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RUSSIAN NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN NATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT AND MODERNITY

Elena. M. Amelina (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) State University of Management, 99, Ryazansky Ave., Moscow, 109542, Russia, em-amelina@yandex.ru

Abstract

The article aims to define the essence of Russian national consciousness from the point of view of representatives of Russian religious thought of the Silver Age (Soloviev, Bulgakov, Ilyin, Berdyaev). Using the method of rational reconstruction, based on the principle of historicism, the author reveals the peculiarities of Russian national self-consciousness interpretation in the views of each of the considered thinkers. The analysis of these viewpoints allows us to determine the philosophers' worldview approaches to the interpretation of such concepts as national identity, nationalism, cosmopolitanism, etc. The article describes the Russian classics' assessment of both creative aspects of the Russian national consciousness connected with Christian universalism, selflessness, "sophistication", etc., and its weak points expressed in contradictions, contemplation, passive dreaming, etc., as well. The article deals with the interpretation of the spiritual tragedy of trampling Russian national consciousness in the era of Bolshevism. The article emphasizes the heuristic value of worldview attitudes of thinkers in understanding the modern processes of unipolar globalization.

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1. Introduction

The relevance of studying national consciousness is connected with the contradictory processes of globalization taking place in the world. They appear, on the one hand, as Americanization, disappearance of national originality, and, on the other hand, as peoples' aspiration to preserve their ethnic and national originality, their traditions and ideals. Building a unipolar model of globalization based on the unification of civilizations and global superiority of one dominant player makes it relevant to analyze those views that are aimed at preserving each unique culture and non-violent consolidation of nations. The study of these views is also important for modern Russia, which has a weakened connection between generations, lacks cultural immunity, has a weak sense of its own basic identification, and its universal code of world consumerism. This situation creates the need to develop effective worldview strategies to preserve national identity, state integrity and international solidarity. In these conditions, addressing the ideas of national philosophy is very relevant, as its representatives put forward a system of ideas and values aimed at preserving the cultural identity of peoples, the ideals of cathedral unity, patriotism, mutual assistance, solidarity, service and responsibility.

It is noteworthy that the analysis of Russian national consciousness is an object of research of many modern domestic and foreign authors. To domestic researches of this question it is necessary to carry Tishkov's work (2013) – "Russian people: history and meaning of national consciousness"; fundamental work – "Modern problems of the Russian state" under the general edition of Shevchenko (2015), and also collective historical and philosophical monograph under edition of Zakharov (2017) – "Problem of nationality in Russian philosophy". Among the foreign authors should be named Andrzej Walicki (2015), a leading foreign expert on Russian philosophy and Russian idea, as well as Evert van der Zweerde (2017) and Teresa Obolevich (2014). Foreign authors such as Jules Assayag (2005), Christian Karner (2016), Lecher (2012), Manuel Castells (2019) Sheila Croucher (2018), Taijung and Hu (2015) and others also pay considerable attention to the national consciousness of nations in the context of globalization.

2. Problem Statement

The task of the study is to define the essence of Russian identity from the standpoint of representatives of Russian religious thought of the Silver Age (Berdyayev, 2010; Bulgakov, 1997; Ilyin, 2011; Soloviev, 1989), as well as to identify its actual meaning for the formation of strategies to preserve Russian national identity.

3. Research Questions

The study suggests answers to the following questions: How did religious thinkers understand the historical process and what role did they play in it? How did each of them interpret the essence of national consciousness? How, in their opinion, should nationalism and cosmopolitanism be explained? What are the peculiarities of the Russian national consciousness? What are its strengths and weaknesses? What contributes to the formation of his healthy identity? What attitudes of domestic thinkers can be used for

modern analysis of globalization processes and formation of the national survival strategy in the unipolar world? How, from the point of view of domestic thinkers, can the leveling sides of unipolar globalization processes be evaluated?

4. Purpose of the Study

The objective of the research is to reveal the essence of the ideas of Russian religious thinkers of the Silver Age about the Russian national consciousness, to reveal the constructive heuristic meaning of their interpretation of national problems for fruitful comprehension of globalization processes and preservation of Russian national identity.

5. Research Methods

Essential to the research are the theoretical provisions of modern social philosophy, according to which society should be studied as integrity, taken in its general historical evolution, and the spiritual sphere is the most important active and factor in its development. The author also uses the method of rational reconstruction, orientation on the multilateral approach to the problem, is guided by the dialectical traditions, and proceeds from the assumption that the study of national consciousness should be accompanied by the comprehension of extremes in its expression, which protects against non-critical analysis of social existence of certain historical subjects.

6. Findings

The views of domestic thinkers who entered the annals of Russian thought as representatives of the Silver Age (Berdyayev, 2010; Bulgakov, 1997; Ilyin, 2011; Soloviev, 1989) are a treasury of Russian philosophical thought. As a preliminary remark, we note that their methodology was both secular, rational and religious-metaphysical in nature. They saw the meaning of historical development as a process of overcoming the fragmentation of the world and achieving the collective unity of mankind, understood as a concrete unity that preserves individual national features. Different nations, from this point of view, are active members of the unified human organism, and the life of each of them represents a certain participation in the life of mankind with the eternally established divine plan.

According to Solovyov (1989), the founder of the Russian philosophy of unitotality, the mission of any nation is to achieve the spiritual foundation that contributes to the creation of a "world communion of life" or Divinity. The true self-consciousness of people, in this sense, was interpreted not as a thing that lies on the surface and can be understood only rationally, but as a divine craft, which people discover in themselves and for themselves as a sacral mystery. According to the thinker, every nation, as a moral being, "cannot live in itself, through itself and for itself". It is called to fulfill in the world only to her God-defined Christian mission, because "the idea of a nation is not what it thinks of itself in time, but what God thinks of it in eternity" (Solovyov, 1989, p. 220). The philosopher believed that the formation of national consciousness was a great success in the history of mankind, but developing in its original individuality, ethnicity should not fall into nationalism, as it is done by colonizers who are not capable of Christian renunciation of the national "ego". "The Englishman," he writes, "is before his victims like a

pirate; the German is like an educator, raising them for higher education. One plunders and crushes people, another destroys what is human in them" (Solovyov, 1989, p. 61). Solovyov considered the German concept of "higher cultural vocation" in politics to be deeply perverse, as evidenced by the sad shadows of exanguinated peoples who were subjected to slavery and lost their vital powers. Like Dostoevsky, he found the peculiarity of the Russian national consciousness in the worldwide responsiveness and ability to Christian self-sacrifice for the sake of universal goals. The philosopher pointed out that any nationality in praises its people and expresses its ideal. If an English man admires "old England", a Frenchman admires "beautiful France", the Russian speaks of "Holy Russia", because Russian self-consciousness wants the Christian unification of all nations on earth as a restoration of the image of the divine Trinity. Solovyov's (1989) ideas influenced the whole philosophical tradition in comprehending the national problems.

The outstanding national thinker Bulgakov (1871–1944), as well as Solovyov (Solovyov, 1989) saw the meaning of historical development in achieving the cathedral unity of mankind in God, and the meaning of the existence of nationality in its ideal Christian mission. At the same time, he also paid attention to such factors that form the consciousness of people, as a specific culture, language, territory and history. Treating the nation as a person, as a "smart essence" who has her own angel in the highlands, the philosopher pointed out at the same time that the national consciousness is connected in a unique "biologically-psychologically-spiritual sense of life", with the degree of manifestation of nationality of its creative essence or "sophism". An important role in shaping the nation's self-consciousness was played by the State, where the nation "has its own home". Since human history is a struggle of nationalities, the role of a healthy national and State organism with a developed economy and it is valued. It is the force that enables nationalities to express their consciousness in the course of history. The philosopher has identified two negative extremes that prevent the expression of a healthy national consciousness. This is cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Cosmopolitanism leads to the loss of national originality, depersonalizes and levels people. Describing this phenomenon as "impersonality", Bulgakov defined it as a kind of "ontological ugliness" and perversion of the national feeling, as it is natural for a person to love his homeland, his traditions, his fathers and mothers. The second extreme is nationalism, which, in his opinion, gives a self-sufficient and autonomous existence to the national feeling, degenerating into idolatry. Nationalism is the precedence of the flesh over the spirit, a kind of deification of the blood and body community. Only the domination of the spirit, ascetic Christian self-education of nations, and their willful impulse can contribute to the formation of a healthy self-consciousness and harmonious healthy interethnic relations. Orientation exclusively towards material enrichment can lead people to moral numbness and degeneration even more than in times of poverty.

Russian national consciousness Bulgakov considered as being in the process of change, in motion, in spiritual ups and downs. He regarded it as oscillating, not definitively becoming and less stable in relation to the self-consciousness of more mature European nations. In this regard, Bulgakov emphasized the fact that Russian self-consciousness requires work on itself: education both in the personal (development of individuality), and in the social and economic plan (opposition to Bentamism).

The philosopher criticized the dreaminess and contemplation of the Russian spirit, which dreams about the ideal, being away from the work on its implementation. Reflecting on the peculiarities of

Russian self-consciousness, the philosopher noted that "Russian genius and Russian muse, unlike German, belong not to the sphere of character and will, but to the sphere of inspiration and spiritual birth" (p. 635). If a German is "all-man" first of all with his mind, the Russian is with his heart. The source of national consciousness of Russian man should be searched, in his opinion, in the ideal image of John the Evangelist. That's why the period of domination of Bolshevik ideas in the country was assessed by the national consciousness as the loss of its sophism, feminine nature. Bolshevism was interpreted by them as an imposed, anti-Christian, volitional, violent capture of the Russian spirit. During World War II, the philosopher saw in Russia the axis and "entelechety of world history", and was convinced that the solution of the mystical mystery of history and the Christian destiny of the world depends on its struggle against Germany. He hoped that in time the spiritual nature of the Russian people would overcome Bolshevism and show the world the creative face of Russian Orthodoxy with its ideal of unity of all nations in absolute peace.

Ilyin (1883–1954) connected the self-consciousness of this or that nation with its individual "spiritual core", with its inherent spiritual beginning of life. He saw the meaning of history in revealing the religious content of social and cultural life. From his point of view, the continuous external confrontation of nations hides the difference of unique spiritual origins, the desire of one nation to impose its origins on another. People's self-consciousness derives from their inner spiritual core, which is the result of the development of their national culture and the outcome of their historical destiny. For the sake of full development of their spiritual principles, the philosopher believes, " people live from age to age, in work and suffering, falls and rises, soaring to heaven, soaring to the dole, – bearing a sort of work prayer and contemplation for the instruction of other people" (Ilyin, 2011, p. 186). The role of cultural values of people, from the point of view of Ilyin, is so great that it can decisively determine the external forms of their lives. If the European people realize themselves most fully in Catholicism, republic and democracy, the Russian people reveal themselves in the Orthodox faith, autocracy and communal way of life".

Russian self-consciousness is connected, in the thinker's opinion, with its bright spiritual identity, with a specific kind of "Russian-Slavic soul" bearing the inexhaustible mark of Orthodoxy. This Orthodox component conditioned the fact that the main values of Russian soul are connected with compassion, mercy and empathy. From the philosopher's point of view, the "Heart" beginning of the Russian people was manifested in all kinds of his creative work – in folklore, in the great Russian fiction, in Russian philosophy, in religious traditions and moral way of life. Ilyin was convinced that the features of political and legal system, economic life and social relations inherent in pre-revolutionary Russia fully reflected the specifics of its national culture and national consciousness. The philosopher criticized "sick nationalism" as a mania of greatness and aspiration to rise above other nations. A nationalist who loves his nation so much that he hates others is, from his point of view, like a man who, preferring some flowers, condemns all others, or a man who "out of love for his mother hates and despises all other mothers" (Ilyin, 1993, p. 367). The thinker pointed out that Russian self-consciousness is often characterized not by this but by the opposite extreme, expressed in a voluntary renunciation of its national origin and spiritual roots. This renunciation is accompanied by a departure from their forms of social life and the acceptance of strangers for the sake of momentary political benefits and interests.

Ilyin considered the tragedy of national identity revolt occurred to Russians during the revolution, when they experienced the greatest "state-political and national-spiritual collapse" (Ilyin, 2015, p. 24). The revolutionaries tried to trample the "national face" in the Russian consciousness. They replaced their love for Orthodoxy, Motherland and Fatherland with loyalty to the state, regime and leaders. Discussing the processes of denationalization spawned by the revolution, the philosopher pointed out that if belonging to a nation and a people, learning the spiritual experience of ancestors gives additional sources for the creative development of the individual, the person who abandoned his people is a "spiritual orphan". The loss of national soil leads him to spiritual, creative and social failure. The attempt to erase the national face of a man creates a spiritualless type of "international groundless" who has forgotten his language and spirit. Turned into a "citizen of the world" and a "class companion", such a person deprives his cultural activity of historical concreteness and degrades into an empty formality. The thinker was convinced of the need to revive genuine Russian consciousness. Russian people, in his opinion, should "observe their spiritual nature, not be seduced by other people's ways, not distort their spiritual face with artificially transplanted features and create their own life and culture ... in their own way: Russian in Russian" (Ilyin, 2015, p. 134). Popularized national consciousness requires protection and targeted revival. According to the thinker, the whole system of patriotic education in Russia should be aimed at combating the national depersonalization of children. It should familiarize them with the hearths and treasures of national culture, native language, Orthodox prayer, Russian song, Russian fairy tale, Russian poetry, etc.

Berdyayev (1874–1948) addressed the problems of national consciousness during the World Wars, which, from his point of view, testify to the spiritual decline of European humanity. The philosopher assessed the existence of nationality in history as a great specific historical value, which, "as well as any value in history has to be asserted sacrificially" (Berdyayev, 2010, p. 73). Reflecting on the nature of national consciousness and self-consciousness, the philosopher came to the conclusion that their essence cannot be fully and completely revealed by any rationally perceptible features, psychological or sociological definitions. From his point of view, the national consciousness that grew out of the consciousness of the unity of the historical destiny of people should be understood as an "irrational mystery", for the spirit of the past and present generations is simultaneously in it.

Analyzing the essence of the Russian national consciousness, the philosopher stated its duality and inconsistency, as well as lack of integrity. It is expressed through a number of antinomies: on the one hand, Russia is the most stateless country, a country of anarchic freedom of spirit; on the other hand, it is the most bureaucratic country in the world, where everything becomes a tool of politics. On the one hand, Russia is a country of endless spiritual freedom, a strange country of pilgrimage; on the other hand, it is a country of unheard, of servilism, a country of consignors and merchants. The philosopher found the source of a number of such antinomies in the unification of the masculine and feminine in the Russian spirit and Russian character. The courageous beginning does not master the feminine national element in Russia from within. It is waiting from the outside, so historically the courageous beginning was often not Russian, but foreign. The companions of weakness and torn national consciousness are also "the latent beginning of self-extermination" inherent in Russian people and their intellectuals, unwillingness to carry their historical burden and fulfill their Christian calling in the fatal moment for the motherland (Berdyayev,

2010, p. 7). But with these flaws come advantages. Berdyaev found the strengths of the Russian consciousness in its supranational orientation, in the liberating character of the national spirit. The mission of Russia, in his opinion, is lucky one, it is called to be a liberator of other people, a protector of the weak. And while the European consciousness suffers from narrowness, bourgeoisie (French spirit), isolation and narcissism ("German spirit"), the Russian spirit is characterized by domestic freedom and Christian universalism. It loves, appreciates and recognizes in the world the creative talents of all nations, which allows it to connect the East and the West. At the same time, it "has some national selflessness, sacrifice, unknown to Western people" (Berdyaev, 2010, p. 20).

The philosopher interpreted Bolshevik internationalism, which denied national consciousness and national existence, as killing a living being. From his point of view, his ideological orientation appears to be a religion of extermination, carrying the message of death. Marxist internationalism was characterized by the philosopher as "abstract poverty", which "is not a specific unity of mankind, but concludes an abstract unity that denies national individualities" (Berdyaev, 1995, p. 344). The philosopher interpreted the spiritual essence of the Third International as a distortion of the Russian idea, as a denial of the independent value and dignity of national individuality and its spiritual freedom. The philosopher understood the Soviet period of Russian history as one of the moduses of eternal Russia. He was keen on comprehending those features of the Russian people's self-consciousness that preserved the original spiritual values of their spirit. Among them he referred to the revival of humanist ideals in the works of Soviet writers, and the inexorable craving of Russian man for the universal genius of Alexander Pushkin. He interpreted these traits as a foreign existence of deep Russian origins, as a revival of inextricable traditions of humanity, inherent in the Russian national consciousness. The philosopher saw the historical task of the Russian people in the creative self-development, in the enlightenment of their national consciousness, in the acquisition of their own will, energy, "positive power and strength to fulfill their mission in the world" (Berdyaev, 2010, p. 77).

7. Conclusion

So, the historical process, from the point of view of domestic thinkers, is the process of the God-human. It is the process of overcoming the fragmentation of the world and achieving the collective unity of mankind, which is called to become a concrete unity that preserves individual national features. The meaning of history has been seen by philosophers. Russian philosophers interpreted nationality as an integral part of humanity, as an active historical subject with both phenomenal (language, territory, ethnographic features, etc.) and numeric meaning ("smart essence" with its sacred secret of historical destiny). They associated the deep essence of the national identity with the creative energy aimed at the fullness of Christian creative expression. Self-awareness was interpreted as a complex of ideas of the nationality about itself, as a form of its spiritual self-expression in culture, religion, spiritual values, state life, in attitudes towards other nationalities. In the modern era, thinkers associated the peculiarities of Russian national consciousness with the ideals of Orthodoxy, cathedral unity, Christian universalism, all humankind, patriotism, mutual assistance and service. They attributed its strengths to the absence of selfishness, individualism and bourgeoisie, spiritual openness, cordiality, sophistication, inspired by spiritual creativity, selflessness, sacrifice, liberating spirit, aspiration for the solidarity of all peoples. Its

weaknesses were associated with immaturity, bifurcation, femininity, a propensity for imitation, passive dreaming, and even the "beginning of self-destruction" hidden in it (Berdyayev). They saw threats to Russian national consciousness not in nationalism (for Russia is characterized by universalism), but in the ease of parting with indigenous traditions that lead to an interruption of native spiritual traditions.

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