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Cosmic Thinking as a Factor of Harmony of Being

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Abstract

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Modern society is characterized by a high level of scientific and technological development. But this does not solve the problem of crises in different spheres of life. The cause of the situation we are facing is seen in the tradition of abstract scientific thinking. Emerging in the New Time, this tradition excluded the spiritual constituent from the systemic consideration. This methodological approach resulted in problems in spiritual and ethical development of man.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the algorithm of the holistic cosmic thinking contributing to spiritual and ethical development of man and the harmony of Being. The object of the research is to reveal the holistic approach of cosmic thinking, its universal principles, world view peculiarities, and the system of interrelations. The research methodology is based on the holistic systemic approach stemming from the ideas of the Teaching of Living Ethics and other philosophical works. The research employs comparative philosophical analysis of the principles underlying the Bases of Being and their synthesis.

As a result of the research we obtained an algorithm of cosmic thinking expressing by itself a triune dynamics of ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects of Reality. Representing by itself a synthetic unity of life, cognition and self-perfection, the algorithm shows their systemic interrelation and mutual influence in the process of cosmic Being.

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1. Introduction

At present mankind has reached a high level of scientific and technical development. Evidently, this fact suggests a highly developed mentality on the whole. Unfortunately, this condition does not ensure a harmonious life for society. We can see lots of problems of social, ecological and political character. The cause of these is seen in imperfection of spiritual and aesthetic aspect of man's consciousness. To improve the situation, it is important to reveal the root of the problem.

It is noteworthy that a great number of philosophers, such as Soloviev, V.S. (1999), Berdyaev, N.A. (1994) and Florensky, P.A. (2001; 2003), draw our attention to the predominance of the so-called problem of "abstract sources" in the new European philosophy. Bulgakov, S.N. (1993) refers to this tradition of thinking as "logical monism". According to him, the core of the problem lies in the fact that in these philosophical systems "one side, or only one part of integral reality wants to be seen as a whole <...> claims to be absolute philosophy" (Bulgakov, 1993: 312-313).

They use any possible methods to achieve this goal. It results in errors of thinking that affect practical activities and behavior. Being accumulated, they turn into global economic, political and military problems of mankind threatening the life of the planet.

In connection with the aggravated problem of harmony in the relationship between people and the surrounding world it may be helpful to reconsider the peculiarities of the holistic philosophical approach. The purpose of the article is an attempt to understand the fundamental features of the holistic approach represented in the philosophical tradition of cosmic thinking. The subject of the research is the system of principles of holistic approach of cosmic thinking, its philosophical peculiarities and the universal system of interrelation. The article supports the idea that mastering the principles of cosmic thinking by people and their aspiration to apply them to real life will be a great contribution to the harmony of Being and evolutionary development of man and society.

The research methodology is based on the holistic systemic approach presented to this or that extent in the works of different researchers in the history of philosophical thought including the Russian cosmism. This approach was best expressed in the cosmic world look of the Teaching of Living Ethics. The methodological principle of the Three-Hypostases Essence of the Bases of Being revealed in its basis provides opportunities for systemic solution of the problem of synthesis of ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects of Reality. The research employs comparative philosophical analysis of principles underlying the Bases of Being as well as their synthesis. Ideas of the founders of philosophy, philosophers-cosmists, Berdyaev, N.A. (1994), Bulgakov, S.N. (1993), Florensky, P.A. (2001; 2003), Roerich, H.I. (2000a; 2000b; 2006), Roerich, N.K. (1995; 1996), The Teaching of Living Ethics (2003; 2011), etc., Shaposhnikova, L.V. (2005), et al are connected with this scientific trend.

2. Cosmic Being as integrity of life, cognition and improvement

The author starts off from the principle of self-sufficiency and self-organization of the Absolute in Eternity and Infinity. According to Roerich, H.I. (2000b: 252), the Absolute occasionally appears in Manifested and Non-Manifested Being. In its essence, this utterance is conformable with the following well-known philosophical thesis - "All in One and One in All" - which, in fact, expresses the universal

Essence of the Absolute in its opposite states. In their unity, they make up the Cycle of self-organization of the Absolute which functions as a basic principle of the spiral movement underlying the manifested cosmic Being

In this context, to describe the holistic dynamic cosmic Reality occasionally manifested in Eternity from an Integral, Absolute, or Divine Source a relevant holistic philosophical approach is needed. That is, on the one hand it should provide theoretical adequacy in reflecting the unchangeable structure of relations stemming from the Bases of Being as an integrity of ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects in an integral philosophic system. On the other hand, in compliance with these aspects, it should as well appear in the real peculiarity of its practical synthetic implementation as a trinity of life, cognition and perfection. Under the holistic approach, these aspects are inseparable. Cognition and perfection are impossible without life as well as life is senseless and self-destroying without cognition and perfection.

Thus, in the integrity of its theoretical and practical meaning, the holistic approach appears to be a really efficient algorithm of both a holistic systemic thinking and the self-organizing cosmic Being of the Absolute. It was as early as in ancient times when Parmenides mentioned the synthetic integrity of thinking and being: "Thinking and the thought that it is are the same; for you will not find thinking apart from what is, in relation to which it is uttered" (Anthology of world philosophy. Antiquity, 2001: 53). Therefore, it becomes clear that it is the adequacy of the thinking process to the principles of thinking underlying the Bases of Being that creates the preconditions for both true cognition and true harmony of life and, hence, natural evolutionary cosmic development of man.

The above mentioned makes it clear that the synthetic quality of the holistic approach also suggests using a synthetic categorical-conceptual apparatus. Let us take a closer look at these theses.

Holistic philosophical approach and the tradition of abstract thinking contrasted

The problem of the holistic approach in understanding Being has existed at all the historic stages of the development of philosophy. The New European tradition of abstract thinking has made it even more topical. Despite their different, sometimes incompatible philosophical views, many representatives of various philosophical schools strived for developing the holistic approach in the XIX-XXth centuries. In the Russian philosophy many researchers were united by the fact that their philosophical system presupposed the understanding of Being in close connection with the Absolute, or the Divine Source. But at the same time the Absolute also represented the Outcome for all the existing things as well as the criterion of Truth. The inseparable unity of the Source, The Outcome and the Existence of manifested Being as structural elements of the self-organizing dynamics of the Absolute gave birth to the principles of the synthetic research methodology of the holistic approach. These principles were employed in this or that way by representatives of different schools creating a prerequisite of their cohesion. For example, here is what Florensky P.A. wrote about the existence in the holistic reality of Divine spiritual energy which is invisible in relation to the visible physical reality: "...in my world, the physical as such, i.e. regardless of its pervasion with spiritual and occult energies, does not exist" (2001: 248). Roerich H.I. pointed out that under the holistic approach of understanding

Being it is important to keep in mind the following: “Synthesis is summarization of the processes of the Visible and the Invisible Being” (2001: 252).

In the context of their research all the philosophers made their own contribution to understanding and further development of the holistic approach creating a more and more complete representation of the holistic research methodology. For instance, Florensky, P.A. who understood the Absolute I as the Subject of the Truth existing in the dynamics of its three potential states or Persons (I, You, He) reasoned: “Self-validity and self-grounding of the Subject of Truth of I is the relation of He through You. Through You the subjective I becomes the objective He, and in the latter it has its validation, its objectivity as I.” (Florensky, 2003: 66). In fact, by this Florensky, P.A. reveals the fundamental substantive elements of the potential of Absolute I in the process of cyclical Manifestation of the Absolute which Roerich, H.I talks about in the citation above. This also may be understood as the expression of the principle of spiral motion described by Blavatskaya, H.P. (1992).

Reasoning about the holistic cognition from this angle, Blavatskaya, H.P. also notes: “To make of Science an integral whole necessitates, indeed, the study of spiritual and psychic, as well as physical Nature” (1992: V.1. B. 2, p. 734). Berdyaev, N.A., who confirms this thesis on the whole, writes that “philosophical cognition is a spiritual act which employs not only the intellect but also a complex of spiritual powers of man, his emotional and volitional essence” (Berdyaev, 1994: C. 235).

Let us go back to S.N. Bulgakov’s reasoning. After mentioning the drawbacks of the new European tradition of abstract thinking, he finds a relevant holistic pattern in the structure of sentence which in its essence is the trinity of the subject, the predicate, or in other words the statement about the subject, and the linking verb.

Thus, according to Bulgakov, S.N., the structure of the sentence “I am something (potentially everything)” (Bulgakov, 1993: 317) expresses both the ontological and epistemological aspects of the integral structural organization of the Bases of Being. In this structure “I” ontologically is the subject, or as Bulgakov puts it: “Spirit is a living sentence constantly realizing itself” (Bulgakov, 1993: 318]. On the other hand, the epistemological aspect expressing the way of integral judgment as the self-consciousness of “I” is also represented in the sentence pattern. As Bulgakov says, “it is sentence that lies in the basis of self-consciousness” (Bulgakov, 1993: 318].

Taking into account the ideas of the Teaching of Living Ethics and the above mentioned philosophers belonging to different schools it should be noted that the given system of relationships also contains an axiological aspect. In the context of the holistic approach it expresses the semantic value of the proposition from the angle of its validity or conformity with the supreme principles of Absolute Being. The Living Ethics states that “Love is the leading, life-giving source. <...> Love is the crown of Light” (The Teaching of Living Ethics, 2011: 140). We can find similar quotations about Love as the nature of God in the works by Florensky, P.A.: “God is Love..., i.e. love is the divine essence, His true nature” (Florensky, 2003: 83) and other authors. It means that man’s judgments and activities take on a truly creative character if they are directed at Common Good, are filled with Love to the world and its Divine Source. On the contrary, a piecemeal abstract way of thinking which does not systemically take into consideration this moment will have a conditional, probabilistic character fraught with egoistical, selfish manifestations.

As it was mentioned above, in the context of the holistic approach words, concepts and judgments acquire a synthetic character. In other words, in contrast to pure neutral abstractions, they are perceived as real born substances containing energy of a certain quality and able to interact with the surrounding world. This is what Florensky, P.A. discusses in “The Watershed of Thought” in the chapter titled “The Magic of Word” (Florensky, 2001: 244-265). Not taking into account this circumstance may bring down man’s responsibility for his thoughts and words.

From the methodological angle, the empirical and rational research instruments used in the tradition of abstract thinking are not sufficient for integral understanding and veritable solving the problems of Being, on all levels including the cosmic level. The fact is that in this case we only take into consideration what is accessible for empirical perception and can be understood with the use of rational methods. The hyper-rational, metaphysical, or the so-called spiritual aspect of Being is left out beyond the systemic comprehension. It is a structural element of integrity, the element that interconnects separate forms of life, processes and phenomena of cosmic Being in a single system at all levels of its hierarchical organization. From the methodological angle, the essence of spiritual aspect has not been thoroughly studied by the modern scientific thought. But the existence of a certain profound reality gapped by traditional empirical and theoretical methods of cognition is not to be excluded today. In research process the manifestation of this reality is designated as “intuition”. In the Teaching of Living Ethics this phenomenon of spiritual interrelation with the Bases of Being is called “sense knowledge”. Due to this, there sometimes happen prominent discoveries of new natural laws revealing profound mysteries of Being. The synthetic quality of sense knowledge is linked to the activities of a spiritually developed heart. Many philosophers devoted their speculations to the philosophy of heart. Yurkevich, P.D. (1990), Soloviev, V.S. (1999), Florensky P.A. (2003), Vysheslavtsev, B.P. (1994), Ilyin, I.A., (2002), Berdyaev, N. A. (1994) et al are among them. In the Teaching of Living Ethics, there is a book devoted to this problem which is called "The Heart".

In the context of the holistic approach a spiritually developed heart is, on the one hand, the implementation of the higher “I” of man (i.e. motivating their activities from the angle of the true knowledge, consciousness, goodness, beauty, unlike the lower, egoistical and selfish “I” when it dominates over man’s judgment). And on the other hand, the heart is the centre of a human being’s connection with the Absolute Divine I. That is why the research tools of the holistic approach necessitate ennoblement with the spiritual energy of the true belief and the sense knowledge of heart. Lacking this spiritual cordial synthesis man’s thinking becomes ephemeral, opportunistic, unreliable from the angle of truth with all the ensuing practical consequences.

Today it is important to methodologically improve man’s way of thinking so that it will be able to reflect the real structure and laws of cosmic Being.

Structural elements of cosmic thinking and their characteristic features

Unfortunately, the brief format of the article does not allow giving a detailed presentation of peculiarities of cosmic outlook. Based on the author’s research some aspects of which have been presented previously (Svyatokhina, 2013; 2015a; 2015b), a number of theses making up the platform

for judgments and conclusions can be formulated. They are supported by the literature mentioned above. Among important features inherent in cosmic thinking we can point out the following.

The principle of self-sufficiency and self-organization of the Absolute in Eternity and Infinity is realized due to its Spiritual and Material nature. The thesis that the world: “is composed of various combinations of differentiations of the One element - Spirit-Matter” (Roerich, 2006: 24), for example, was formulated by Roerich, H.I. This universal basis of the world allows to ensure its diversity on the one hand, and its harmonious unity and development on the other. “The world is one in the consonance of spirit.” (The Teaching of Living Ethics, 2003: 307).

At the heart of development there lies the law of spiral movement and variation of vibration of all-source spiritual and material energy of manifested forms of life from minimal to maximal and vice versa. Various harmonious combinations of them create the greatness of Cosmic Being.

Complete evolutionary Cycle of Manifestation consists of a descending, involutorial part, and ascending, evolutionary constituent. In the first, involutorial part of the Cycle there takes place a process of the so-called “descent of spirit into matter”. It provides evolutionary preparation for the human form of Being which is the main one at this stage. Unlike sub-human forms (animals, plants, minerals etc.), and due to its structural organization, human cosmic form of life reaches the state of the microcosm, or the similarity of Macrocosm. This provides an opportunity for realization of the second part of the Cycle, the evolutionary one, “the ascent of spirit from matter”.

Initially this cosmic process is intended to be realized through spiritual perfection of a human essence in the process of historic development. The following stages may be defined as Divine-Human, Divine and so on, according to the stages of Spiritual Cosmic Hierarchy aspiring to the Infinite. In the context of the holistic approach which employs the category of Eternity it becomes evident that the stages of Spiritual Cosmic Hierarchy are not abstract judgments about Reality to reach by people in their spiritual development. The Spiritual Hierarchy of Human Cosmic Beings who have passed the human stage of development in earlier cycles is the true Reality of Cosmic Being that so far has not been considered by the existing research methodology. Pointing out an outstanding contribution of these Cosmic Teachers and Instructors to the development of mankind at all stages of its history Shaposhnikova, L.V. writes: “... representatives of the animated Cosmos, or Cosmic Hierarchs, emerge on the earth to bring man knowledge, expand his consciousness, and explain things unperceived by the moment” (Shaposhnikova, 1996: 326).

Thus, the maximal Cycle of Manifestation of the Absolute includes all the system of Hierarchically organized cycles, or forms, of life up to minimal, relating to the beginning of the evolutionary way. All forms of life and their natural evolutionary development are formed basing on the single principle arising from the Three-Hypostases Essence of the Bases of Being which also generates integral laws of cosmic Being. In this research the most actual of them are the law of Reincarnations and the law of Cause and Effect.

According to the holistic approach the Essence of the Bases of Being is seen as a Three-Hypostasis unity of Life, Mind and Love of Absolute I. Each Hypostasis performs its own indispensable function in self-organization of integrity of the Absolute in Eternity and Infinity. Moreover, each Hypostasis is impossible without the other two.

Thus, the Hypostasis of Life (the ontological aspect) expresses the principle of an integral organization of Manifested Being of the Absolute, which is only possible in the trinity with the hypostases of Mind and Love of the Absolute “I”.

The hypostasis of Mind (the epistemological aspect) in the process of manifestation of the Absolute is a three-link system of the cycle of Spiral Movement understood as “*I – not I – not not I*”. In fact, this double negation is the expression of the cycle of the development of self-consciousness of the manifested potential of Absolute *I*. That is, *I* in the manifestation of part of its potentialities as *not I*, completes its cycle as *not not I* with some new potential for the next manifestation cycle. From the angle of its structural organization, it is a system with a feedback giving an opportunity to estimate and control one’s own activities and development as well as move towards cosmic evolution, or involution. At the same time, the system with full feedback in the limit is synthesis (Razumov & Blagodatskikh, 2006: 267) or the Single, the Absolute.

The hypostasis of Love of Absolute *I* (axiological aspect), being the energy nature of the Divine Absolute, is called upon to give birth and harmonize all around. Love is the condition of self-organization of the Absolute in Eternity and Infinity. In the cycle of manifestation of potentialities of the Absolute, Love is the criterion of the true estimation of man’s conscious activities and the condition of his evolutionary development. This conclusion is drawn from the principle of functioning of the system with a positive feedback. According to it, the positive sign of the feedback loop, i.e. conformable with the input signal of the system, is its development.

In this context, the Principle of Absolute *I* symbolizes the synthetic Centre of manifestation of universal energy of Love, Life and Mind of the Absolute. In the Teaching of Living Ethics this centre is called Heart. That is, in the system of Three-Hypostases structural organization “*I*” is the synthetic centre, the heart of integrity, or form of life of this or that kind, as well as of her consciousness. Roerich H.I., writes: “Spirituality, first of all, is consciousness, and consciousness is the foundation of the Universe. Each atom has its consciousness, as wherever there is life there is consciousness; but, of course, its gradations are infinite” (Roerich, 2000a: 88). Actually, Heart is not merely the centre of the manifested integrity, or form of life, but the centre of life’s consciousness and contact with the surrounding world and the Bases of Being.

3. Spiritual potential of cosmic thinking

The research showed that the potential of cosmic thinking gives mankind not only new opportunities of cognition but opens new horizons of cosmic Being, creates preconditions for man’s forming truly responsible thinking aspiring to the harmony of Being.

The necessity of man’s spiritual perfection and developing the best qualities of his heart acquires special significance. The fact is that due to its central position in the structure of organizing integrity, the heart is actually the connection point of the Divine Source giving life to all, and the Divine Outcome expressing the purpose and the sense of the manifested Being. In its essence, the period between the beginning of manifestation of human life form and its completion is the opportunity of cosmic evolutionary development for heart and mind. But its realization is only possible as a result of assimilation of man’s own life aspirations and cognitive activities with Divine Source based on creative

spiritual energy of Love. Otherwise, only involution, or the descent of human nature to lower levels of development is possible, which will mean having to retake the cycles.

In the process of evolution the scale of heart's activity and self-organization opportunities expand significantly due to the laws of cosmic Being. The Teaching of Living Ethics says: "I advise, first of all, to pay attention to the heart as the source of the predestined unification of the worlds. It should not be thought that Hierarchy is only discipline; it is the advance into the Higher World" (2003: 217-218). This means that new, larger-scaled cosmic opportunities of man's Being are disclosed through the spiritual development of heart.

According to the Teaching of Living Ethics, after having successfully passed the human stage of evolutionary development, the Spiritual Cosmic Hierarchy of Human Beings aspires in the Infinity. They possess deep knowledge about the laws and principles of Cosmic Being and successfully implement them into the life of Cosmos. Only laws based on the Truth, Beauty and Common Good can lead to harmonious collaboration and creative activities of Spiritual Cosmic Hierarchy. Only man's conforming qualities will be the engine to engage them in this creative process and further evolutionary development. "Merger with the Cosmic rhythm is the Foundation of all Transcendental provisions" noted Roerich H. I. (Roerich, 2000b: 253).

From the above said it is clearly seen that the energy of Love is connected with the spiritual sphere of the heart's activity. That is why cosmic thinking can manifest itself increasingly alongside with man's spiritual and aesthetic development. This, in its turn, will contribute to the harmony of Being and man's cosmic evolution.

4. Conclusion

As it was shown above, the New European Tradition of abstract thinking does not contain the necessary methodological potential to solve the problem of harmony of Being. As a solution, the author used the already existing in the history of philosophical thought holistic approach including the Russian cosmism and the Teaching of Living Ethics where it is most fully represented.

The author's contribution consists in formulating the principle of the Three- Hypostases Essence of the Absolute Bases of Being (encompassing the trinity of the ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects) and the holistic synthetic algorithm of cosmic Being as the trinity of life, cognition and self-perfection stemming from it.

These research tools allowed to see that in the context of abstract thinking man activates only intellectual, empirical and rational, potential leading to a relative, piecemeal result. It fails to reach an integral synthetic perception of reality as the spiritual and ethical, or axiological, aspect of the holistic thinking connected with the activity of the heart is not taken into consideration. But, as it was shown, the heart is the centre of the structural organization of integrity and carries the spiritual energy connection with the Bases of Being on the basis of Love. The exclusion of the backbone structural element from the process of thinking leaves it without the source of energy and the criterion of verity and only supports its external shape. That is why the results of such a piecemeal thinking are fraught with arbitrariness, disharmony, lack of vitality.

The holistic cosmic thinking stemming from the eternal principles of the Absolute Bases of Being includes not only empiric and rational but also spiritual and ethical aspect of heart activity in the structure of thinking. The research showed that the principles of cosmic synthetic thinking contain a unique potential for spiritual and aesthetic development of man's consciousness encouraging him to put higher, eternal values resulting from the Bases of Being into real practice of life. Such a systemic ideological attitude in man's consciousness creates objective conditions for spiritual and moral self-perfection as well as successful solutions to practical challenges, such as maintaining peace and creativity in the Common Good. This is an important background of the harmony of Being.

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