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TÍTULO: Cornelius Castoriadis y Claude Lefort con referencia a la manejabilidad de la Unión Soviética: Dilemas políticos y educativos de la izquierda.

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RESUMEN: Hoy en día, la sociología plantea la cuestión de la manejabilidad: cómo se va a manejar la clase obrera de forma tal que se evite la dominación. Es de recordar, que después de la Revolución Socialista Rusa en 1917, la burocracia Rusa se alza como la clase dominante. El neo-marxismo francés estaba especialmente interesado en la crítica y la desilusión del capitalismo de estado burocrático y buscaba soluciones teóricas al problema de la dominación por parte de la dirección política. En este trabajo, consideramos la concepción de la psique de Castoriadis como la exigencia a un individuo social de ser creativo por la dirección. Nuestro estudio tiende a demostrar que los administradores deben ser educados de tal manera que promuevan la sociedad autónoma.

PALABRAS CLAVES: manejabilidad de la Unión Soviética, filosofía de la gestión, neo-marxismo francés, Lefort, Castoriadis.

TITLE: Cornelius Castoriadis and Claude Lefort about the Soviet Union Manageability: Political and Educational Dilemmas of the Left wing.

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ABSTRACT: Nowadays, sociology put the question about the manageability: how the working class is to be managed in such a way as to avoid the domination. It is to remember, that after the Russian Socialist Revolution in 1917, the bureaucracy in Russia took place of the dominating class. The French New-Marxism was especially interested in critique and disillusionment of the bureaucratic state capitalism, and was looking for theoretical solutions of the problem of domination by the political management. In our paper, we consider the conception of psyche by Castoriadis as the demand to a social individual to be creative by management. Our study tends to prove that the managers are to be educated in such a way as to promote the autonomous society.

KEY WORDS: Soviet Union Manageability, Philosophy of Management, French Neo-Marxism, Lefort, Castoriadis.

INTRODUCTION.

If we ask about the genuine sense of manageability and how the working class is to be properly ruled, we encounter many objections connected mostly with the destiny of the Russian October Revolution of 1917. Then the power was transferred to the bureaucracy and so was constructed the state capitalism, known as “the real socialism”.

In the time of bureaucratization of the Soviet regime, the French Neo-Marxism put the question about the possibility of the autonomous society. Claude Lefort supported the spontaneity of management and Cornelius Castoriadis put forward the creativity of masses as a base of the management.

One of main theses of the Marxism was expressed by Marx in the “Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy”. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness” [Marx, 1977]. In fact, according to the Marxian theory, it is enough to change the material conditions of the production, and the social consciousness would change too.

DEVELOPMENT.

From the history, we know that this project was not realized. Leo Trotsky, the principal creator of the Soviet bureaucracy, was exiled from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR). He accused the Stalin’s bureaucracy of the treason of the Revolution. According to Trotsky all Stalin’s regime is no other thing that a product of the “degeneration of the Workers State”. From our point of view, these historical debates have a real meaning for the theory of the sociology of management. In fact, it proves that the social being in Marx’s sense, really can determine the social consciousness. However we cannot presume this assertion as a law of History so as the “historical materialism” did. In this sense, Trotsky did not follow Marx by letter, and understood that there are subversive factors like the “degeneration” and the “bureaucracy”. But Trotsky did not consider the bureaucracy as a ruling class, but just as a cast. Trotsky’s positions were criticized by the Neo-Marxian French thinkers: Cornelius Castoriadis and Claude Lefort, creators of the revolutionary group “Socialism or Barbary”. The real Marxian point of view must logically consist in the question about the economic condition of the Stalinism and not one about any temporary “bonapartistical” sect in the Party.

In the presentation of the group, Castoriadis wrote: “We began [...] by asking ourselves... What do the politics and ideology of Stalinism signify? What are the social bases? And finally, what are the economic roots [of Stalinism and his bureaucracy]?” [Castoriadis, 1997: 61].

This question has for us not only historical or philosophical interest. Our question is if only the social bases are determining by the management. So bureaucracy can be a product of the social

being or just of the hierarchical consciousness of the bureaucrats. In this sense, from a modern point of view, we can suppose that the managers could be educated, so their social consciousness is to be formatted. The materialist theory did not preview neither that the capitalism can change, nor that the revolution can produce bureaucratic regimes of the One-Ruling Party. *The sociology of management that would to use both, materialist and idealist principles needs, to know which the nature of the domination is.*

The modern sociology of management can use for explaining the domination, not only the Marxian materialism, as well the idea of the “microphysics” of the relations of power offered by the work of Michel Foucault, as the one of the symbolic nature of power offered by Claude Lefort, as the psycho-social idea of the institution of the society by Castoriadis. These three conceptions we choose, because they seem to contain basic principles connected to the materialism, rather than to the idealism, but are not so strongly determinist as the Marxism-Leninism was. In this paper, we would just concentrate to explain some theses of Castoriadis and Lefort from the point of view of the sociology of management.

First of all, the analysis of the Soviet planned economy by Lefort is very significant for understanding the probably most important deficiency of planning connected with the bureaucratization of the management of enterprises in Soviet time. Secondly, the debates between Castoriadis and Lefort about the leading role of the Party in the revolution are very important to put a question about the necessity of management as such and a role played by autonomy. Thirdly, the conception of the psyche and the cultural time by Castoriadis could help us to formulate how we can proceed to build responsible and autonomous managers.

Lefort and the planned management.

Claude Lefort (1904-2010) was a French philosopher, co-founder with Castoriadis of the “Socialisme or Barbarie” libertarian socialist group. He studied philosophy in Sorbonne

University and was interested in Marxism through his teacher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1903-1961).

Merleau-Ponty was a famous French phenomenologist; Lefort also analyzed the politics within phenomenological approaches. Lefort formulated in the “*Experience ouvrière*” the theoretical principles of anatomy of workers. In the same time, the notion of “class experience” connected with Society and History was elaborated in the “*Phenomenology of Perception*” by Merleau-Ponty. [Merleau-Ponty, 1962]. We have not to forget that against Sartrean absolute freedom, Merleau-Ponty showed that the freedom of a person is always connected with its body, experience of its “bodiness”, as a part of a social class.

How the phenomenology is connected with Marxism? H. Poltier explains that the phenomenology was very popular in the ante-war time. This Cartesian-Kantian phenomenological mind is associated with a political passivity. For this reason, in the time of the war, the Marxism was associated with the resistance, the national and social struggle against the fascism and collaborationism [Poltier, 1998:30-31]. The French existentialist such Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, tried to marry the phenomenological method with their Marxian *engagements*.

Considerations of the Soviet regime and the life under “the real socialism” have also sociological meaning. As we can see, the members of the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* were at the same time professional intellectuals, more often young thésards (doctoral students) in philosophy, but also professional workers. They founded a review of the same name and cooperated in it, publishing texts reflecting the life of workers, both observations and philosophical reflections. It remembers the idea of the phenomenological sociology founded by Alfred Schütz (1899-1959) in the last 1930s in New York.

Schütz suggested that the sociology should describe phenomena of the social life as such as they appear rather to give them explanations. Schütz distinguished between paramount and

non-paramount realities. A Cognitive Style of the paramount reality needs, after Schütz, 1) wide-awakeness of the consciousness, 2) suspension of doubt (*epoche*), 3) “a prevalent form of spontaneity, namely working”, 4) experience one’s self, 5) specific form of sociality (intersubjectivity), 6) specific time-perception. [Schütz, 1970:253-4]. Thus, “the exploration of the general principles according to which man in daily life organizes his experience, and those of the social world, is the first task of the methodology of the social sciences” [Schütz, 1970:273].

“Phenomenological sociology [...] emphasis of understanding reality through the perspective through the acting subject [...]” [Farganis, 2011:257]. The method of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* and particularly that of Lefort was just the same: the members of the group were themselves political activists, social theoreticians, intellectuals or workers, telling about their experiences as active subjects.

Describing the Soviet reality, Lefort took seriously only the experiences of the eyewitness (Trotsky, Kravchenko, Ciliga) and not theoretical argumentations of French Stalinists, nor the promises of the Communist Party. In this sense, we can consider Lefort as a phenomenological and Marxian sociologist of management, as well as Castoriadis.

The after-war time was a great improvement for French Marxian intellectuals. First of all, a great part of them was enthusiastic for the Russian October Revolution and the construction of the first socialist country in the world. They admitted that errors in this way could be possible, and were generally aware of strong and feeble sites of the Marxist theory. The experience of the Resistance against the Nazi intervention just consolidated their forces to sympathize the Soviet regime and the French Communist Party.

Since 1945, Sartre begins to edit “*Les Temps modernes*”. Initially, Raymond Aron, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others took part in the committee of edition. In the February of 1948, Lefort published the article “*Kravchenko and the problem of URSS*”. The “*problem of the URSS*”

intends first of all the critique by Lefort of the Trotsky's thesis about the defence of the USSR. The Trotskyists think that the Marxian intellectuals must defend the USSR, even if it was ruled by Stalin, because the USSR was an only one socialist country in the world. Through his lecture of the book of Kravchenko: "I choose freedom" (1946), Lefort tried to prove that there was no socialism in the USSR, but the state capitalism, and the planification was not a progressive economy, but a way of the ruling of the bureaucracy.

Viktor Kravchenko was a Soviet defector. He was born in a family of a worker communist, but unlike his father, he was not an idealist of the Revolution, but a convinced Stalinist totally engaged in the industrialisation. He was an important chief of a big enterprise and could get a precise knowledge of the Soviet collectivisation, industrialisation and Stalin's staff policy and repressions of the Soviet secret police (NKVD) against the engineers and specialists. In 1948 he stayed in America and edited there a book explaining his choice to make a break with the Stalinism. In his book, Kravchenko reveals inner contradictions of the Soviet society, especially problems between political power personified by Stalin and his secret police – NKVD, and the Soviet economists, responsible for the realisation of the plans.

Some contemporary historians speak about the conflicts between the political power and the economic power, personified for a long time by Ordjonikidze. It was Ordjonikidze who had helped Kravchenko to get the high education. Stalin thought Ordjonikidze could be dangerous for his power and Ordjonikidze was supposedly murdered by agents of Stalin [Khlevniuk, 2015:45].

Many French left intellectuals, for example Sartre, refused to accept the truth about Stalin's regime. Some of them, for example Charles Bettelheim, spoke about the deficiencies of the Soviet planification. But Lefort emphasised that it is no question about deficiencies, but all the Stalin's economic regime is nothing else but the political reign of the bureaucracy. The state capitalism is a new form of the exploitation of the working class, insisted Lefort. And in the

totalitarian society the workers even have not right to protest nor strike. The Soviet worker is so alienated as workers under capitalism and the regime largely uses the forced work in the concentration camps to reach its aims [Lefort, 1979:139].

Some left intellectuals – that supported the Stalinism - argue that the Stalin's society was ruled with proletarian slogans and the Soviet leaders quoted often Marx. Lefort proved that the bureaucracy abused the ideas of the October Revolution to make illusions; for example, the idea of the Labour was used to give a theoretical base to the exploitation of prisoners and the idea of History was used to justify the extermination of millions of people [Lefort, 1979:142].

From the point of view of the Sociology of management, we can see that Lefort shows that the Stalin's bureaucracy intended to change the reality of the Russian society in the scope to create a new society of the planned economy and the high developed industry. The bureaucracy used the models of the scientifically organised labour produced by the *Gosplan* - the highest organ of the planned economy - under influence of ideas of Henry Ford and Frederick Winslow Taylor. These models were created to organise the mechanic labour in the aim to reach a best productivity and efficiency from the workers by the rational use of time and distribution of the tasks of the production.

Nevertheless, the bureaucracy was not used to change its habits of management. The ideas of Henry Fayol about the education of the managers were not requested by the Soviet leaders. Some scholars remark that the Scientific Organisation of the Work was strongly connected with the interpretation of the work as a just manual and mechanic one, and rare scientists that attempted to study the intellectual and managerial work were oppressed [Koritski, 1999:87].

Finally we cannot be completely agree with Lefort that the planned economy as such was a product of a bureaucratic society, but we can share his point of view that the planning State could not change into a socialist society in the condition of the roles played by the bureaucracy and the police.

Castoriadis and the socialization of the managers.

In 1953, the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* published the letter of the Dutch Marxist and astronomer Anton Pannekoek (1873-1960). Pannekoek was one of the oldest Marxists, belonging to the same generation with Lenin. Pannekoek expressed his joy about the similarity of his own ideas and those of the group, but he criticized the approach to the Russian Revolution of October. He thought it was a typical bourgeois revolution and not a socialist one.

Castoriadis argued that the revolution of October was a proletarian revolution and the reason of its degeneration consisted in the fact the industrial workers were a minority in the agrarian Russia. Pannekoek argued that if the vanguard of the Bolshevik party usurped the power, there is no need of any revolutionary organization at all. Castoriadis replied that there is need for a vanguard revolutionary organization, and there was not a necessarily strong one in Russia in the moment of the Revolution; especially, the new power needed specialists and they have no other choice than to recruit specialists as from the ancient elites and unequally paid in comparison with simple workers. Castoriadis was convinced that “to refuse to act in fear that one will transform to a bureaucrat, seems to me as absurd as to refuse to think in fear to be wrong. [...] the only guarantee against bureaucratization consists in permanent action in an antibureaucratic direction, [...] non-bureaucratic organization of the vanguard is possible and it can organize non bureaucratic relations with the working class” [Castoriadis, 1953].

In this sense, the State capitalism is nothing but a product of the degeneration of the proletarian revolution. Castoriadis argued that the Revolution of October was realized under proletarian and not bourgeois slogans [Castoriadis, 1953]. “The whole situation, - wrote Marcel van Linden, - [...] was what Castoriadis suggested, in one sense, the fault of the Russian workers themselves. [...] the positive half would consist of the transfer of all management to the working class. The Russian workers had not been thoroughly aware of this, and this had, by their own actions [...] brought the bureaucracy to power” [van den Linden, 2007:118].

Lenin in 1918, in his famous work: “the State and Revolution” argued that the proletariat needs the State, but it needs “only the state which is withering away [...] a state so constituted that it begins to wither away immediately, and cannot be wither away” [Lenin, 1932]. Lenin said, the proletariat needs state only to suppress exploiting class. “Marxism educates the vanguard of proletariat, capable of assuming power and leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organizing of the new system, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all working and exploited people [...]” [Lenin, 1932:75]. We can see all the ambiguity of these words.

The Bolshevik party in the 1920s usurped all the power and progressively transformed the “dictatorship of the proletariat” into the personal dictate of Stalin. He was considered as the Guide, the Teacher and the Leader in the very specific sense of these words, in the sense of the absolute Power, absolute Knowledge and absolute Truth, but initially, we see that the role of the vanguard consisted to educate the working people to be able to live without the state.

Lenin supposes that the transition to the proletarian state is not possible without the 'reversion' of the 'primitive democracy', but nobody can return to the precapitalistic state. So, the proletarian state needs measures to make this new society as egalitarian as it can be possible. “All officials without exception, elected and subject to recall at any time, their salaries reduced to the level of the ordinary 'workmen wage' [Lenin, 1932:77]. In practice, we know that the 'purely political organization of the society' lead just to the repartition of the property among the bureaucrats. In the same work, Lenin supported Pannekoek in his polemics against Kautsky and anarchists, saying that Pannekoek had reason 'for it was Marx who taught that the proletarians cannot simply win state power [...], but smash this apparatus, must break it and replace it by a new one' [Lenin, 1932]. Marx demanded that the proletariat 'be trained for revolution by utilizing the present state'. In fact, Lenin, Castoriadis and Pannekoek searched the answer to the question about the nature of the power and the state management in the radical revolutionary Marxism.

But there was another thesis of Marx that seems to be underestimated by Lenin. That claims that “the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule [Marx, 1864]”. In fact, the struggle of workers for equal rights had place before Lenin and even before Marx himself: the workers organised themselves in revolutionary groups without creating a ruling bureaucracy. Under Lenin, “the Party killed the Soviets” (i.e. democratic workers’ auto-management). The Communist Party of the USSR was not a form of workers’ organization struggling for their rights, but a form of the State bureaucracy. The Western proletariat by the time of the Soviet Russia was more organized in the forms of trade unions and socialist parties specialised in the struggle for the equity of rights. In the midst of 1970th, Castoriadis abandoned the Marxism, and said that he was obliged to choose between to stay as a Marxist or to stay as a revolutionary.

The idea of Castoriadis in the 1970th, that seems to us the most important here is that the revolution is not a just a historical fact, but it takes place in the heads of people. The revolutionary, doing as such, does not change the society, but the *praxis* does. “We term *praxis* that doing in which the other or others are intended as autonomous beings considered as the essential agents of the development of their own autonomy” [Castoriadis, 1997:75]. Castoriadis quotes Freud speaking about three impossible professions: teacher, doctor and politician. These three cannot just produce something but the results of their doings are often unpredictable.

In this sense, the key word of the ontopsychology of Castoriadis is the socialization. Castoriadis interprets the psychoanalysis saying that the socialization is a break of the egoistic monadic being that can equally produce a social being or a psychopathology. “The subject - said Castoriadis is a scene of the phantasy [...], because the subject has been this undifferentiated

monadic state” [Castoriadis, 1997:295]. Castoriadis suggests that the human *psyche* is strongly connected with the external world and this break with its egoistic *self* is the base of the desire.

The socialization is not only in individual process, the individual is always included in a social-historical context. The socialization of a modern bourgeois and those of an Ancient-Egyptian preacher or of a feudal of the Middle Age is absolutely different. “The process of the social institution of the individual, that is to say, the socialization of the psyche, is indissociable from the process of psychogenesis [...] and from a sociogenesis [...]. This is the history of the psyche in the course of which the psyche alters itself to the social-historical world, depending too, on its [...] own creativity: and also, the history of society’s imposition on the psyche of the mode of being which the psyche can never generate out of itself and which produces-creates the social individual” [Castoriadis, 1997:300].

In this sense, the subject makes part of the social-historical being that is not to be reduced to biological and sociological determinism. Also, Castoriadis criticized both the determinism of the “historical materialism” and the subjectivism of the existentialism or that of the liberalism. He points that the individual freedom is not to be disconnected with the social freedom of all. The subject is free if it exists for its autonomous being in the autonomous society.

CONCLUSIONS.

In this sense, we can conclude that the managers of the Communist Party were socialized as subjects of the bourgeois society. The Soviet managers lacked the creativity; more precisely, the creativity was not considered as a principle of the management. So, the manageability was considered as just a mechanic effect.

According to Castoriadis, the creativity is the major force to build a new autonomous society. In the Soviet Creative Marxism, the philosophers, such as Ewald Ilyenkov, emphasized the fact that the new management is to be constructed only on the bases of a new culture and socialization. “Only in this soil, - wrote Ilyenkov, on the soil of culture, genuine originately

blossoms, the genuine, i.e. specifically human individuality which is called, in the language of the science, the personality” [Ilyenkov, 2013:135].

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