



# Deconstruction of Natural Order

The Legacy of the Russian Revolution

edited by Joachim Diec



# **Deconstruction of Natural Order**

## **The Legacy of the Russian Revolution**



**RUSSIA**

Yesterday, today and tomorrow  
Politics – Culture – Economy – Religion

*Editors: Joachim Diec, Anna Jach, Michał Kuryłowicz*

**Vol. 23**



# Deconstruction of Natural Order

## The Legacy of the Russian Revolution

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Kraków

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Review  
prof. dr hab. Roman Bäcker

Copy editing  
Joanna Hańczkiewicz

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Anna Słota

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KSIĘGARNIA AKADEMICKA  
ul. św. Anny 6, 31-008 Kraków  
tel./faks: 12 431 27 43, 12 421 13 87  
e-mail: akademicka@akademicka.pl

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[www.akademicka.pl](http://www.akademicka.pl)

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JOANNA RAK  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0505-3684>  
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

## Chapter 5

# Justifying the Use of Violence: A Gnostic Deconstruction of a Political Universe<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction and State of the Art

The current analyses of the Russian Revolution of 1917 show that it was a by-product of successful modernization (Mironov, 2015, p. 79; Bassin, et al., 2017, p. 2). Theoretical frameworks employed to study the contentious politics draw upon the theories of anomie, disorganization, and tension. In introducing a variety of social and political factors that influenced the revolution, they concentrate on the change of living conditions, rules of behavior, social norms, anomie, attenuation of the mechanisms of social control over the individual by social organizations, disorganization

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of society, tensions between people's needs and actual possibilities of satisfying those needs, relative deprivations, social, economic, and political grievances (Sargeant, 1997; Badcock, 2008; Mironov, 2015, p. 89). The works claim that disorientation, dysregulation, disorganization, and the intensification of tensions increased the level of deviant and protest behavior (Mironov, 2015, p. 89; Rendle and Retish, 2017). Although the existing body of work plausibly identifies the structural factors that contributed to the Russian Revolution of 1917, it understudies how political subjects triggered off their revolutionary potential (Kumar, 2015). In other words, the substantive literature avoids scrutinizing Russian political consciousness shaped by the structural factors, perpetuated, distributed and redistributed over time (Rendle, 2005; Cracraft, 2010; Michael-Matsas 2016; Rendle and Lively, 2017). Political consciousness is relatively persistent and remains after the disappearance of beings, phenomena, and processes which molded it (Wood, 2003; O'Kane, 2015). As such, it is of exploratory and explanatory power for identifying the sources and consciousness heritage of the revolution (Hickey, 2011; Beyrau, 2015).

Researchers point out that a gnosis is a form of historically-effected political consciousness characteristic of the processes of modernization, and it arises from a lust for power (Voegelin, 1997, p. 71; Hotam, 2007; Smith, 2014; Chase, 2015). The article argues that a theoretical category of political gnosis may offer a powerful conceptual framework for analyzing the sources of the Russian Revolution of 1917 identifiable on the level of political communication. It may be applied to study how political consciousness evolved over the history of Russia determined by contentious politics, what consciousness factors justify the use of political violence, and how Russian revolutionary deconstructions were reflected in political consciousness after 1917.

According to Voegelin, in political gnosis, the will to redeem ancient gnosis is combined with the "metastatic expectation

of apocalypse” and “faith in the possibility of bringing about the metastasis” through human action to form the complex of revolutionary consciousness. Revolutionary consciousness is “the faith in the gnostic recipes for redemption according to which humankind is to be displaced out of the structure of temporal history and into the structure of eternal history by revolutionary action” (Voegelin, 2000, p. 205).

A classic meaning of ancient gnosis, its secularization through politicization, and criticism of modernism inform Voegelin’s understanding of political gnosis. Gnosis was first defined as “knowledge” – a pure translation of the Greek *gnôsis*. However, in late antiquity, that knowledge achieved a saving role as arcane knowledge. Thereby, gnosis became a religious movement. In a narrower sense, gnosis or gnosticism is a syncretistic religious movement distributed particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean sphere of late antiquity. This movement made the elitarian “knowledge of divine secrets” the center of its theory and regarded the spiritual core of the human being as partaking in the divine substance. After having fallen into a fateful entanglement with the matter, this spiritual core can gain salvation solely through the recognition of its true, transmudane nature (Riegel, 2007, p. 214). Importantly, gnosis draws on a strict ontological dualism between the immanent, evil world of darkness and the good world of light in the beyond. As *salvator salvandus* (the savior to be saved), the saving knowledge also has a dynamic of its own: leading its immanent part to knowledge and salvation, it becomes a *salvator salvatus* (saved savior). Thus, the saving knowledge has a liberating and healing effect (Riegel, 2007, p. 214). Those features reflect Voegelin’s meaning of ancient gnosis and introduce a conceptual framework of gnosis.

Since the meaning of gnosis has been changed many times to perform diverse exploratory and explanatory tasks in various scientific fields (Varshizky, 2002, p. 315), its semantic field is

vague to some extent. In political sociology and philosophy, the term of gnosis occurs with a predicate of political, and the notion of political gnosis applies to describe the phenomena considered to be the sources of radical evil and the embodiment of the use of excessive political violence, such as revolution, terrorism (Pellicani, 2003), anarchism (Bamyeh, 2013, p. 192), Maoism (Grelet and Smith, 2014), Marxism, Leninism, Bolshevism (Besançon, 1981), totalitarianism (Gray, 2014), pathological sickness of political mindset, and lethal neoplasm of Western Civilization (Voegelin, 1952, p. 317; 1987, p. 112; Jonas, 1952). Those approaches are criticized for being value-laden (Miley, 2011, p. 34; Gerschewski, 2016). Furthermore, the works do not introduce the differences between gnostic and non-gnostic political consciousness. They also omit to provide us with operationalisable definitions and conceptual frameworks.

The literature review raises two research problems. First, how to categorize the differences between gnostic and non-gnostic political consciousness? Second, how to measure political gnosis? Hence, the paper aims to create a tool for both identifying the distinction between political gnosis and diagnosis and measuring the intensity of political gnosis. It consists of eight scales formulated according to the values of the essential features of political gnosis. A value is a qualitative quantity assigned to a variable (feature). Political gnosis is the set of beliefs determining the interpretation of social reality. It often serves as a justification for the use of political violence (Mulholland, 2017). The very nature of an apparatus specified by the predicate of epistemic indicates that beliefs are considered to be knowledge or knowing (Dalferth, 2004, p. 194).

The features are sufficient and necessary for an epistemic apparatus to fall into the category of political gnosis. Although single features or their values may be characteristic of other epistemic apparatuses, their configuration implies political gnosis. They are: splitting the universe of material things into the good



internal world and the evil external world, dividing people into “we-insiders” and “they-outsiders”, fallacious immanentization of the eschaton, self-construction of the expansionary savior to be saved, political obscurantism as a mode of dealing with dangerous knowledge, creation of the total enemy, manifestations of presumed anomie among a populace, and strategies of survival on the historic battlefield. Each feature takes on values that contribute to the extent of the intensity of political gnosis. In turn, an epistemic apparatus is non-gnostic when it does not meet the criteria for political gnosis and satisfies those for political diagnosis.

## Feature № 1: The Good Internal World and the Evil External World

The first essential feature of political gnosis is a distinction between the good internal world and the evil external world, including their political values (e.g. Russia and the rest of the world). It concentrates solely on inanimate elements of the existing political reality. The distinction is a result of the semantic creation of either intrinsically good or evil worlds. It may take a form of five basic strategies that are based on the mythical structures of the images of things (Rak, 2017). On the level of the distinction between the worlds, two homogeneous criteria for the positive valorization of the internal world and the negative valorization of the external world allow us to distinguish the levels of the intensity of political gnosis. The scale ranges from (5) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning the internal and external worlds is free from attributing either positive or negative value to political reality, a feature takes on [0].

The description of the features marks the range of political gnosis determined by the level of its intensity with round brackets. Numbers in the brackets imply places on the continua. For the

sake of clarity, a political diagnosis is marked with square brackets. Sufficient and necessary defining features of political gnosis and diagnosis mark out a boundary between the categories.

The distinction between the good internal and evil external worlds ( $f_1$ ) takes on the following values:

- (5) sacralization of the good internal world and devilization of the evil external world,
- (4) hierophanization of the good internal world and demonization of the evil external world,
- (3) nympholeptic melioration of the good internal world and nympholeptic pejoratization of the evil external world,
- (2) counter-iconoclastic purification of the good internal world and counter-idolatric purification of the evil external world,
- (1) defensive relativization of the good internal world and offensive relativization of the evil external world,
- [0] political diagnosis of political reality.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (5) is when the gnostic sanctifies the internal world so much that it becomes the sacred, the greatest thing in the universe. An antinomic semantic creation focuses on the external world. The gnostic damns it so much that it is an extremely infernal evil. Adjectives in the superlative degree used to create words in that way indicate a maximum intensity of gnosis. The very high level of intensity (4) is when the internal world achieves a status of hierophany. It is a manifestation of the sacred but not the sacred itself. Although the gnostic avoids sanctifying the internal world, he or she sees it as a revelation of something greater. In contrast to hierophany, in demonization, the gnostic presents the external world as possessed. According to the narration, a demon evinces itself in the external world. The world is not the devil's spawn, but evil manifests itself in its form. Adjectives in the comparative degree serve as a means of verbal construction. The high intensity (3) is when the gnostic settles for nympholeptic creations of the worlds. Adjectives are

in a positive form. They show affectionate and frenetic allegiance to the worlds under valorizing, either positive or negative. The gnostic designs the worlds by exalted manifestations of worship or aversion respectively. In the moderate intensity (2), counter-iconoclastic purification of the internal world is founded on the reduction of the diagnosed negative features of the world. The gnostic avoids making an avowal of his or her observation because he or she opposes the devaluation of the world and the decline of its positive image. The image is purified from even potentially negative qualities. Then, counter-idolatric purification of the external world is based on the reduction of the diagnosed positive features of the world. The gnostic does not disclose the discovery of its positive features. Instead, he or she rejects them actively to purify the world's image from the properties which are not bad. On the low level (1), defensive relativization depicts the elements of the good internal world as being not as evil as others. It makes use of comparisons to convince people that they are the best against the background of others. Offensive relativization of the evil external world takes advantage of the same mechanism. The gnostic presents positive components of the external world as being not as positive as others. The comparison of features serves the depreciation of that world. When a verbal expression does not take the shape of a value-laden discursive creation and is relatively close to a political diagnosis of the worlds [0], political gnosis does not emerge.

## Feature № 2: “We-Insiders” and “They-Outsiders”

The second feature of political gnosis is the distinction between “we-insiders” and “they-outsiders” (e.g. Russians and non-Russians). Just like the previous feature, it consists of splitting, also called black-and-white or all-or-nothing thinking. However, in contrast to the above feature, the second one focuses on animated

elements of political reality. Whereas the former concerns things and political values that constitute the gnostic's universe, the latter relates to people that are in the universe, including Paraclete who is shown and shows himself/herself as the main creator of political gnosis (e.g. he/she may be a leader of a revolution). The ontic status is a criterion for their analytical distinction, but they co-occur in the real world. The distinction is a result of a semantic creation of political subjects. It may take the form of five basic strategies that draw upon the mythical structures of the images of people (Rak, 2017). On the level of the distinction between people, two homogeneous criteria for the positive valorization of "we-insiders" and the negative valorization of "they-outsiders" enable us to distinguish four levels of the intensity of political gnosis. The scale ranges from (4) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning "we-insiders" and "they-outsiders" is free from attributing either positive or negative value to political subjects, a feature takes on [0].

The distinction between "we-insiders" and "they-outsiders" (f<sub>2</sub>) takes on the following values:

- (4) anthropolatritization of "we-insiders" and devilization of "they-insiders,"
- (3) theophanization of "we-insiders" and demonization of "they-insiders,"
- (2) making "we-insiders" a divine mesistes and "they-insiders" – an infernal mesistes,
- (1) making "we-insiders" a katechon and "they-insiders" – an antichrist,
- [0] political diagnosis of political subjects.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (4) is when the gnostic acknowledges the in-group as the divinity. The out-group is the devil incarnate. The high extent (3) is when the gnostic claims that the divinity revealed itself in the in-group. In contrast to anthropolatritization, "we-insiders" are not the god but its

revelation. In demonization, a demon manifests itself in the out-group. Unlike devilization, “they-outsiders” are not a hellhound but a devil’s tool. The moderate extent (2) refers to a category of a mesistes (also known as a mesidios). A mesistes is a particular type of mediator that can establish and perpetuate relations between the real and supernatural worlds thanks to his or her own unique features. A divine mesistes intercedes between a deity and people. In contrast to theophany, a mesistes is not a physical manifestation of a god, but he or she contacts a god. An infernal mesistes mediates between a devil and people not because he or she is possessed but thanks to his or her extraordinary features. The low extent (1) is when the gnostic makes “we-insiders” a katechon and “they-insiders” – an antichrist. Whereas a katechon is the one who prevents evil from destroying the world and safeguards human lives, an antichrist devastates the world and strives for its perdition. In each case, a political subject is an imagined being and may be either individual or collective. They do not have to be presented as aware of fulfilling their roles in a gnostic universe. When a verbal expression does not assume the form of a value-laden discursive creation of an imagined subjectivity and is relatively close to a political diagnosis of political subjects [0], political gnosis does not occur.

### Feature № 3: Fallacious Immanentization of the Eschaton

The analysis does not enter into a discussion on to what extent the subject matter of a discursive creation is real and imagined, but it assumes the verbal expressions of elements of political reality as the results of a semantic creation (Shahzad, 2014). They mirror how the gnostic alters the ontological status of the existing reality by destroying and building a new one on its smoldering

ruins (Pellicani, 2003, p. 11). Thus, let us emphasize that political gnosis hypostases imagined beings with words (e.g. a vision of Russia as a great power). The first two features of political gnosis concentrate on the semantic creation of the existing reality, the next one focuses on the design and performance of its future shape. The third feature of political gnosis is the fallacious immanentization of the eschaton which mirrors how eschatology affects politics (Voegelin, 1987, p. 117). The gnostic fallaciously immanentizes the eschaton by projecting eschatological visions for the world and implements a policy to actualize them (Voegelin, 1987, p. 166). Immanentization is fallacious because the projects of eternal salvation are of political rather than religious nature (Voegelin, 1987, p. 120). Political gnosis is gradable under a criterion of a variant of immanentization of the eschaton which provides the gnostic's life with sense. The distinction is a result of a semantic creation of what political reality should dawn and how to achieve that dreamful state. It may take the form of four basic strategies that emanate from Voegelin's variants of immanentization (Voegelin, 1987). On the level of the fallacious immanentization, a homogeneous criterion of the feasibility of the eschaton enables us to distinguish four levels of the intensity of political gnosis. The scale ranges from (4) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning the future of political reality is free from overtly dreamlike visions, a feature takes on [0].

The fallacious immanentization of the eschaton ( $f_3$ ) takes on the following values:

- (4) active mysticism,
- (3) utopianism,
- (2) eutopianism,
- (1) progressivism,
- [0] political diagnosis of current efforts to develop the state.

The scale is based on Voegelin's three variants of fallacious immanentization: active mysticism, utopianism, and progressi-

vism, but it modifies the framework to enhance its methodological and expected empirical effectiveness. According to Voegelin, in active mysticism (4), a state of perfection is to be obtained through a revolutionary transfiguration of the nature of a man. Let us go a step further and add that active mysticism consists of the performance of a fully unrealistic vision of the eschaton. The gnostic declares the use of available and inaccessible means to perform the eschaton. As Voegelin argues, utopianism concentrates on the state of perfection, without clarity about the means that are required for its performance. It may assume two forms. First, it may be an axiological dream world when the gnostic is aware that the eschaton is unrealizable. Second, it may take the form of social idealism. The distinction between the forms remains unclear. Whereas the first locates just in an awareness sphere, the second is verbally expressible. Here, within the scale, utopianism (3) is when the gnostic creates a wholly unrealistic vision of the eschaton and declares the deployment of available means to actualize it. Unlike utopia, eutopia embodies a possible concept. Eutopianism (2) draws upon a realistic vision of the eschaton and making declarations of the actualization of the eschaton. The gnostic presumes the employment of available means to immanentize his or her vision. It is utopistics in Wallerstein's (1998, p. 1) understanding. As Voegelin indicates, progressivist immanentization (1) focuses on a movement towards a goal, a beatific vision that is a state of perfection. The progressivist gnostic does not provide clarity about the final perfection, but it need not be clarified because he or she takes a selection of desirable factors as the standard and interprets progress as a qualitative and quantitative rise of the present good – the “bigger and better.” Unless he or she adjusts the original standard to the changing political situation, it becomes reactionary (Voegelin, 1987, pp. 120–121). It means that progressivist immanentization concentrates on the rather realistic but not well-defined eschaton. The gnostic introduces ways

towards its achievement. Whereas the gnostic verbally creates a heaven on earth, the diagnostic avoids introducing his or her unrealistic expectations. When a verbal expression does not take the form of a value-laden discursive creation and is relatively close to a political diagnosis of prospective political reality [0], political gnosis does not occur.

## Feature № 4: Presumed Anomie

The fourth feature of political gnosis is presumed anomie. The gnostic that creates and distributes political gnosis assumes that its recipients feel anomie and thus he or she refers to anomie's suppositious features (e.g. a vision of relative deprivation in social security). Anomie is instability resulting from a breakdown of the regulatory order that secures norms (Braithwaite, et al., 2010, p. 17). Even though it is an opportune awareness undertow for political gnosis (Bäcker, 2011, p. 195), it also informs a semantic resource of political gnosis as a reaction to the existing populace and world condition. The gnostic seeks to distribute political gnosis effectively to win political believers over and encourage them to redistribute political gnosis. He or she makes provision for the properties of actual anomie to make his or her expressed vision of anomie the reflection of reality. His or her presuming, however, is not contingent on the actual anomie. It is just a goal-driven semantic creation which may take on a variety of values.

The scale to measure an extent of the intensity of the feature of political gnosis benefits from Heydari, Davoudi and Teymoori's set of indicators of anomie (2011). The set comprehensively, critically, and skillfully summarizes and develops current scales of anomie. The authors define three major groups of indicators: meaninglessness and distrust, powerlessness, and fetishism of money. Meaninglessness and distrust find expression in eight



statements: (i) I can trust the statements of high-ranking officials (authority), (ii) There is little use in writing to public officials because they often aren't really interested in the problems of the average man, (iii) In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better, (iv) I believe most of the congress bills are towards the welfare of people, (v) Most public officials (people in public office) are not really interested in the problems of the average man, (vi) I often wonder what the meaning of life really is, (vii) It's hardly fair to bring children into the world with the way things look for the future, (viii) Everything is relative, and there just aren't any definite rules to live by. Powerlessness expresses itself in seven statements: (i) I lead a trapped or frustrated life, (ii) Nobody knows what is expected of him or her in life, (iii) I have no control over my destiny, (iv) The socioeconomic status of people determines their dignity and it is inevitable, (v) The world is changing so fast that it is hard for me to understand what is going on, (vi) My whole world feels like it is falling apart, (vii) No matter how hard people try in life, it doesn't make any difference. Fetishism of money is expressed in five statements: (i) To make money, there are no right and wrong ways anymore, only easy ways and hard ways, (ii) A person is justified in doing almost anything if the reward is high enough, (iii) I am getting a college education so I can get a good job, (iv) I follow whatever rules I want to follow, (v) Money is the most important thing in life (Heydari, Davoudi and Teymoori, 2011, p. 1089). Verbal expressions which fall into the statement category are the elements of political gnosis called presumed anomie.

On the level of presumed anomie, two homogeneous criteria for the anomie indicators and statements enable us to distinguish three levels of the intensity of political gnosis. The scale ranges from (3) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning presumed anomie is free from the references to the statements, a feature takes on [0].

The presumed anomie ( $f_4$ ) takes on the following values:

- (3) three types of the anomie indicators and at least 50% of the statements of each one,
- (2) two types of the anomie indicators and at least 50% of the statements of each one,
- (1) one type of the anomie indicators and at least 50% of its statements,
- [0] political diagnosis of relative deprivation.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (3) is when the gnostic presumes anomie that finds expression in meaninglessness and distrust, powerlessness, and fetishism of money. At least 50% of the statements of each indicator are in use. Political gnosis achieves the moderate extent (2) when the gnostic takes advantage of two out of the three indicators and at least 50% of the statements of each one. The low extent (1) occurs when the gnostic refers to one from among the three indicators and at least 50% of its defining statements. When a verbal expression does not take the shape of a value-laden discursive creation of a response to the presumed anomie and is relatively close to a political diagnosis of relative deprivation [0], political gnosis does not emerge.

## Feature № 5: Total Enemy

The research avoids employing the category of the objective enemy because it is strongly associated with totalitarianism (Arendt, 1973, pp. 422–423). Instead, it defines political gnosis by the feature of the semantic creation of the total enemy (e.g. enemy of the people). Thorup defines the total enemy as the one whose identity and deeds are substituted for analogies and being; whose the only one goal in life is to destroy and deploy violence; who is present even if not apparent; whose enmity comes from a being rather than an action; and with whom coexistence is impossible due to the fact that the total enemy will never let go and allow

peace and prosperity to become the order of the day (2015, p. X). The total enemy is to be found, punished, and annihilated because it impedes any immanentization of the eschaton and threatens the existence of the in-group. It is a source of great and everlasting insecurity.

On the level of the total enemy that jeopardizes gnostic enterprises, two homogeneous criteria of the expectedness of the total enemy's shape and the extent of the establishment of in-group political values under the total enemy threat enable us to distinguish four levels of the intensity of political gnosis. The scale ranges from (4) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning obstacles to development is free from the category of the total enemy, a feature takes on [0].

The creation of the total enemy in relation to in-group political values ( $f_5$ ) takes on the following values:

- (4) moral-nihilistic creation of the total enemy in relation to a floating set of political values,
- (3) moral-nihilistic creation of the total enemy in relation to a fixed set of political values,
- (2) fundamentalist creation of the total enemy in relation to a floating set of political values,
- (1) fundamentalist creation of the total enemy in relation to a fixed set of political values,
- [0] intersubjective political diagnosis of obstacles to the community's development.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (4) is when the gnostic employs moral nihilism to produce the total enemy. Members of a populace can never be quite sure that they will not fall into some future category of the total enemy because it may be changed and supplemented over time (Court, 2008, p. 107). The gnostic claims that the total enemy stops the immanentization of the eschaton and puts many things significant to a populace in jeopardy. It is erratic what political values, apart from the core ones, contribute to the

creation of relations between the total enemy and other semantic creations. The high extent (3) is when people cannot predict who or what will become the total enemy because it is continually under construction. The total enemy undermines immanentization of the eschaton and threatens the gnostic's resources. The gnostic has, however, a rigid set of political values that are to be protected from the total enemy. Unpredictability-driven fear is a result of the most intensive types of political gnosis which make use of moral-nihilism. In turn, a firm agenda mirroring a hierarchy of political values contributes to less intense fundamentalist political gnosis by arming it with relative predictability. The moderate extent (2) occurs when the gnostic distributes a consistent vision of the total enemy. People know how to recognize it, and the criteria for recognition are invariable. Nevertheless, that well-determined total enemy puts a variety of volatile political values at risk. The low extent (1) typifies a fundamentalist project of the total enemy. The fundamentalist gnostic creates a consistent image of the total enemy. Members of a populace know the criteria for its distinction and are sure what and who meets the essential criteria to be the total enemy. That figure impedes the immanentization of the eschaton as well as the firmly established and hierarchized political values. When a verbal expression does not take the shape of a value-laden discursive creation of the total enemy that endangers gnostic enterprises and is relatively close to an intersubjective political diagnosis of obstacles to the community's development [0], political gnosis does not take place.

## Feature № 6: Expansionary Savior to be Saved

According to a politico-soteriological gnostic view, the gnostic is a savior to be saved. It means that the gnostic has knowledge of how to be saved through the immanentization of the eschaton, performs eschatological goals, and saves others from extinction by

sharing knowledge and immanentizing the eschaton together. At a declarative level, he or she saves himself/herself, others, and will be saved. The expansionary nature of the savior to be saved finds expression in the search for savable non-agnostics (e.g. Russian compatriots (Grigas, 2016, p. 2)). Apart from unambiguous divisions between the in-group, the out-group, the good internal world and the evil external world, the gnostic detects some group of people who may become a material resource of the internal world. They are neither part of the in-group nor belonging to the evil external world. They do not belong under the total enemy. As such, they may be saved rather than doomed to extinction like the out-group.

On the level of the expansionary savior to be saved, a homogeneous criterion of the source of non-agnostics' predisposition to become gnostics allows us to distinguish four levels of the intensity of political gnosis. The scale ranges from (4) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning external political subjects is free from overtly soteriological attempts to change their status to a political structure, a feature takes on [0].

The expansion of the savior to be saved ( $f_g$ ) takes on the following values:

- (4) voluntarist rescue operation,
- (3) subjective rescue operation,
- (2) objective rescue operation,
- (1) fatalistic rescue operation,
- [0] political diagnosis of external political subjects in relation to domestic and exterior political structures.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (4) occurs when the gnostic refers to the knowledge-driven will to semantically inform a rescue operation aiming at transforming non-agnostics into in-group gnostics and building them into the good internal world. The gnostic avoids introducing the perspective of the would-be material resource. The other three semantic strategies relativize

the sources of the predisposition. The high extent (3) is when the gnostic refers to the passionate desire of a subject formed by non-agnostics to join in-group agnostics and become the part of the good internal world. The gnostic shows the subject as enticed into immanentizing the eschaton together and thus thirsting the future, secular and political salvation. The moderate extent (2) is if the gnostic objectifies the rescue mission by giving it objective values to introduce it as generally beneficial. The source of the operation is general knowledge rather than agnostics' or non-agnostics' will. The low extent (1) typifies a fatalistic semantic creation of the rescue operation. As the gnostic claims, there is nothing left but to save non-agnostics, and this is not a matter of anybody's choice. When a verbal expression does not take the form of a value-laden discursive creation of the rescue operation aiming at expanding the savior to be saved and is relatively close to an intersubjective political diagnosis of external political subjects in relation to domestic and exterior political structures [0], political gnosis does not make an appearance.

Despite non-agnostics' predisposition to be saved, they must not immanentize their eschaton. Let us bring back Buckley's (2007, p. 24) famous phrase "Don't let THEM immanentize the eschaton! [original spelling – J. R.]" to delve into the very nature of the conditions of the savior's to be saved expansion. Non-agnostics must attach themselves or be taken into the in-group soteriology. Otherwise, they fall into the out-group or the total enemy category.

## Feature № 7: Political Obscurantism

Obscurantism consists of purposeful withholding knowledge from members of a populace. The gnostic imposes restrictions of disseminating knowledge to prevent facts from becoming known

(e.g. current economic rates in the world). Thus, he or she strives to maintain the shape of a gnostic universe under construction. On the level of political obscurantism, one homogeneous criterion of a strategy of coping with non-gnostic knowledge lets us define three levels of the intensity of political gnosis. Non-gnostic knowledge is of a dangerous nature because it potentially or genuinely precludes the immanentization of the eschaton, supports the out-group, the evil external world, the total enemy, and threatens the in-group and the good internal world. The scale ranges from (3) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning knowledge is free from attempts to stop its spread and politicize its nature, a feature takes on [0].

Political obscurantism ( $f_7$ ) takes on the following values:

- (3) exterminating dangerous knowledge,
- (2) faking dangerous knowledge,
- (1) tabooing dangerous knowledge,
- [0] discussion over the diagnosed knowledge of political meaning.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (3) occurs when the gnostic displays overt hostility to dangerous knowledge which is to be destroyed due to its very nature. The moderate extent (2) is when the gnostic presents non-gnostic knowledge as fake knowledge that misleads. The low extent (1) makes an appearance when the gnostic taboos non-gnostic knowledge. Since tabooing draws upon making things unmentionable, dangerous knowledge does not enter the gnostic's statements. When a verbal expression does not take the shape of a value-laden discursive creation of the eradication of dangerous knowledge, and it is relatively close to contributing to the discussion over diagnosed knowledge of political meaning [0], political gnosis does not appear.

## Feature № 8: Survival on the Historic Battlefield

Political gnosis gives temporal solutions which stem from a desire of self-perpetuation. The gnostic introduces strategies of how to survive on the historic battlefield of the clash of good and evil powers (e.g. a revolutionary situation). Unlike the features of political gnosis that depict how the in-group/out-group and the good/evil worlds look like, and in contrast to the future-oriented immanentization of the eschaton, the following feature concentrates on the strategies of coping with being here and now. On the level of the strategies of the survival on the battlefield, two homogeneous criteria for responding to non-gnostic cultural resources and treating gnostic cultural resources enable us to determine three levels of the intensity of political gnosis (Rak, 2015a; 2015b; 2016). The scale ranges from (3) to (1). When a verbal expression concerning the use of cultural resources in daily life is free from the references to the statements, a feature takes on [0].

The strategies of survival on a historic battlefield ( $f_8$ ) take on the following values:

- (3) annihilating contra-acculturation and celebrating nativism,
- (2) isolating contra-acculturation and preserving nativism,
- (1) escapist contra-acculturation and reviving nativism,
- [0] political diagnosis of how to use or avoid using cultural resources.

The maximum extent of political gnosis (3) is when the gnostic claims that non-gnostic cultural resources are to be annihilated. Simultaneously, the gnostic celebrates gnostic resources by making use of its valuable potential to survive. The moderate extent (2) makes an appearance when the gnostic comes out in favor of isolation from non-gnostic cultural resources. The gnostic perpetuates his or her own cultural facilities. The low extent (1) occurs when the gnostic escapes from being in any



relationship with non-gnostic cultural resources. He or she makes attempts to revive the weakened cultural base. When a verbal expression does not take the form of contra-acculturative and nativist approach towards cultural resources and is relatively close to an intersubjective political diagnosis of their use [0], political gnosis does not show up.

## Conclusions

The chapter makes a methodological contribution to the growing body of literature concerning political gnosis. It creates the research tool for differentiating between political diagnosis and gnosis and measuring the intensity of the latter on the basis of the qualitative indicators. Each out of the eight defining features takes on values that contribute to the level of the intensity of political gnosis. Every time before their application to empirical research, they should be operationalized according to the character of the sources to be analyzed.

In political reality, the pure ideal types of neither political gnosis nor diagnosis occur. Instead, their features co-occur in various configurations. It means that in a political text, a researcher may find both gnosis and diagnosis even on the level of the same feature. The former may take on a variety of values which indicate its intensity. When verbal expressions of a feature are diversified in terms of intensity, a researcher has to estimate which value is dominant and what characterizes the configuration of values.

These considerations initiate an academic debate over the measurement of political gnosis and as such avoids proposing a final conceptual framework. Instead, it brings researchers in to analyze its methodological and theoretical assumptions critically and make research attempts to contribute to the field. Researchers may develop the tool by both discussing the quality and properties of

its structure and testing its empirical effectiveness. Revolutionary, non-revolutionary, pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary thinking offer a challenging research field. It may be helpful to evaluate how well the tool performs its methodological function within an analysis. One may also wish to rethink and modify the necessary and sufficient criteria for an epistemic apparatus to fall into the categories of political gnosis and diagnosis. The already proposed scales may be extended to improve their sensitivity to the details. The more precise the scale is, the more detailed the research results are.

### Usprawiedliwienie zastosowania przemocy: gnostyczna dekonstrukcja wszechświata politycznego

Celem artykułu jest stworzenie narzędzia badawczego służącego do rozróżniania gnostycznej i niegnostycznej świadomości politycznej oraz mierzenia natężenia pierwszej z wymienionych. Gnoza polityczna to aparat epistemiczny, który przybiera formę konfiguracji przekonań określających interpretację rzeczywistości społecznej. Wystarczające i konieczne cechy definiujące gnozę polityczną są następujące: podział uniwersum rzeczy materialnych na dobry świat wewnętrzny i zły świat zewnętrzny, rozróżnienie ludzi na „nas-swoich” i „ich-obcych”, fałszywa immanentyzacja eschatonu, manifestacje domniemanej anonii wśród populacji, stworzenia wroga totalnego, autokreacja ekspansywnego zbawiciela, który ma zostać zbawiony, polityczny obskurantyzm jako sposób radzenia sobie z niebezpieczną wiedzą i strategię przetrwania na historycznym polu bitwy. Każda cecha przybiera wartości, które wskazują poziom natężenia gnozy politycznej. Wkładem opracowania do metodologii socjologii polityki jest zestaw wskaźników i skali pozwalający badaczowi identyfikować i porównywać werbalne wyrazy gnozy politycznej. Co więcej, rozwija ono metodologię badania gnozy politycznej za sprawą kryteriów rozróżnienia politycznej dia-gnozy od gnozy.

### Оправдание насилия: гностическая деконструкция политической вселенной

Цель этой главы – создать исследовательский инструмент для измерения интенсивности и определения различий между гностическим и негностическим политическим сознанием. Политический гнозис – это эписте-

мический аппарат, который принимает форму конфигурации убеждений, определяющих интерпретацию социальной реальности. Достаточные и необходимые черты, определяющие политический гнозис следующее: разделение вселенной материальных вещей на хороший внутренний мир и плохой внешний мир, разделение людей на «нас-своих» и «их-чужих», ложная имманентизация эсхатона, проявления предполагаемой аномии среди населения, создание тотального врага, создание экспансивного спасителя, который должен быть спасен, политический обскурантизм, как способ справиться с опасными знаниями, а также стратегии выживания на поле битвы истории. Каждая черта принимает ценности, указывающие интенсивность политического гнозиса. Вклад настоящего исследования в методологию социологии политики это предоставление набора показателей и шкал, позволяющих исследователю определять и сравнивать словесные выражения политического гнозиса. Более того, оно разрабатывает методологию изучения политического гнозиса по критериям различения политического диагноза и гнозиса.

# Deconstruction of Natural Order

The Legacy of the Russian Revolution



The book focuses on selected far-reaching consequences of the Russian Revolution: the transformation of law and legal culture, aberrations in international behavior, opening the way to nationalism as a motive for another revolution and timeless gnostic thinking, which undelay the revolutionary events and has never lost its original productivity in Russia. The authors try to present the legacy of the revolution in the context of the category of natural order. The analysis is based on four problematic issues: the nature of unnaturalness, the problem of equality, which involves the distinction between the people and the elite, the relation between the revolution and the natural order and the understanding of natural order from the pragmatic perspective.



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