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Axiological Aspects of Imperial Culture Development

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This article is devoted to highly wide-spread in humanitarian study term «imperial value system». As it is seen from contemporary public practice, this topic, due to Russian polyethnic structure, possesses considerable potential. This work contains researchers' ways of «imperial value system» analysis, author's opinion. The article is dedicated to researchers of imperial history and culture.

Keywords: Imperial culture, value system, multiculturalism, nation.

Points

The latest social transformations lead to qualitative changes both in social-cultural situation and in people's consciousness. Disintegration of multi-national states, «above-ethnic» social-cultural systems and ideologies strained potentially conflict situation, followed by rather painful «reappraisal of values». The whole former social-cultural tradition, system of values and moral aims of past fell under doubt.

Authors remark that some ways of solving problem exist, and the necessary choice is done. Thus, V.S. Malakhov's opinion: «vague image of now-being-constructed official ideology seems no features of cultural pluralism», that «is evidence rather of official monoculture construction than of effective multiculturalism model thinking-over» (Malakhov, 2001. P. 17). On the other side, thesis of «multiculturalism thread» causing total ethnisation of identity and

decreasing of above-ethnic identification to a local ethnically homogenous society, gets a great support. (Drobizheva, 2003.)

These topics are very up-to-date for Russia having endured for a short time test of «ideas of ethnicion» and multiculturalism in its sharp forms – ethnic conflicts and cultural above-ethnition reviving ideology as a conception of «liberal empire», «net empire» and other imperial constructors.

«Empire» in Russia is really highly demanded for. While empire's specific features as economical and political system are discussed and researched, imperial culture «thin matters» of mental and psychological levels opened new layers to researchers.

In author's opinion, clarification of actual character of the imperial culture, that is its axiological semantic field is determined by a number of reasons. First, methodological argues about imperial culture phenomena, values and

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imperial way of consciousness are still have a place, which causes opposite opinions based on the same data. These opinions are often estimative. Second, due to problem extensiveness wide topical issues (eg. imperial identity, imperial evaluation system) are beyond researchers' view. Third, ideas of great differences between value basics of European and Russian imperial cultures are highly wide-spread in modern scientific knowledge.

While researching imperial systems scientists make stress on theirs' peculiarity that may be explained by plenty of ways to classify empires. But, L.V. Anzhiganova notices: »human nature itself is indivisible, so basic ways of learning world over culture must be identical also. Culture specific character is, maybe, not only in speaking of different matters, but also in speaking on the same matters, reflecting them in one's own way» (Anzhiganova, 2006. P. 92-93).

Variability of social-cultural reality and activity reflection in consciousness is explained by strict differences in values of different nations. That means that for better understanding of nation's cultural identity it's necessary to mention value system as a basis of its ideology (Tishkov, 2003).

So it's necessary to define what is a place of values' system within the culture; what is the difference between ethnical values and imperial ones; which values of imperial culture determine culture generation process, cultural expansion and creation of imperial ideology? Which of them are evidence of imperial disintegration and beginning of values' ethnisation? What is the influence of this process on imperial ethnos?

First of all, note that «value» term means humanitarian, social and cultural meanings of different things. Values are functionally-meaning. But they play a role of motive of consciousness

and are considered as value orientations. «Value orientations» can be represented as ideological, political, moral, esthetical and different basics for person to evaluate environment and orientation there. Without value orientations all values just play a role of ideal category, and only within valuable orientations they have their own functional meaning. Valuable orientations are created through adoption of social practice and are discovered in aims, ideals, opinions, interests and so on. During discovering of valuable orientations we can re-create in general original value system of nation culture, that is its real specific character.

Looking on nowadays researchings of imperial culture, note that it is often considered as a problem of above-ethical societies' analysis, that is explained by expelling of imperial studies out of researchers field up to 1990-th. multinational states tried to avoid marking specific characters of theirs' own social-cultural situation in imperial terms. Nevertheless, basic views on value system of culture were put. Thus, A.G. Vishnevskiy notes that states of empire as unided phenomenon are mythological, so «imperial culture» is an ideological myth. In his opinion, empire consisted of lots of «sub-societies» and ethnical cultures spread in different territories and times, so imperial culture and value system was «indifferent» (Vishnevskiy, 1998).

In A. Prasauskas's opinion: «...durability of multi-national states and limits of efficient communication between groups depend on social-cultural differencies. Their depth and incompatibility are main cause of unstable poly-ethnical states and all states of imperial type» (Prasauskas, 1997). Author comes to conclusion that besides features which are typical for all mankind and political institutions nothing could join, for example, Letts and Turkmen in Russian Empire, and Englishmen and Indians in the British Empire.

Followers of the third opinion suppose that creation of above-ethnic system and self-realizing as a member of this community supposed collective self-recognition and smoothed meaning of ethnic identity and ethnic value system (Buligina, 1999; Barulin, 2000; Achiezer, 2002).

Appealing to axiological way to cultural system researchings has a plenty of reasons. Axiological way considers cultural values as basic categories in spite of culture type. Cultural structure are considered to be system unity of three basic components, which are discovered both in imperial and non-imperial social-cultural systems. First, it's value's «core», which is created during ethno genesis, hold culture from disintegration and determines quantity of borrowings. Second, «defense bell», which contains mechanisms of culture's conservation and development through time and space: traditions, customs, symbols (Anzhiganova, 2006).

Hierarchy of culture core is formed by specific outside (spatial) and inside factors of nation existence. So, spatial factors are territorial specifications which determine types of economic way of life as a way of adaptation to the Nature. determination of territorial factor which defines one ethnos from another, is based on the fact that during ethno genesis all nations are in definite territory. Environmental factors during ethno genesis leave definite traces in ethnic image and value system of a nation (Gachev, 1994). Author supposes that depending on environment three basic types of ethnic communities can be defined: adapting (which are adapted to environment to survive), transforming (which are transform their own and outside nature), reformative (which reform outside nature).

The first appear in rather unfavorable climate conditions, which demand special conditions for survival. Second category are nations in favorable conditions, which do not bring real threat for survival and do not demand transformation of

nature. It helped to develop their own nature, to attend to spiritual self-perfection. Third category consisted of nations which were formed in favorable but rather strict outside conditions that stimulated transforming forces and wishes to become more independent from nature.

Conditions of creating and habitation of nation are conducive to fastening of mood and psychological patterns. It's not hard to tell which environment was ethno genesis of most adopting to imperial building nations was followed by.

Empires are often met in general history, that gives researchers opportunity to classify them depending on criteria into marine and continental, classical and pseudo-empires. On the other hand, we cannot note that periods of spreading and wellness were changed by crisis, decay and territorial disintegration. Values of surviving and development alternate between cultures of basic and non-basic nations. For example, Mongol dominion was unfavorable. But this does not abolish its importance for Russian culture in whole. Mongol dominion has changed into ethnic raise and finally – into Russian empire as a type of continental empires. For Mongols, rather difficult age up to XIII century has changed into Chingizids' reign through over the Pacific Ocean up to Eastern Europe (nomadic empire); the Great Britain's history had both Norman invasion and «White empire» (marine empire type). So we can suppose existence of very important geopolitical factor. Here favorable circumstances are absence of strong neighbors with «imperial ambitions» or, at least, security, different development dynamic (one ethnos's prosperity during another ethnos's crisis).

Danger of destroying which empire is faced turns on «self-reservation» mechanism which could be compared with an instinct; this mechanism starts basic values: family, ethnic and tribal ones. Nation prosperity under good circumstances starts growth values: honor, duty, courage, heroism.

Internal component of nation existence has not lesser meaning than internal (spatial) one. Y.V. Popkov and E.A. Tugashev note that «social cooperation constructs quite different (in comparison with natural and climate conditions) basis of social development, change of which creates historical process as it is. Due to actual historical significance social organism gets all-sufficient character and comparative independence from the environment» (Popkov, Tugashev, 2006. P. 128).

But it is necessary to divine dominative values of person, ethnos and a state in whole. In K. Kasyanova's opinion, «in person's consciousness social archetype stands against stage ideology and is a keeper of former cultures' values» (Kasyanova, 2003). Thus, imperial culture like ethnical one can be observed in two levels: level of ethnical conscious and an individual one.

On the first level positioning within the ethnical world has place, nation's role and place are determined. Ethnical cultures have it in quite clear localizations in specific field, which is estimated superlatively: the best place, centre of universe, space under «sky» opposite to districts as Barbarian, cold, divided by ethical so as state borders. These conceptions is concerned with necessity to consolidate heirs own ethnical existence. The absence of clear ethnical and state borders is explained by necessity to spread its own existence and wish to fulfill the whole empire. For example, ethnical borders of imperial core for Russian ethnos in empire period are expressed through categories of central, or great-Russian provinces; for Anglo-Saxons of imperial period – through «Little England» category and so on.

On the second level representatives of proper superiority are fixed, which are expressed by ethnical cultures in the statement: we are the people, differ from the others superlatively. In imperial above-ethnical culture: we are builders of the new, we have the Truth, and our aim is

to bring the truth to all who are ignorant. And this way is determined by the aim. I.e. the same superlative exists, which is reflexed in social statuses of non-ethnical character: «builders of the empire» (The British Empire), «state people» (Russian Empire), «people of long will» (Mongol Empire); these statuses play the role of culturally-identification models of the new above-ethnical culture.

So, speaking of the imperial culture and a corresponding above-ethnical identity, we speak about cultural, social and political values (basic categories), stereotypes and ideas (periphery and protective belt), which differ from ethnical ones. The essence of the imperial culture and above-ethnical identity is presence, on the one hand, of values and ideas; on the other hand, ethnical identity due to which classification of a person as imperial culture and tradition representative, takes place. Imperial values, indeed, are relevant values during ethnical and cultural raise. These values do not abolish nation identity but just turn it to the second stage.

Values and cultural-identity concepts within the empire seem to be objects for classification not for everybody from the main ethnos at all. These are accepted values, being adopted and integrated into consciousness by the most energetic part of the nation, which finally construct reigning elite. Durability of the elite's existence determine the adaptation measure of newly-adopted values into consciousness.

Example

The beginning of empires' creation in New times coincided with radical changes in a row of European countries, which lead to loose of all recent mechanisms and objects of identification and necessity to restore the united world in the new forms. Basic social-cultural agents – social corporations, reflected within theirs' own culture basic trends **of the** New age epoch, were formed

around new value concepts. On the same time, we can tell that building of the new social and cultural hierarchy concerned the elite mostly, whereas a mass culture gives pale vision.

Value concepts of «serving man», «empire builder», voluntary accepted social statuses of «state servants», «empire singers», «pioneers» being formed in European and Russian culture, during imperial creation found a basis in vital needs of the ethnos which is on the early stages of ethnical growth. Such definitions as «honor», «duty», «success» and «serving» expressed strict need not only to strengthen unique ethnos and its elite existence, but also widespread it. These needs increase receptivity to new exciting ideas, changes and heroism. The role of charismatic leaders and elite increases.

It is noted by researchers that religious concepts of ethnos move to the background side by side with ethnical identity and they are often discredited. The sacred sphere of preceded ethnical history leaves the space for new ideological concepts.

For example, new ideology of Peter's reforms stood opposite to Medieval, its ideas and values. Peter the First's reforms were marked as novelty, in which Russia seemed to be a «new-born» having no own history. These processes affected a field of something symbolic. Sacred, above-ethnical Emperor figure stood opposite to symbols of ethnical character which were also sacred. Idea united Russian ethnos as the last keepers of the pure Christian faith, stood against the idea of spreading this faith, where the State took a great role. «Secularization of culture takes quite a new role: it does not delight fews (closed performances under tzar Aleksey Michaylovich. – A.Y.), but educates society in a whole or, at least, that only part of it which can be reached by the hand of reign, creating new paradigm» (Zhivov, 1996. P.65). These processes strictly affected the elite. Russian Liberals and

Radicals up to the end of the XIX century finally came apart the Church, considering it to be «a support of reaction», but meant special Russian type of spirituality. Orthodoxy is still kept as a basis only by the most conservative party of Russian elite and intelligentsia, thinking of it as a value: «notion of God, eternal life aims, finality of real life itself» (Tikhomirov, 1997. P.5). It is the spirituality that replaces religious functions, Orthodoxy as identity objects leaves a space for ideology (Lotman, 1992).

The attribute of spiritual things in value hierarchy in other culture, the British one, also was substituted for principles of sacred ethic, racial (ethnocultural, not anthropological meaning) superiority and national spiritual community.

Within «person – above-personal» communication context the British spiritual oneness were determined by distillation of spiritual unity of Anglo-Saxon race claiming of real racial differentiation into «the lowest» and «the highest». Up to the middle of the XIX century inside the mother country thoughts of world Anglo-Saxon brotherhood as a source of spiritual might of the country – «Little England» were wide-spread. Artistic realization of imperial person disposition reached its peak in works of R. Stephenson, A. Konan-Doyle and R. Kipling which were highly wide-spread in Russia also.

Mongol empire was not exception. Chingizid's empire was based on spiritual, moral categories: «Virtues which he (Chingishan – A.Y.) appreciated most of all were truth, devotion and courage. Vices he disdained and hated most of all were treachery, faithlessness and cowardice» (Trubeckoy, 1995. P. 217). Imperial values of Chingishan and his people, separated from relative places adopted religious meaning as if they were given by the God. Violation of these norms «more scary than death for them» (Trubeckoy, 1995. P. 218). Religious and philosophical conceptions of former epoch during prosperity of Chingizid's

empire were changed by ideological constructions which do not differ belief specifications.

The aim of imperial ideology spreading within the imperial society – ideal type of personality – formal, controllable, having impersonal loyalty to higher organs, based on «practical activity» (Lebedeva, 1999. P. 105). Honor, courage, duty, fame, exploit are claimed to be a most valuable qualities. Practice of self-positioning with heroic and generally useful deeds became an attribute of specially imperial businesses.

During imperial crisis when it is necessary to keep and develop the empire, the interest to the religion and ethnical identification revivals. The researchers note that among Russian and British imperial societies in the XIX century ideological motivation prevails (Aron, 1993). The imperial elite actively states «imperialism», cult of «imperial heroes» in the press and among the population.

At the same time, the intelligentsia notes imperial and above-ethnical ideology crisis, necessity to keep ethnical core of the empire. N.A. Berdyaev notes: «significant legend lies at the basis of Russian history – legend of Varangian vocation for reigning Russia. It is so typical for fatal Russian unwillingness to put its life into an order by itself! Russian people wants not free state, not freedom within state, but freedom out of state... Russian ethnos does not want to be a courageous builder...» (Berdyaev, 1990. P. 5). This unconscious obedience of Russian nation lead it, in Berdyaev's opinion, to creation of huge despotic state, in which «Russian nation's heart was not interested» (Berdyaev, 1990. P.5). Contradiction of above-ethnical, state and ethnical aspects shatter empire, determine search of ideological basic of

co-existence and reservation of official nation, imperial confederation, revives ethnition values: order, justice, equality, safety, stability and so on.

Resume

So, it becomes evident that «to combine state and ethnical identity, – as notes L.M. Drobizheva, – the State must build a system of mutual understanding and confidence» (L.M. Drobizheva, 2003. P. 26). In this society model every nation, ethnical group becomes interested in consolidating state. Looking to real imperial and cultural units, we can see that imperial culture is formed in specific historical situation, its values are constants of the new, imperial consciousness. These values are expressed in ideology, in which the elite identifies itself. Comparison of values accepted by the empire independently of imperial type allows to note row of coincidence: 1) collectivism (in form of property, solidarity etc.); 2) confessional pluralism (as domination of internal religiosity regarding imperial ideas and symbols); 3) multiculturalism; 4) main freedom; 5) sacrificiality.

Nations, are situated into imperial area, «settle down» to its internal processes, accept values. Paradox is that the price of empire and civilization (many authors seem this concepts to be equal) is often loose of proper ethnical identity of basic and «settled down» nations. Empire, which was created for satisfaction value orientations of new elite, can not reflex cultural and national diversity of nations whose development dynamics differ. Problem noted existed during history of The Russian Empire, The Soviet Union and still is faced Russian Federation while choosing between national empire or civil society.

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