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**METHODOLOGICAL BASIS OF CULTURAL INTERACTION
BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST**

Alfiya Kamaletdinova (a)*, Anatoly Nevelev (b)

*Corresponding author

(a) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, allakamaletdinova@rambler.ru, 89630823688.

(b) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, nevelev@csu.ru, 89058367628.

Abstract

The paper makes an attempt to understand the dichotomy of the East and the West, as well as the genesis of Eurasianism. The comparative analysis of works of thinkers of the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th centuries made it possible to uncover the importance of Eurasianism; to determine opposing cultural and historical types and to define criteria uniting ethnic groups into a single community. Over a half of the century scientists have been studying the interaction of cultures of the East and the West, interpreting the civilization theory and understanding the concept of Eurasianism. The paper studies the concept of Eurasianism derived from the dichotomy of cultures of the East and the West thus defining its purpose – to reveal the methodological basis of cultural interaction of the East and the West. The study was based on dialectic logic, comparative and philosophical analysis. A theoretical conclusion is that concreteness and energetic aspect of human life have mutually inverse trends in their development: minimum thematic definiteness of human identity is accompanied by the maximum energetic focus of love. The maximum thematic definiteness is accompanied by the energetic minimum. Perhaps the crisis of the idea of Eurasianism is connected with the super idea weakened by energetic seizure, idea of love, idea of unitotality. The development strategy of any cultural and historical type is possible in conditions of powerful energetic concentration on super ideas. All countries are concerned with the search of the idea directing and uniting the community members.

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Keywords: Cultural and historical types, Eurasia, thematic and energetic analysis.



1. Introduction

Over a half of the century scientists have been studying the interaction of cultures of the East and the West, interpreting the civilization theory and understanding the concept of Eurasianism. However already in medieval literature we face the opposition of cultures based not on the search of spiritual bonds, but on the definition of distinctive features. What could serve the criterion of historical comparative analysis? The European comparison of cultures of the West and the East was traditionally characterized by the indulgent sideward glance towards the latter one as a symbol of invariance of traditions thus becoming a synonym of statics. This point of view was supported by some founders of the civilization theory such as Danilevsky (2010), Solovyov (2012a, 2012b), Trubetskoy (2015), Savitsky (1992).

2. Problem Statement

Since the ancient times scientists were considering the opposition of cultures of the East and the West as carriers of different valuable bases, however, not at the conceptual level. At the theoretical level the opposition of western and eastern cultures has been analyzed since the second half of the 19th century by G. Rückert, O. Spengler, N. Danilevsky, P. Savitsky (as cited in Savitsky, 1992), and later by the philosophers of the 20th century – V. Solovyov, P. Karsavin, P. Bitsilli, N. Trubetskoy, etc. (as cited in Solovyov, 2012b, 2012c; Trubetskoy, 2015) In their definition of the development strategy of Russia philosophers and political experts more often address the study of historical heritage.

3. Research Questions

The subject of this study is the concept of Eurasianism derived from the dichotomy of cultures of the East and the West.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to reveal the methodological basis of cultural interaction of the East and the West, to justify the viability of Eurasianism.

5. Research Methods

The study is based on dialectic logic, comparative and philosophical analysis, thematic and energetic analysis.

6. Findings

The comparative and philosophical analysis revealed the unproductivity of opposing western and eastern cultures according to statics and dynamics, regress and progress, universal and single, etc. The authors propose the thematic and energetic analysis as the methodological basis of dichotomy of the East and the West.

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The idea of cultural and historical types implies the comparison of various civilizations based on forward ascent from the lowest to the highest levels. The European civilization fully corresponds to this feature though the history of forward movement faced the periods of not a mere stagnation, but even regress.

The comparison of the East and the West at the level of cultural development is absolutely unconstructive. The Eastern countries refer to wild, barbaric, while the Western states are a priori treated as progressive, technologically developed where sciences, arts and well-developed political system prevail. Such division was typical for pro-Western direction, but our domestic philosophers, for example, Solovyov (2012b), also expressed similar views.

Danilevsky (2010) believes that it is primitive to compare different cultures according to the correlation of human (universal) and national (general) features. It is especially relevant in the conditions of the globalized world of the 21st century when national and cultural identities are wiped out. When modern thinkers declare universal cultural values, this results to future leveling of the special (national and ethnic) thus inevitably leading to stagnation, or even degradation. All these are features building a barrier between the cultures of the East and the West.

Scientists of the beginning of the 21st century face a global task: not to search for the opposition reasons, but to find the reasons for unification not on material or economic basis, but based on considerably different aspects.

Let us generalize those laws, which were defined by Danilevsky (2010) in comparative and philosophical analysis: existence of a unique cultural and historical type; political independence; interrelation between civilizations at the stages of adaptation and integration; at last, the dependence of the level of culture on the developed political system; duration of the periods of formation and prosperity. When the specified laws are complied with the cultural and historical type is viable, efficient and fruitful. In modern realities the technique of imposition, replication of political system, suppression of national and ethnic originality became quite usual. The declarative slogan of the need for globalization (transfer to the level of the universal) is unfortunately understood as the leveling of originality and particularity typical for any cultural and historical type. In practice within the European Union the idea of globalization fails mainly due to the fact that within the social development the countries did not comply with the laws of political independence and identity of the national culture. The international community chose non-constructive way: imposition of certain norms in the conditions of colonization; establishment of a single universal civilization; education of a different system of values, etc. As a result, the underestimation of the role of original cultural development by the international community leads to extinction of civilizations.

What cultural and historical type is the most viable? The one, which belongs to the category of successive, where as a result of interaction of various cultural and historical types (their constituent elements) the traditional aspects remain the same and the new ones are created. The ideal cultural and historical type is the type where the integrity and reproduction of original national principles reflecting the general are implemented in a special form. In the way of evidence Danilevsky (2010) illustrates the Greek cultural and historical type (though in this case the fifth law of duration of civilizational development comes into force).

What is the uniqueness (originality) of any culture? In his public lecture in 1877, later published as *Three Forces*, Solovyov (2012a) noted that each nation (universal) is energetically united on the basis of one principle subordinating the variety of particulars (single). According to the philosopher, this direction is not vital since it suppresses the special, excludes variety, transfers the dynamics of development into the statics of a uniform general, reasons of the entire variety. The opposing force supports the set of diverse manifestations of the single and the individual, being the reason and the purpose themselves. Personal (vested) interests trample upon universal interests (laws of life). The laws cease (the present justifies this) to manage human life in particular and on the whole. In his comparative and historical analysis Solovyov (2012a) defines two forces, which may serve the basis for any civilization, and describes their destructive role. One destroys the unity of the whole, the second stops the dynamics of development.

The history of civilizations cannot develop following negative principles therefore there is a need for the development of the third force. “And if the history of the mankind shall not end with this negative result <...>, if a new historical force shall be created, then the main task of this force <...> is to create new cultural forms ...” (Solovyov, 2012b, p. 34). The purpose of this force is the creative unity of diversity that can only be reached at the level of universalization (universal unconditional). The nature of the universal unconditional is evident in the freedom from limitation, definiteness; energetic eminence over private interests; ataraxy to outer sides of human being; unconditional belief in creative and positive force of the supernatural. It is possible to challenge this unconditional conclusion of the philosopher that only the Slavs are the carriers of the third force. The destructive influence of the two first forces on other nations and cultures inevitably led to spiritual degradation being the carrier of the highest force which “the Russian people shall bring to mankind” (Solovyov, 2012c) and perform the mission of combining different cultures.

Can the religion be that energy uniting a variety of objectness of human life? Considering the Muslim world and Islam, Solovyov (2012a, 2012b, 2012c) more simply represents the energetic component. For him the East suppresses an individual, excludes a variety of the personal, ensures firmness of the conjoint. The divine in Islam is a comprehensive law submitting all and everything. The philosopher notes the following as an absolute givenness: absolute submission of the believer to supernatural forces, dissolution of the single in general since the Muslim world has no divisions between society, the state and confessional institute. In this unity Solovyov failed to see the energetic uniting force, which is an intrinsic component of any religion, having reduced everything to unconditional adherence to an instruction (predetermination, norm). The contribution of the Muslim world to progressive development of humanity is also viewed by the ingenious philosopher with somewhat preconceived conclusion: it is possible to discuss the lack of original ideas, but what shall we do with an invaluable contribution to the development of science and philosophy. The names of such astronomers as Mohamed Al-Horezmi (783-850), Al-Battani

(858-929), Abu Raykhan al-Biruni (973-1048), Nasreddina Tusi (1201-1277), Mohamed-Taragay Ulugbek (1394-1449) and philosophers Al-Kindi (800-870), Al-Farabi (870-950), Abu-Alya ibn-Xing, (980-1037), Omar Khayyam (1048-1122), Ibn-Rushd (1126-1198), who made an invaluable contribution to the doctrine on life, are strongly inscribed in the history of the mankind. The science and religion found a common ground and are united in a tremendous thought of Ibn-Rushd on the deity, which nature is “the thought conceiving of itself”, but it is another subject (A.K.). Bare listing of names allows supposing the unilaterality of the Eastern nature by V.S. Solovyov. The philosopher rejected the development of the Eastern culture. Perhaps, the forward movement of the East does not fall within the scope of dialectic laws based on the conflict of opposites and transition of quantitative accumulation into qualitative changes. First of all, the religion is energetic, moreover, the East is not only the Islam. Religious consciousness is characterized by the energetic seizure. Within the religious doctrine the concentration on the energy of spirit, the maximum dismissal from the real is the purpose of carnal abidance of the believer. Religious canons ensuring the stability of faith restrict the religious consciousness. Let us assume that the first force (unity excluding variety) cannot be the criterion of comparative and philosophical analysis.

Unlike Solovyov, Savitsky (2010) saw the indisputable influence of the Asian culture on the development of the Russian culture. The idea of the influence of the militarized statehood forms (Timur and Genghis Khan’s army) on the Russian culture was not recognized unambiguously by all modern scientists. The conceptual provisions of Savitsky deserve special attention: the development of cultures complies with the law of cyclism, the modernization of any culture, even being in stagnation, is carried out by identification of original principles.

When considering the culture of the West Solovyov (2012b) addresses the second force, which casts off the unity releasing an individual being the reason and the purpose of himself, the general is trampled upon, suppressed and turns into formality. Strangely enough but individualization leads to depersonalization, where the reality of the modern Western world serves a striking example. In traditional concepts of opposition of two worlds the essence of the western civilization is illustrated by the progressive dynamics. Unfortunately, technological and economic progress leads to spiritual degradation of the personality and society. At the end of the 19th century in his forecasts the philosopher anticipated future unconditional victory of socialism exactly in the West though the history proved that in reality it did not happen. In the comparative analysis of two forces the philosopher revealed a contradiction between technological and economic improvement and inevitable spiritual degradation. Solovyov (2012c) built an ingenious algorithm of human development from theology through philosophy to supremacy of practice-oriented science. The society ceased to delve into the reasons and meaning of phenomena following the information flow and observing the most general laws. A “faithless” person reigns the western culture.

Conceptually there is a need for the third force, a special mission of Slavic peoples and Russia as the third Rome, a special cultural and historical type. However, according to the religious philosopher, the mission the Slavic people is to save the mankind since it is the carrier of the highest (divine) force. In the development of the idea of the third force by V.S. Solovyov we saw the potential of deduction of a powerful energetic component.

Similar to V.S. Solovyov, arguing on the purpose of Russia Danilevsky (2010) considers the Slavic people as “the idea in itself and for itself”. The uniqueness of unity is declared in the logical reasoning at

the formal level. The Slavdom is implemented as “the idea outside itself” or as “the idea that went back to itself”, i.e. the Spirit, is poorly studied (Nevelev, Neveleva, & Shabatura, 2018). However, in his definition of cultural and historical types Danilevsky (2010) does not share the opinion of the Westerners and the Slavophiles on the irreconcilable opposition of the West and the East (progress and wildness), on the inevitable evolutionary absorption of the national by the universal. As evidence he refers to Russia as to the unity and continuity of cultures: Byzantine, Asian and European. We will not go into subtleties of cultural and historical types on the basis of scientific, artistic and religious ideas. Later, Danilevsky (2010) in his comparative and philosophical analysis of various cultural and historical types adds another principle – industrial (material component). The estimated cultural and historical type (mainly, Slavic), which is based on four fundamental principles, will be able to fulfill its universal purpose.

In the work *Russia and Europe: Insight into cultural and political relations of the Slavic to German-Romance world* (Danilevsky, 2010) he expresses some doubt on the possibility to perform a special mission of Russia. It is fair to assume that initially the idea of Eurasianism as “the idea in itself and for itself” is developed at the theoretical level (ingenious plan). The idea of Eurasianism as “itself outside itself” shall be embodied at the subject level of a material world. Unfortunately, the developers of the idea of Eurasianism (Danilevsky, 2010; Savitsky, 2010) rejected the idea as impracticable and unproductive. In the conditions of revolutionary cardinal changes, it failed to be accepted in Russia (Middle Land). In the West, where the philosophers emigrated, the concept of Eurasianism also failed to be widely understood. It was originally declared that Eurasia is not a geographical concept, not a certain median place between Europe and Asia, but the continent harmoniously uniting different cultural and historical types. Conceptually Russia was facing the strategic objective of “introducing Europe and Asia to the principles of genuine life” (Savitsky, 2010).

For almost hundred years the idea of Eurasianism as “the idea that went back to itself” was not developed, concretized or specified (Gegel, 1977). Within seventy years the religious principle was emasculated from our culture. Russian philosophers could not suggest anything at the level of the Spirit. The Spirit (energetic aspect) leaves the ethnos inhabiting the territory of Russia and then there is nothing to offer the mankind. At the material level and external well-being we shall catch up with the West, in terms of coalescence and unity – with the East.

Danilevsky (2010) noted different principles of cultures of the East, the West and Russia. Taking into account the comparative and philosophical analysis and thematic energetic analysis we can assume that the culture of the West lingered in general at the first and second (material and figurative) levels of human life. The culture of the East is energetically concentrated at the levels of a word and the super idea. The concept of Eurasianism was very often blamed of linearity and unilaterality. A century later it is possible to state the loss of ontological principle: the eminence to ideal, abstract, the energetic concentration of speech was out of the question. How did these metamorphoses occur?

The thematic and energetic structure of human life includes two components, which shall be clearly and theoretically distinguished in any reflection. Thematic component of life fixes subjectified and objectified aspects. It is not a dynamic form, but rather implanted in a subject. A relatively inert form deprived of dynamism or varying only slightly. Its leading property is stability, high degree of definiteness, reproducibility and in this sense “rest” as a type of the equilibrium movement. The thematic component of

life is more “man-sized”, more adequate to the speed of human activity. Custom, tradition, moral standard of human activity is based on its stability.

There is the known abstraction from the changeable aspect of life, and by means of “meta” a person holds, or even enhances the invariance of what is identified in a flow of life. The thematic component of human life inevitably implies its duplicate – active ability of a person. The activity desubjectifies a thematic form of life, transfers it to the energetic plan.

The “disappearance of concreteness” is a terrible prioritization of an actively binding principle, which is expressed in the energetic aspect of a subject. The energetic aspect is the ability of a subject to actively connect all in everything. A person as the subject acts as an idealized energetic aspect of relation, amalgamation, adhesion of all with everything. Most precisely the energetic aspect as a universal idealized active ability of relation of all with everything can be triggered by love. This all-consuming love as an ideal divine principle was at the heart of Eurasianism.

Against the background of almost disappeared concreteness and ultimate thematic uncertainty of being and here-being (person) we may state the existence of the boundary energetic focus, concentration, saturation. We face a terrible condensation of completeness of love when a person as a being is generally transformed into a place of love per se, into a place of a loving link of all with everything. The energetic aspect of this idealized state is terribly strong. A theoretical conclusion is that concreteness and energetic aspect of human life have mutually inverse trends in their development: minimum thematic definiteness of human identity, the “here-being” is accompanied by the maximum energetic focus of love. To the contrary, the maximum thematic definiteness is accompanied by the energetic minimum. Perhaps the crisis of the idea of Eurasianism is connected with the super idea weakened by energetic seizure, the idea of love, the idea of unitotality.

Is the concept of Eurasianism vital in modern realities? The development strategy of any cultural and historical type is only possible in the conditions of powerful energetic concentration on super ideas. All countries are concerned with the search of the idea directing and uniting the community members.

7. Conclusion

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