

*Parodies of Authority in the  
Soviet Anti-utopias from 1918-1930*

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## Introduction

After the abolition of censorship ensuing from the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian social science fiction of the 1920s was provided with a new perspective for research in literary history. In Russia literary anti-utopias evoked a particular interest of the researchers. “Who read science fiction utopia in 1920s? This is difficult to measure”—writes Richard Stites (Stites 1989: 173). No less difficult is to define how to read utopian and dystopian literature as censorship did not allow to conduct research for decades in the Soviet Union. Russian researchers emphasize the flexibility of the determinants of literary genres of utopia, so the terms anti-utopia and dystopia are used frequently interchangeably. It also happens in publications of eminent authors: Vyacheslav P. Shestakov defined Zamyatin’s novel “We” as “an anti-totalitarian utopia” and even goes a step further: “Utopia of Zamyatin was so a pamphlet on the present, like a warning for the future” (Shestakov 2012: 52, 54). Ambiguous utopia is features in some parts of novels indeed and it was confirmed by Morson, who writes that some of them contain both “Utopian and anti-utopian visions” (Morson 1981: 154).

Today’s distinction between anti-utopia and dystopia had no place in the perspective of the Russian authors from the first half of the twentieth century. There

was, however, a clear conflict between their literary comments on the utopia of authority confronted with utopian ideas of the Bolshevik regime. The concept of utopia or anti-utopia helps to explain the phenomena of political and social issues of Bolshevik revolution (Heller, Nekrich: 1988); therefore, separate studies on the complexities of genres are not conducted too often. According to Aleksandra Lyubimov “anti-utopia serves to verify the socio-political models and debunks the ideological myths (Lyubimov 1994: 95). After the October Revolution, utopian and social influences were expressed mainly in the visual arts. Among the supporters of Bolshevism, the October Revolution instilled utopian faith in the forthcoming communism, which hid the camouflaged waiting for the saviour—the Comforter (Paraclet).

Utopian science fiction of the 1920s as a genre summarized the experiments of the Revolution—or from long before it—and synthesized them into larger pictures of the future. Like slogans, posters, and agitational literature, these stories were signposts and guidebooks for the current march (Stites 1989: 174).

This kind of images of reality, which served for ideological propaganda, were mocked by the authors of anti-utopia.

## Anti-utopia and War Communism

Efim Zozulya, Andrei Marsov, and especially Yevgeny Zamyatin, Mikhail Kozyrev, and Andrei Platonov had the courage, despite censorship and commonly used persecution against opponents of Bolshevism, to write critically about the alleged equality and justice in the first in the world state of the workers’ and peasants’ democracy. In their novels parodies of the authoritarian rule and the enslaved people grew to a kind of contemptuous mimesis. The Russian Revolution inspired by the communist ideology deeply redefined social norms and perverted behaviour patterns. On the ruins of the old world a founding myth of the new Soviet state was created. In the years of War Communism (1918-1921), the positive characters of the novels were revolutionary activists or Red Army soldiers—role models for “the new man”. Red Army soldiers were the main social base for the Revolution and an exemplar of the disciplined society (Bogdanov 1999: 335). They were subject to the military regulations, had to live in the barracks, were given the same uniforms to wear, and in case of desertion were executed. “The Red Army man, it explained, was the hero in the battle

to win back *pravda* for the people. The resonance of »red star« thus shifted from a rational to a religious-mythic tale of good and evil” (Stites 1989: 85).

At the time of War Communism, the fundamental aim of Lenin and Trotsky was to impose ironclad principles of the barracks discipline on the whole nation. “The Workers’-Peasants’ Red Army produced strictly authoritarian structures” (Bogdanov 1999: 335) out of politically shaped soldiers, who constituted the largest consumer group which was fully controlled by the Bolshevik authorities. On 9 May 1918, the decree for general mobilization of workers and peasants was issued. It obligated them to contribute to the fight against counterrevolution, and in June of the following year the mobilization was extended to include unions and supervisory personnel. The Bolshevik authorities had the right to dispose of workers at their own discretion. Absenteeism was regarded as desertion, and being late to work meant sabotage. In dystopia *We*, Yevgeny Zamyatin presents the scene of a raid by three Chekists carrying out a random house search. The fear of the secret police engulfed the whole Soviet society especially when Bolshevik regime intensified the dekulakization and deportations in 1932-1933 (Heller and Nekrich: 1988: 238). The foundation of the Bolshevik Revolution fell apart in the mid-thirties as a result of widespread terror, whose victims were also old revolutionaries. “Bolshevik party is dead, and no force will resurrect it”—Trotsky summed up the “betrayal of revolutionary” ideals after the murder of Kirov and the liquidation of political factions (Trotsky 2004: 79).

The Bolshevik system of class struggle enforced the utopian schematic order of the society. At the same time, there also took place substantial ideological, aesthetic, and political transformation within literary circles, i.e. from the state of relative independence in the 1920s into absolute obedience through the act of approval of socialist realism and the mandatory oath of allegiance to the Soviet Union in 1934. In response, some writers reduced their literary activity, others were forced to emigrate, but the majority were subordinated by the power of the predominant standards. Anti-utopian literature from the years 1918-1930 was a response of merely few authors to the propaganda campaigns by Proletkult, which were intended to cover up tragic consequences of the Revolution. “The Soviet Proletkul’t was not a specifically literary movement, but in 1920 it inspired the formation of a group of workers, known as Kuznitsa (The Forge), which issued a manifesto intended to be “The Red Flag of Proletarian Art”. This group convened what was eventually to become the permanent Rossiiskaia Assotsiatsiia Proletarskikh Pisatelei (RAPP, All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers)” (Morgan, 2001: 2108).

People resistant to the authorities fell victim to repressions, so writers started to read aloud their works to small circles of friends. So did Zamyatin, Kozyrev, and Platonov, whose anti-utopias and dystopias are today monumental testimonies to the period; however, dystopia, a literary genre which describes the worst state of life conditions, emerged as the most distinctive in the evocative novels of Zozulya, in which the courage to confront with terror had a negative impact on the opinions of authority about their author. Among the Soviet authors writing in the 1920s and 1930s there is no division between utopian enthusiasts, or even sycophants, and anti-utopian mockers, as any type of deliberation of the social science fiction genre and the contemporary politics inevitably led to a conflict with the authorities. Alexander Chayanov, Vadim Nikolsky, Vivian Itin and Mikhail Kozyrev were shot. Viktor A. Goncharov and Andrei Marsov mysteriously disappeared. Efim Zozulya, Yakov Okunev, Alexander Belyaev, Yevgeny Zamyatin, Yan Larri and Andrei Platonov were targets of more lenient pressure, like publication bans, imprisonment, and persecution of family members. On the assumption that there is lack of the above mentioned division it should be noted that the anti-utopias of that period are not parodies of literary utopias, as asserted Saul Morson (Morson 1981: 115-116), but they are parodies of social deformities of the Bolshevik system.

### Anti-utopian Criticism and Literary Dystopias

The first part of *Golden Little Book* by Thomas More is comprised of a critical analysis of the social relations in England under Henry VIII. There is a certain similarity between the process of enclosure in Henry VIII's times, which meant mass termination of tenancy agreements with English peasants, and the brutal collectivization of the agricultural sector in the Stalin Era with meant ousting the *kulaks* from their farms. The second part of the *Golden Little Book* is a metaphor for the world expected, in which social justice comes from equal material and legal status. Examples from reality as well as its allegories and metaphors are the categories helpful in distinguishing between utopias, anti-utopias, and social dystopias. While the Bolshevik utopias wanted to dazzle the reader with the rationally ordered world in terms of class consciousness and historical dialectic, the anti-utopias and dystopias questioned that order from the perspective of a single man. The authors of the latter genres used two stylistic strategies. Some of them, in order to confuse vigilant censors and for their

own safety, created a parabolic picture of reality, masking it with allegories and metaphors, as Zozulya, Itin, Marsov and Zamyatin did. Others, like Kozyrev and Platonov, referred to reality, but clearly siding with opponents of Bolshevism.

In 1918, during the Russian Civil War, Efim Zozulya published a short parabolic novel titled *The Doom of Principal City*, which provided associations with the dictatorship of the proletariat imposed on the Russian people. The novel tells about the invasion of enemies on the “Principal City”, which can be perceived as a parabola of the Bolshevik Coup. After the surrender of the corrupt army, the sky over the defenceless city is getting covered with propaganda banners and public notices of the conquerors. Shrieking giggle of “machine laughter” (Zozulya 2016: 46) reminds the conquered that they are defeated because of the “detrimental epidemic of optimism” (Zozulya 2016: 47) with which they were infected for many years. The giggle of the machine drives people crazy. Some commit suicide, others torch their houses. The novel’s instrument of torture called “laughing machine laughter” corresponds to the real-life’s satirical Rosta windows printed by the Russian Telegraph Agency ROSTA. They were posters mocking enemies and victims of the Revolution. The invaders start to wield the authority and force the defeated to connect the roofs of their houses and on such structure to build the Upper Town with no access for those living below. To humiliate the vanquished, they found for them the “Association of Love to the Man”, intended for total surveillance, and create the so-called “Humble Government” for fighting the rebels. Residents of the Lower Town, afflicted by poverty and deprived of access to light, decide to blow up the foundations of the upper buildings; however, while their oppressors manage to evacuate shortly before the catastrophe, they themselves die under the piles of debris. In Zozulya’s dystopia, the Upper Town is an allegory of the system of dictatorship, and so called *lishentsy*, i.e. “the deprived” living in the Lower Town, are an equivalent of the class enemies, who lost their basic civil and social rights under the constitution of 1918. In 1919, Efim Zozulya published the dystopia titled *The Dictator: A Story of Ak and Humanity*, which can be seen as a literary commentary on the anti-Soviet poster “Peace and Freedom in Sovdepiya”, which was created in the Kharkiv branch of the propaganda agency working for Anton Denikin’s counter-revolutionary army. The Tamerlane’s mounds of human skulls are a well-known historic example and established symbol of war atrocities. This motif appears in the poster by an anonymous author that depicts an execution in the Kremlin dungeons watched from the height by a monster with Leon Trotsky’s

face. On 26 June 1918, Lenin approved introduction of the Red Terror. This campaign of mass killing was designed to be the method for increasing the pace of establishing communism. Literary scholar Dmitry Likhachov, who in 1918-1919 lived near the Peter and Paul Fortress, noted that just to open the window at night was enough to hear shots from pistols or machine-gun rattle from behind the walls (Likhachov 1997: 153). The killings were systematic and executed in accordance with the adopted doctrine explained by Cheka deputy director, Martin Latsis, who claimed that: "We are not waging war against individuals. We are exterminating the bourgeoisie as a class" (Pringle 2006: 48).

Zozulya wrote a devilish parody on the utopian Bolshevik eugenics aiming to cleanse the world of "human trash". Comrade Ak, the eponymous character of the novel, signs a decree ordering all citizens to appear with their families before the Court of Supreme Decisions to undergo an examination to obtain a certificate for life. The decree stipulates that "Human trash that makes it impossible to rebuild life on the principles of justice and happiness must be ruthlessly eliminated" (Zozulya 2009: 202). Crowds of people become horrified and gripped with fear of death. Everyone rushes to escape, but the way is barred by the cordons of soldiers with batons and guns. The survivors hide in their houses, but police officers catch them and take for interrogations. Zozulya focused his attention on human emotions, i.e. on despair of family members being torn apart and on their dramatic begging for life, though in each particular case a ruling is the same—no reasonable claim for life. The report on convicted worker no. 14623 clearly shows that the place of the action of the discussed dystopia is Bolshevik Russia. During the October Revolution, the given worker carried a red flag and was very active in politics; however, later he lost his enthusiasm and gave in to his old habits. It takes one hour for the Court to pass a hundred death sentences. Consistent development of the narrative in a specific direction would expose the author to ideological allegations, so Zozulya ended it with the scene of condemnation of Comrade Ak, who is guilty of genocide.

The White Movement, the Red Terror and the lost war with Poland led the Soviet state to ruin, so in March 1921 Lenin announced the principles of the so called New Economic Policy (NEP). In a remarkably short time, a significant economic recovery took place. Around 500 private publishing houses were established, which supplied the book market with (Mandiel 2011: 181, 207), among others, on 1923 more or less 42.5% of the books in the field of literature (Blium 1993: 179). Relative freedom

of publication made the communist authorities set up in July 1922 the official censorship organ called Glavlit to prevent any ideological contamination from occurring. Writers whose publications were rejected by Glavlit, for the time, could enjoy a certain amount of freedom and participate in privately organised literary meetings, during which they read aloud their works. For example, Yevgeny Zamyatin in such circumstances read aloud fragments of his dystopia *We*. Its structure is based on intertwining two conspiracy themes. The first one is about a sabotage of the orders “lex sexualis” bidding in The One State, committed by a pair of lovers: him—the constructor D 503, and her—the sensual I-330. The second theme tells about an unsuccessful attempt to take over the spacecraft named “Integral” with the intent to overthrow the tyranny of The One State. Zamyatin drew on a journalistic deception that was disseminated by the White Army propaganda, pertaining to the alleged distribution of women who were to sexually satisfy party activists. Rumours about this appeared in February 1918 in Saratov and in a short time they were picked up by the White Army newspapers (Carleton 2005: 10), which combined them with the Marxist idea to abolish the bourgeois family model, the decree of 16 December 1917 on divorces and statements by an advocate of free love, Alexandra Kollontai, to be the instruments of that idea. Futuristic conceptions of sexual liberation were known as soon as before 1917, but a typically utopian affirmation for supposedly scientific adjustments of sexual selection was presented in 1920 by Yakov Okunev, the author of utopian *The Coming World 1923-2123*. However, anti-utopian and parodic texts were published more often. In a dystopia *Leningrad* (1926) Mikhail Kozyrev condemned sexual promiscuity of Bolsheviks. In an anti-utopia *Love in the Fog of the Future* (1924) Andrei Marsov portrayed a tragic fate of Jerry and Donna, who prefer to die rather than to undergo the obligatory scientific procedure of sexual selection.

Anti-utopian writers saw an opportunity to oppose the centralized power in authenticity of feelings and in the traditional model of family. They believed that only out of true love there shall be born a will to revive the old world and its fundamental values. In anti-utopias the protagonist always ends up physically defeated, but not before one manages to expose hypocrisy of the utopian regime. In most works of the social science fiction genre, a feat of technology plays a role of accomplice in the system of coercion. In Zamyatin’s dystopia *We*, The One State reaches a new stage of development thanks to the machine that can remove one’s imagination, and thus one’s free will. In Marsov’s novel the totalitarian system of control, introduced by the Council of Global Reason, is based on the indestructible technology of seeing

through one's thoughts hence potential crime is spotted on time. In dystopias authored by Zamyatin and Marsov there is no trace of the ancient ideologies heritage. It is replaced with blind obedience. The utopian human is mentally and morally degraded due to the submissiveness towards authority, but also because the dependence on technology makes a person mathematically easily recognized. The rebellious I-330 reproaches D 503 for that dependence, saying "numbers crawled over you like lice" (Zamyatin 1952: 153). The scope and effectiveness of the wielded power is to be determined by Integral—"the agitating spacecraft" (Leinwand 1998: 200). Before he joined the conspirators, D 503 writes about the craft that it "will be like a flaming Tamerlane of happiness" (Zamyatin 1952: 79). The mounds of skulls are represented here by the "mounds" of standardized minds. Having gone over to the rebels' side, D 503 still wants to use Integral, but this time to destroy The One State itself. But the Mephi Revolution ends in defeat. After the operation for the removal of his imagination, D 503 writes his last note: "No more delirium, no absurd metaphors, no feelings-only, facts" (Zamyatin 1952: 217).

In that context, a victory of "facts" over feelings means a victory of the totalitarian rule. Anti-utopian novels by Zozulya and Zamyatin were created under the influence of events of War Communism, while the extraordinary anti-utopia *Leningrad* by Mikhail Kozyrev (1892-1942) was written in 1926 against the backdrop of the NEP, at the height of its success (Kozyriev 2014). The style of the latter can be described with the words of Zamyatin, "no absurd metaphors", only facts matter. The author, called the Russian Swift, enjoyed huge popularity in the 1920s. He, like Zamyatin, read aloud fragments of his dystopia to his friends, not suspecting that there are informers among them. The nameless protagonist of *Leningrad*, a worker of the Azov's plant in St. Petersburg, has a rich revolutionary past. In 1913, he gets battered during the May Day demonstration and is taken from the street to the prison hospital. To avoid deportation, or maybe even execution, he yields to persuasion of a fakir who stays in the same hospital, and promises that he will put him into lethargy for a few days and revive him in the cemetery. But the awakening comes after thirty-seven years. Miserable residents of Leningrad that he meets after waking up refrain from giving him any support, as helping beggars is banned. He tries to steal a roll at the bakery but gets caught and arrested. Theft is punishable by up to ten years in prison. Fortunately, he has a worker's card from pre-revolutionary times when he worked in the Novy Azov plant, which saves him from trouble. On seeing the card, the court absolves him of the charge, as the binding class law allows, in special circumstances,

a proletarian to dispose of the property belonging to a member of the bourgeoisie. He is given a carer, who explains to him all the changes that took place after the October Revolution. Thus he learns that the proletariat—the new elite of the society—comprises of former revolutionaries and party activists with their families. Now they enjoy many comforts and privileges allowing them to work only two hours a day. Yet, they are prohibited from getting in touch with the “bloodsuckers”, as the bourgeoisie is called. In exchange for the comforts of life, the proletariat is subjected to close scrutiny by the secret police. Every day till late at night, each of them completes a questionnaire on one’s daily activities broken down into minutes. The questionnaire is then examined by the carer of the relevant residential block, empowered to search particular flats. The rule is: if you have a clean conscience, there is nothing you should worry about. The lowest part of the “new bourgeoisie” class includes also ordinary workers, exploited by the Soviet state to the same extent as they used to be under the Tsarist regime. Thus, they are coerced into sixteen hours of hard physical work a day and into living in terrible conditions, but they do not try to rebel because of the lack of class conscience. Rare cases of law violation by the proletarians result in their demotion to the lower social class. According to the penal code, the bourgeoisie is subject to even heavier penalties, including capital punishment. The awoken from lethargy a proletarian becomes journalists’ favourite overnight. The Soviet authorities grant him a comfortable flat, previously confiscated from a granddaughter of the Tsarist officer, as well as a high pension, a car with a driver, and free meals in the government canteen. He is irritated that the proletarians he meets cannot say a word of their own but cite leaders of the Revolution. And as they do not know quotations relevant to the contemporary state of affairs, they never discuss matters of current politics. Invited by his neighbours for tea, he finds himself in a cluttered living room full of knick-knacks from the previous era, but in a corner of the room, below the golden inscription “Lenin’s area”, there are icons with faces of communist leaders. Even playing cards bear their images.

Mikhail Kozyrev captured the characteristics of the party upstarts, typical of NEP times, and the fact that they covered their conformism with the help of the Marxist phraseology. On the initiative of Lenin, every few years there were purges in the Bolsheviks’ ranks, relieving them of con men, opportunists and careerists. Shortly after the introduction of NEP and following a resolution of the Tenth Congress of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), over 24% of the Party members were deprived of a membership card (*Bol’shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*

1934: 653), and four years later, after the Thirteenth Congress in 1925, the Party was reduced by a further 25% of the members, in order to adopt about million next communists (TSK KPSS 1939: 259). During those purges, the censors allowed to publish satirical comments on the reviving bourgeoisie, the weekly *Krokodil* [*Crocodile*] was leading the way. In the Kozyrev's anti-utopia the parodies of the "new man" emerge, as the ignoramus and the conformist, who submits without any resistance to propaganda manipulation. Widespread hypocrisy and social injustice soon provoke the risen from the dead revolutionary to action. Kozyrev hid name of his literary hero. Anti-utopia Leningrad gives the impression of narrative devoted to presentation way of forming the underground conspiracy. Regime agitators and censors were going to be used for propaganda purposes risen revolutionist as a relic of the past. They created him a false biography in such a way that according to it he was exiled in Siberia several dozen times and sentenced to hang seven times but still each time he managed to escape the pursuers. His protest against the censors' manipulation results in the first conflict with the authorities. A censor patiently explains to him that in the Soviet state anything is better than in the Tsarist regime, so the censors must be more effective too. His personal carer of hero advised him not to worry over the distorted biography so much, because in the world around them apart from the idiots nobody reads books, besides idiots while decent people are impressed only by covers. Soon in the press accusations against him appear. His personal carer reproaches him for addressing topics reserved exclusively for the twenty-five top party leaders, which is breaking the law. He is criticized for not maintaining class vigilance and for being in contact with members of the bourgeoisie which is illegal. Repeated denunciations in the press eventually bring about his demotion to the lower social class, which he welcomes. From now on, he can freely organize revolutionary groups. Unfortunately, there is a traitor among the conspirators and the armed riot scheduled on 1 May 1951 ends with the massacre of the workers. The history has come full circle. The workers again stood up to fight for a better life. Their first defeat was adopted as a boost in the quest for revenge.

## Conclusion

Totalitarian terror, exposed in novels by Zozulya, Zamyatin and Kozyrev, was to be fuelled by the Marxist-Leninist dialectics of class struggle, but in rural Russia with the consistently implemented policy of NEP the class revolution would eventually

come to an end. Yet Stalin added fuel to the flames of the Revolution by deciding that the *kulaks* were a separate social class of exploiters which should be exterminated. The fifteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1927 was said to have re-established serfdom in the country, but the most brutal methods of fighting with villagers within the framework of the collectivization were employed only after the publication of Stalin's article *The Year of the Great Breakthrough* in *Pravda* [Truth] on 7 November 1929. The slogan popularized by propagandists, "Eliminate the *kulaks* as a class", served as justification for the mass murder. Literary equivalents of such propagandists depicted by Platonov use propaganda slogans in various combinations, helplessly citing party leaders and timidly following one another in order to observe political correctness.

In 1929 Platonov wrote the novel *Chevengur*, about a rule of Bolsheviks in a remote village beyond the Urals. The village Chevengur is a microcosm of revolutionary Russia. A small group of people pretending to be communists, in fact local idlers and nitwits, confident of validity of their beliefs, decided to round up all people belonging to all the class enemies in the market square, including former shop assistants and widows of the expelled bourgeoisie and kulaks. Then, they are clubbed to death, shot, or driven away. In January and February 1930, party activists with the help of the army and the NKVD forced sixty million peasants to join collective farms. The eradication of the "kulaks" became one of the main themes of the anti-utopia *The Foundation Pit* written by Andrei Platonov in the same year. On establishing the kolkhoz "General Line", proletarian activists pull frightened opponents of the collectivization from their houses and kill most of them on the spot. The rest of the victims are floated on a kulak's raft down the river. The scale of crimes committed during the collectivization was so great that on 2 March 1930 Stalin published in *Pravda* the article *Dizzy with Success*, in which he condemned overzealous party activists. Soon they were accused of working in favour of enemies of the Soviet Union and being Trotskyist spies. A parody of Stalin's belated justice is showed by Platonov in his dystopia *Chevengur* (1930), in which the county authorities send army to the place of where the *kulaks* were massacred of the *kulaks* on assignment to bring lawlessness of the local activists to an end. Discussed here examples of anti-utopian literature provide parodic portrayals of tragic people devastated by the dogma of interclass hatred, but mostly of people ignorant of their situation, deprived of family and religion. To accomplish the ideological transformation, the all-embracing desacralization of the Soviet society was indispensable. Before the Revolution, Bogdanov, Lunacharsky

and Gorky, being under the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche, proclaimed the death of God and prepared the so called “god-building”, i.e. a materialistic religion of the new man (Lunacharsky 1909). During the Revolution, Lunacharsky, as the People’s Commissar for Education, believed that the Soviet man was a link in the chain of changes that would lead him to the position of a superhuman (Rosenthal 2010: 69). The Proletkult literature was to provide that religion with spiritual strength.

In 1919 Lunacharsky “was extolling Proletkult as a new incarnation of the “Church militant”, as distinct from the “Church triumphant”, a classless society (Rosenthal 2010: 160). The given materialistic religion of the new man was embedded, against the intentions of Lenin, in the founding myth of the worker-peasant State, yet it did not transform a Soviet proletarian into a superman. Quite the reverse, it brought ideological chaos. In Platonov’s dystopia *The Foundation Pit* (1930), the workers digging foundation trenches for the “shared, all-proletarian house” lose faith in the sense of their work after the death of an orphan girl, Nastya, a symbol of hopes for happiness of future generations. Around 1930, Stalin started to cool the revolutionary frenzy among the Soviet people. The ideological radicalism, meaning Trotskyism, was eradicated as much as the counterrevolutionary activity was. During the Great Terror (1936-1938), the parabolic novels of the social science fiction genre, standing against any kind of the authoritarian government, ceased to appear. The anti-utopian literature stimulated critical thinking of the system of the communist government, therefore, it was banned by the censors. Some of the above mentioned anti-utopias became known to Soviet readers in the late 1980s, the rest of them came onto the market only after the fall of communism. At present, anti-utopias by Zamyatin and Platonov are required readings in Russian schools, which raises hopes for happiness of future generations.

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