov characterized this new state of idealism as a “shortage of positivist content” that illustrated the “objective impotence of the religious-nationalistic consciousness facing a modern reality” and an “advocacy of the religious imperialism” [2, p.186-187]. It is obvious that the new conservative program of the idealists had Slavophile roots. It reproduced the old mythology about the specific historic path of Russia connected with restructuring Russian culture on basis of Orthodoxy and isolationism. That is why Bazarov defined the position of “*Vekhi*” as a “Slavophile tribunal of world culture” [26, p.66].

The “regressive utopia” of the idealists can be contrasted with the “*progressive utopia*” of “critical positivism”. The ideas of the latter can be reconstructed from the newspapers “Education” (*Obrazovanie*) and “Truth” (*Pravda*) (1905–1909) as well as a collection of papers “Essays on the philosophy of collectivism”. These essays criticize the idealistic position and reflect on possible ways out of the political crisis<sup>13</sup>. It represents the position of those who wanted to live without an authoritarian patriarchal state and who connected Russia’s future with integration into the European system of values. *Collectivism* is named by the editors of this publication as a way of solving social problems. It is defined as a “philosophy of work and unity, a theory of social activity and active sociality” [28, p.6]. From this definition it follows that the solution of all individual human problems depends on the solution of social problems. Collectivism conceived as the essence of socialism, it should, on the one hand, create the conditions for true and adequate knowledge and, on

<sup>13</sup> Lunačarskij described this collection of papers as a reaction “towards the spreading of the idealistic infection among the intelligentsia” [27, p.274].

the other hand, it should connect the individual and society, law and economy, as well as national welfare and rational politics. The idealists' tendency to move "from socialism to individualism" can be opposed with the consequent orientation of positivism towards socialist ideals "combining the interests of individual development with the interests of development of the species — humankind" [27, p. 291].

The positivists' social optimism, in contrast to the social pessimism of the idealists, was based on the faith that the developing working class would be a bearer of a collectivist ideology. For the positivists, the proletariat symbolized the tendency toward a rising organization and rationality of a social life. It creates conditions under which the socialist reorganization of society could be possible. The aim of socialism was the establishing of social order making a free personality possible. The achievement of this goal implies, in its turn, the development of a free personality. Thus, not a "contemporary man isolated and striving toward isolation" [29, p. 373], but an active member of society is who has the ability to contribute to a social melioration. The positivists tried to advance a new ethics according to the "principle of an active progress" [27, p. 239].

Summing up, the progressive utopia of the "critical positivism" is distinguished through the "pathos of creative work" [30, p. 217] which can be opposed to the "troubled depression"<sup>14</sup> of the idealists. This positive attitude toward social reality can be explained with the positivists' hope for the future reconstruction of the contemporary structures of a Russian society caused with its all-sided modernizing.

Comparing these two programs, it is evident that they express absolutely different states of mind. As Gor'kij noticed, "the 80s outlined three lines for the self-definition of the intelligentsia. These are nation, cultural enlightenment and personal self-perfection." [29, p. 378] Applying these words to the polemics of 1909 between the idealists and positivists, one can say that the former choose "self-perfection" and the latter the "nation".

Diverse tactics were guided by different strategies that could be juxtaposed as a confrontation between the "Middle Ages" and "Enlightenment". Referring to statements of the historical actors can legitimate this contraposition. Thus, Bogdanov published the review of "Problems of idealism" in the newspaper *Obrazovanie* in 1903 under the title "The New Middle Ages" ("*Novoe srednevekovje*") [31]. Bulgakov claimed that positivism was a direct product of Enlightenment [22, p. 34]. However not these historical facts but, primarily, the analysis of the content of these two programs confirms my claim. In case of the positivism there is its trust in human reason, its social engagement and its active character. The idealistic point of view is skeptical, anti-scientific, anti-rationalist, religious, mystical, and eschatological. Positivism tried to answer to the principle questions about the relationship between industrial and political revolution, social and individual emancipation proceeding from the scientific and experimental platform; idealists held onto familiar ethical-religious models. The positivists were convinced that Russian society needed economical and political modernization; the idealists suggested to return to the old social-cultural identity under the government of the Orthodox Church. The former symbolized the break toward modernity, the latter the restoration of a traditional order of life.

As we know, both "critical positivism" and the "new Russian idealism" have a very short history having been defeated by Plekhanov and Lenin's Marxism. While idealism is now included as part of Russian spiritual legacy, the rehabilitation of the intellectual

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<sup>14</sup> This notion belongs to Gor'kij: [29, p. 364].

legacy of Russian “critical positivism” is still on the agenda. The importance of this rehabilitation involves several facets: first, it must be shown that, except of the Russian idealism, there was another philosophical current that attempted to prevent the coming Bolshevism. Hence the ideological struggle between idealism and positivism at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can no longer be considered as the only struggle of the Russian religious philosophy against the Russian Marxism as it is widely considered. The expression “Russian Marxism” must be exactly determined: it was a complex phenomenon within which an “orthodox Marxism” (Plechanov, Lenin) and a “critical positivism” were counteragents. The latter contributed a lot to the struggle against Bolshevism. Second, “critical positivism” worked out a progressive philosophical discourse oriented toward a science and correlating with the contemporary philosophical developments in Western Europe. This kind of discourse was unusual and alien for the traditional Russian metaphysical thinking. For this reason, critical positivism can be adequately appreciated not in comparison with the ideas of Russian religious philosophy, but rather in comparison with the modern philosophical theories. On this way, it appears as having a great theoretical potential. Therefore, some words must be said about this way of thinking.

### Theoretical program of the “critical” positivism

It is usually considered that Russian positive philosophy went through two periods. They are called the Comtean positivism and “Machism” (to which the followers of Ernst Mach’s and Richard Avenarius’s empiriocriticism pertain) [31–32]<sup>15</sup>. I prefer to speak about “dogmatic” and “critical”<sup>16</sup> positivism in sense of “following the tradition” and “innovative”. Moreover it is overlooked that one can speak about a *third* positivist period in Russia — *neopositivism* — represented not with a positive philosophy, but with a scientific theory — with Bogdanov’s “theory of organization”<sup>17</sup>.

The traditional positivist ideology includes theoretical and practical aspects. *The theoretical core* of positivism is “realism”. It is epistemology based upon belief in universal laws, prediction and the legitimating of theories through the process of verification (or falsification). Positivism searches for rigorous, complete explanations of events; it does not differentiate between social and natural reality regarding their cognition; it emphasizes the universal methodology on the model of natural sciences; it tends to materialism or naturalism; it despises ontology; it insists on the absolute separation of facts and values.

*The practical core* of positivism is “idealism”. It is a special theory of social action aiming at the working-out of a scientific worldview and accepting all possible forms of public education and propaganda to achieve it. Thus instead of a contemplative approach positivism insists on a social activity.

Russian “critical” positivism in all its variants — Jushkevich’s empiriosymbolism, Bazarov’s empiriocriticism, Bogdanov’s empiriomonism and others — shares this general view. The most famous product of Russian positivistic thought is Alexander Bogdanov’s

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<sup>15</sup> In principle, Soviet researchers follow Zen’kovskij’s classification, which is more detailed: [33].

<sup>16</sup> This name was proposed by the representatives of this kind of positivism: Sergey Suvorov: [34, p. 11] and Alexander Bogdanov: [35, p. 12].

<sup>17</sup> The analogy is, for example, the Vienna Circle’s logical positivism that focuses on the semantic analysis of scientific utterances.



“theory of the organization” or “Tectology”<sup>18</sup>. Bogdanov concentrates on systems theory as a universal science that describes the “organization of things, humanity, and ideas”. Tectology is primarily concerned with discovering the formal unity of the world, the unity of forms and methods of the organization of inorganic, organic and social levels of life as much as the setting of general laws of the organization. It does not describe and explains details of isolated phenomena, but researches into complex structures taken in their totality and interactions with each other. That is why Bogdanov’s new science does not make any sharp division into branches and disciplines. Tectology is interdisciplinary; it embraces not only chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics, but also economics, education, cultural building, psychology, medicine, linguistics, sociology, and political science. It is aimed to the organization of social practice.

Tectology is based upon three presumptions: 1) human society, as part of the natural world, can be understood by general scientific methods (the naturalist presumption); 2) a theory of science can contribute to cognition and reconstruction of society as well; 3) pressing social problems result from processes in large social structures rather than from individual characteristics, and their adequate explanation must be macrosociological. Tectology is an exact science having its own basis — collective labor — for verifying the theoretical statements. Its final goal is an instrumental and technical control over nature and society.

Bogdanov’s theory of the organization was supposed to become a proletariat’s weapon in process of social reconstruction from capitalism to socialism. Thus, methodological rules must turn into instructions for social engineering; the building of a socialist society can be implemented by realization of scientific constructive norms. Hence Tectology might provide a connection between the theoretical and practical activity of humans. It had to be implemented into the real practice of social modernization. Bogdanov’s project of tectological reorganization of society was not merely a theoretical vision but a concrete program of action including such spheres as culture, economy, public health, space research. However, the political circumstances made it impossible to realize this program.

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## «Критический позитивизм» против «нового идеализма» в России начала XX века

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Статья посвящена ситуации, сложившейся в философии в России начала XX в. Основное внимание уделяется дискуссии между представителями так называемого критического позитивизма и нового идеализма. Первый связан с именами А. А. Богданова, В. А. Базарова, П. С. Юшкевича и Я. А. Бермана, второй — с именами Н. А. Бердяева, С. Н. Булгакова, П. А. Флоренского и др. В статье сначала реконструируется дискуссия на основании сборников «Проблемы идеализма» (1902) и «Вехи» со стороны идеалистов, и сборников «Очерки реалистического мировоззрения» (1904), «Очерки по философии марксизма» (1908) и «Очерки по философии коллективизма» (1909) со стороны позитивистов. Показывается, что дискуссия эта имела характер борьбы мировоззрений, борьбы традиционной для России парадигмы философского мышления с новым, ориентированным на естественные науки типом философствования. Затем коротко дается характеристика теоретической и практической программы «критического позитивизма». Основной его теоретический принцип — это «реализм», а основной практический принцип — «идеализм». Причем как понятие «реализм», так и понятие «идеализм» получают здесь совершенно новую трактовку. «Эмпириомонизм» Богданова, «эмпириосимволизм» Юшкевича и развивающая идеи эмпириокритицизма философия Базарова предлагают различные варианты реализации этих ключевых принципов. В статье предлагается рассматривать так называемую третью волну российского позитивизма (А. А. Богданов, В. А. Базаров, П. С. Юшкевич) в качестве «неопозитивизма», поскольку в ней осуществлен переход от научной философии к теории науки. Ярким примером этого является «Всеобщая организационная наука» — «Тектология» — Богданова.

*Ключевые слова:* идеализм, позитивизм, критический реализм, неопозитивизм, эмпириомонизм, эмпириосимволизм.

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