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National Idea in Russia: Cultural and Historical Genesis and Factors of Actualization

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The article is devoted to the problem of national idea in Russia in the context of sustainable cultural meanings. The subject of this research is determined by actualization in the modern Russian public consciousness of various, sometimes contradictory, ideological concepts originating both in pre-revolutionary times and in the Soviet period. The article questions the well-known thesis that proletarian Cultural Revolution meant complete destruction of Russian traditional culture. The purpose of the current research, thus, is to clarify philosophical-cultural nature of fundamental national ideas of various eras in the Russian history. Through the example of literary process of 19th — 20th centuries Russia by the method of comparative philosophical-literary and cultural analysis using semiotic and phenomenological approaches, the article reveals the unity and difference of contexts of the Russian national idea of different eras; the aspects of its major cultural meanings, features of their transformation and actualization in the 20th and 21st centuries are specified. The hypothesis has been confirmed that in various epochs of Russian culture the presence of its stable elements — deeply rooted national-semantic “matrix” — is traced. Its connection with thoughts expressed by the philosophers, writers and politicians of different eras is stated. As a result, it is argued that this connection has led to the fact that such thoughts acquire the status of national ideas. The conclusion that the connection with main semantic centers of national culture — affirming or denying — actualizes the ideas of previous eras in the historical perspective of the national identity development, can be used in scientific research on this issue, in corresponding courses in history, political science and cultural studies, as well as in the practice of modern social process in Russia.

Keywords: national idea, Cultural Revolution, ideal, socio-cultural norm, Russian classical literature, Soviet literature, proletarian humanism, Soviet person, literary female image.

Research area: philosophy and history of religion; philosophical anthropology and philosophy of culture.

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From the beginning of the 21st century until the present time, much has been said in Russia about the search for a national idea — the unifying “leading essence” of the nation. Many believe that Russia lost these “leading essences” in the 1990s by choosing consumptionism. There are even more of those who believe that the original “leading essences” had been destroyed by Russia much earlier, during the revolutionary turn of the 20s in the last century.

In the Russian flag, white color symbolizes nobility and frankness, blue — loyalty, impeccability and virtue; and red — bravery and courage, generosity and love. But looking at the retrospective of national history, then another version of the Russian tricolor deserves existence. The “Cultural Revolution” of the 1920s changed Russia’s “original blue” color to the blood-red color of proletarian revolution and the Civil War. Did this mean a complete destruction of traditional Russian culture, or not? Was a “non-opposition” philosopher Leo Tolstoy the only spokesman of the “Russian spirit”, or, to a lesser degree, a “revolutionary practical storm-petrelism” of Maxim Gorky can be regarded as “Russian”?

Even a hundred years later, this problem remains relevant. It is no coincidence that, since the 1990s, Western scholars constantly underline the fact that in Russia now and then “myths reappear being strangely mixed, partly leading back to pre-revolutionary times, from the 19th century, partly arising in the Soviet era ...” (Mify i mifologiya..., 2000: 5). What is a cultural basis for the fact that the “blue” and “red” meanings live in the Russian self-consciousness up to this day?

Hypothesis

It is possible to answer this question only layer by layer revealing the depths of the Russian culture and ideology, as is known, embodied in our thousand-year-old literature, which reflects the people’s self-consciousness, “which includes historical memory, origin awareness and historical stages of the ethnic group’s life, national beliefs and interests ...” (Alekseeva, 1998: 1039). Comparing the motives and ideas of literary monuments belonging to different eras, one can find stable elements of the Russian national culture — a somewhat deeply rooted national-meaning “matrix”. Let us check the guess that it is the relation between this “matrix” — asserting or denying — that gives the status of “national ideas” to any thought expressed by philosophers, writers

and politicians, and thanks to such relations, the national ideas of previous eras, as if fallen asleep for a while, suddenly appear on the surface of the history.

Cultural ideal and political declamation

The content of the national idea is closely connected with its ideals and cultural norms, in other words, with the “cultural code” of the nation (Goloubkov, 2013: 107). Replying to the message from N.N. Ge in March 1884, Leo Tolstoy writes: “Dear Nikolai Nikolayevich. I am very pleased to receive your letter. We live as before, with the only thing that I do not have such an intense work, as in your presence, so I calmly endure that ridiculous life that goes around me. I am busy with another deal I am going to say about later, one that does not require that kind of pressure. My book, instead of being burned, as it should have been according to their laws, is brought to St. Petersburg and the copies are given to the authorities there. I am very happy about it. Perhaps, someone will understand ...” (Tolstoy, 1984: 32). In the confiscated essay “Only Faith Can Give Truth” L. Tolstoy just writes about the Russian people’s ideals. The Russian philosophy regards ideals as the central concept of the Russian culture, unlike the cultures of most European nations, which are based on cultural norms. L. Tolstoy believed that the Russian people perceive their historically tough life through something perfect — the ideal, “looking from an ideal hill”, whence the law is bad, and the rules of such life will never be fair. The norm is easier: it is simple, usual in everyday life, written in the rules and laws that do not require certain spiritual efforts. However, according to the old Russian commandments, mentioned by Leo Tolstoy, the soul is obliged to work, striving for moral perfection and any goodwill.

The same basis with ideals has caused a centuries-old line of political declamation in Russian literature. In the ancient Russian chronicles, it is represented by the word genres and political letters, and then there were state-educating odes by Mikhail Lomonosov and Gavril Derzhavin. Derzhavin’s poem “Let the Thunder of Victory Rumble!”, created in 1791, became the first unofficial anthem of Russia. The line of state enlightenment from Derzhavin leads to a historian Ivan Karamzin, and a mentor of the future monarch, the poet Vasily Zhukovsky, and partly — to Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin. Later, under the same tradition, the poet Alexey Konstantinovich Tolstoy, philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, and the whole galaxy of young poets-symbolists made their names.

In 1815, Derzhavin “noticed and favored” young Pushkin and his friends, future Decembrists, during the exam at the Tsarskoye Selo Lyceum. Radishchev’s notes,

plays and poems of Ivan Dmitriev, which were filled with the “fire of love for the Motherland”, the tragedy by Yakov Knyazhnin “Vadim Novgorodsky” and the lyrics of Kondraty Ryleev gave a birth to, perhaps, the most powerful second movement from the same root of Russian political declamation — so called, a “freedom-loving”, civil-democratic one. The works of Alexey Plescheev, Ivan Nikitin, Nikolai Dobrolyubov and, of course, Nikolai Nekrasov have a ground in it. In the Soviet era, they cited: “A poet in Russia is more than just a poet”.

Cultural-ideological retrospective: from “new people” to a Soviet man

This “more” came to the Soviet literature from the heralds of the revolution, who was fully aware of it, as we can judge from Nikolai Chernyshevsky’s letter to his wife from Alekseyevsky ravelin of the Peter and Paul Fortress (October 5, 1862): “... Our lives belong to history; hundreds of years will pass, and our names will still be good to people; and they will remember us with gratitude when they already forget almost all those who lived with us in this era. So we dare not to lose the ground by our cheerfulness in the eyes of those people who will study our life!” (Chernyshevsky, 1949: 456).

There were many such people of revolution in the 19th century. Even the voicer of the Russian nobility, Ivan Turgenev, could not pass by the “new people.” Proletarian revolutionaries of the 20th century were sympathetic to Turgenev’s “practical man” Bazarov and Insarov, a Bulgarian freedom fighter. Nevertheless, Chernyshevsky in his novel “What to do?” was the closest who came to understanding the image of the Red. His Rakhmetov, unlike other national heroes of the “rebellious century,” is an visionary of destruction, an embodiment of Bakunin and Nechaev’s “Catechism of a Revolutionary” with a revolutionary-practical, off-moral doubts and hesitations, issue of power. This line will be continued by the character of A. Neverov’s “Andron the Wretched” (1922), who argues with his mother and father, stands up against the “whole life”, desperately exclaiming: “No way not to pity, yet no way to pity”. As one moves to the 1930s the class consciousness in literature completely conquers all regrets: Valeria Gerasimova, a proletarian writer, shows the class conflict between a mother and her daughter in the story symbolically titled “Pity” in such a way that if the mother did not become her friend’s co-fighter, she would certainly become the reason for her (daughter’s) death, and therefore her enemy. That was exactly the logic why Fedor Gladkov put forward at the First Congress of Soviet Writers the question of heroism as a way of life and accepted behavior of a Soviet person.

The year of 1934 and the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers means a starting point for impressive Soviet literature, which demonstrated a voluntary or violent self-denial of the Soviet people from an unchained, multifaceted and to some extent unpredictable “me”. The article by a famous Russian émigré thinker, religious philosopher and historian Georgy Petrovich Fedotov gives such a portrait of a Soviet man of the 1930s: “He is strong, physically and mentally, very balanced and simple, lives by order and assignment, does not like to think and doubt; he appreciates practical experience and knowledge. He is devoted to the government, which pulled him out of the mud and made him a responsible master over the life of his co-citizens. He is very ambitious and rather callous to any sufferings of his neighbors ...” (Fedotov, 1989: 212). The Articles by G.P. Fedotov were perceived as slanderous, but ideal Soviet people in the 1930s literature, by acquiring the merits of large communities, were exactly like that.

This is how the Soviet people are described in the novel “In the East” of a Stalin Prize laureate Peter Andreevich Pavlenko, which describes the future victorious war of the USSR over Japan: “The Soviet person’s soul was being strengthened by the difficulties handled. It was becoming wise at 20, and early wisdom remained for the rest of its life as a strong youth secret. A little aged in his twenties, a Soviet man stays young for up to fifty and longer. From year to year, he becomes smarter. The remnants of old feelings faded and new feelings of the soul matured... The person becomes even more visible. In search of happiness, he has to become simple, clear and courageous. His Life forced him to become as he was or threw him off without any mercy” (Pavlenko, 2018).

Youth makes the characters of Peter Pavlenko and their literary predecessors, Bazarov, Insarov and Rakhmetov, related. Youth means a denial based on the desire for self-assertion; it is impulsive, and therefore easy to hold. Youth is revolutionary, as James Aldridge writes, assessing the work of Vladimir Mayakovsky: “His works are a hymn for the youth. This, in my opinion, is the key to revealing Mayakovsky” (Mayakovsky, 1973: 324). Youth is the key to understanding revolutionary time and young proletarian literature, which began in the 1920s with the demonstration of “the most heroic man of the masses” organically linked to the revolution, that won owing to the “iron will” of the majority.

In the 1930s, the heroism of youth is in demand for labor duties: the young generation had to build something that no one had ever built in the human history. The “Socialist Labor” is claimed to be a transpersonal category. The man turned into

an appendage of the machine or factory, just a tool, even if a historical one. This new reality was depicted in the novels “People from the Backwoods” by Alexander Malyshkin, “Hydrocentral” by Marietta Shaginyan, “The Big Conveyor” by Yakov Ilyin. Under defending the human, Andrei Platonov and Mikhail Bulgakov, Ivan Bunin and Ivan Shmelev write about the same. In the Soviet period, opposition literature — a direct descendant to the Russian literary classics — existed and developed, albeit only in samizdat, in censored interpretations. It can be argued that the class-specific proletarian literature, its opposing writers — “companions” and emigrants, are closely related, polemically placed against each other in reflexing the images and ideas of the time (Sushkova, 2014: 367).

Many characters of Andrei Platonov’s books are found in a fanatical tendency in the idea realization. Thus, re-reading “Concerning Questions of Leninism” and reaching through historical policy the “near depth of truth”, Nikolai Vermo, a character of “Juvenile Sea”, understands the Bolshevik’s reliance “on the gigantic heroic person of masses brought into such heroism by a historical disaster; on the one who by his exhausted hand choked off the armed middle class in 1917, and now is building socialism in that poor country, taking the arch-substance for it from its body” (Platonov, 1988: 75). Platonov convincingly shows that these ascetic, physically depleted bodies build no less ascetic and scanty reality. The kinship of the character with the revolutionary idea, like the one between Siamese twins — the logic of its development becomes the logic of its existence. The death of one means the death of the other.

This belief and these ideas are certainly related to the national ideal. Andrei Platonov gives here the exact image of combining the great humanistic idea that masters the masses with the anti-humanity of events. It vividly manifests a contradiction between historical mission of building a balanced society, peculiar to the Russian cultural archetype, and asceticism, an extreme devaluation of the human life per se (Bullock, 2013).

Female portraits: the ideal and cultural regulatory functions

Contrary to unambiguous interpretation of the “the Soviet time hero”, female images in the Soviet literature are semiotically different. They can be, of course, “Soviet heroines”, like Lyubov Yarovaya in the play by Konstantin Trenev or a woman-commissar from Vsevolod Vishnevsky’s “An Optimistic Tragedy”. This motive, by

the way, is controversially described by Vasily Grossman in the story “In the Town of Berdichev”.

The idea of a woman-comrade as the main revolutionary trophy continues in a new way in Fyodor Gladkov’s story “The Tragedy of Lyubasha”. Here, the problem of poor quality yarn evolves into a demand for re-evaluation of the products of labor. That is why at the meeting the husband calls his wife to reply for the marriage made by the brigade, and the secretary of the party committee claims: “For us a thing, material or car, if you want to know, are pricier than a horned deuce ... You save yourself, but learn to save a thing ...” (Gladkov, 1949). This “labor accent”, one must admit, was found by Nikolai Ostrovsky in the novel “How the Steel Was Tempered”: for the country and for the party the drill was recognized as something incomparably more important than the one who had made it.

At the same time, women in the plots of Soviet literature performed other functions. Often they carried a semiotic meaning of testing man-fighters for devotion to the revolution, like Lushka in “Virgin Soil Uplifted”. But in the linear ideology of Peter Pavlenko’s novel “In the East”, the death of a beloved woman plays a fundamental social role. There is no psychology: a loving hero deliberately pushes away irretrievable loss of a woman who he secretly considers his wife, and busily argues about the need to marry someone else. In addition, he is not alone in his “insensitive” socio-political businesslike. We read: “There are no widows in the Far East ... Everything that can love, loves and bears fruits” (Pavlenko, 2018). The death of woman is tragic not because she has a unique inner world, still not because she is passionately loved. The main thing is that death confused and broke the plans of others; it acted as a constructing force: a majestic and formidable act of the heroine leaving her life gives the others an opportunity to live more happily and “majestically”.

As one would think there is the main and widest gap with the Russian classical literature, marked by a deep psychologism. However, this is a dialectical gap: it implies an internal connection. The source of this connection is a deep holiness, sacredness of female image in the Russian culture. In Russia, even in ancient times, a woman stood among the ideal characters. “The Tale of Bygone Years” has amazing lines about the “wise wives” — about Yaroslava’s prayer, about Kniaginia Olga who perceived the only faith, Fevronia of Murom who rescued her husband with love and holiness. Much of them are in Pushkin’s young woman with a bright heart — in Tatiana Larina. But most of all great female images belong to Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev. By emphasizing

this, V.G. Belinsky wrote about Turgenev: “He understands Russia. In all his judgments one can see character and reality” (Turgenev, 1953: 9).

Turgenev’s female images go back to the national ideal, and therefore mean the ideal “mirror” — they immediately see strengths and weaknesses of the hero. Here is Turgenev’s “superfluous man” Rudin: his “superfluosity” is clearly visible right next to Natalia Lasunskaya, who is kind, self-balanced, enthusiastic, able to love and act for the sake of good omens. Liza Kalitina, a religious girl, sensitive to injustice and — necessarily! — with “Russian soul” rises above all the Lavrechs together. Elena Stakhova from the novel “On the Eve” is looking for the service ideal: justly, Dobrolyubov said: “that vague longing for something, nearly unconscious, but irresistible need for a new life, new people, which now embraces the whole Russian society ...” (Turgenev, 1953: 37). The scene shows a conversation between Elena and Insarov, who feared that she would not find any way to serve the deal as he serves, strikingly recalls the well-known conversation between the young Chernyshevsky with his bride Olga Sokratovna.

Many Russian writers wondered why “ideal male-heroes” in their works are often depicted unnatural, strained and stilted. Another thing is a perfect woman. Leo Tolstoy’s favorite heroines, Natasha Rostova, Anna Karenina, and particularly in Katyusha Maslova — as the Turgenev girls — made the original purity and holiness of “sacred Russian history” female images vivid contributing themselves to their lost illusions, shame of sin and a dead routine of everyday life.

Therefore, the Soviet character inherited the female symbol. This symbol was especially strengthened in the poetry of the Silver Age: Vladimir Soloviev, a Russian philosopher, asserted the feminine in the natural-religious sense. He, and after him, the young symbolists recognized the feminine’s special role of in the Orthodox culture as the beginning of something creative, constructive and wise. Sofia — the fourth divine hypostasis — along with the Holy Trinity was conceived by them as the first principle of Russian culture.

The Soviet literature of the 1930s, while rejecting all the previous culture, nevertheless exploits this most sacred female image to show the depth of revolutionary sacrifice, the gap with immediate reality of being, with blood and love relations. This means exactly the revolutionary ideal — the ideal of “purification” for the sake of serving the idea. The more blasphemous and hopeless the gap that Soviet literature demonstrated, the greater the vow of “baptism” by the “new” world. Mikhail Svetlov, who is known mainly for his poem “Grenada”, in 1936 published in the magazine “Krasnaya Novy” his “Song” (rus.— “*Pesn*”) with the following lines:

*Товарищи! Быстрее шаг!
Опасность за спиною:
За нами матери спешат
Разбросанной толпою.*

.....
*Родную мать встречай штыком,
Глуши ее прикладом.
Нам баловаться сотню лет
Любовью надоело,
Пусть штык проложит новый след
Сквозь маленькое тело
(Svetlov, 1936).*

*Tovarishchi! Bystree shag!
Opasnost' za spinoyu:
Za nami materi speshat
Razbrosannoj tolpoyu.*

.....
*Rodnuyu mat' vstrechaj shtykom,
Glushi ee prikkladom.
Nam balovat'sya sotnyu let
Lyubov'yu nadoelo,
Pust' shtyk prolozhit novyj sled
Skvoz' malen'koe telo
(Svetlov, 1936).*

...One can understand the degree of proletarian sacrilege against Soviet poetry only by referring to the ancient archetypes of Russian culture, against which this “bayonet” (shtyk) and this “butt” (priklad) are directed. We can see a revolutionary dialectic, closely linked to the ideals of Russia, with an understanding of “who we are” and “where are we going”. It is not for nothing that the fortieth-fateful, in the harsh time of the Great Patriotic War, when the question of the state existence arose per se, along with a song call for the people, “Get up, the great country...”, another poster appeared: “The Motherland Calls!”

Russian history in the context of “blood and soil” myth

The answer for the question “who are we?”, according to K. Levi-Strauss, can be found in early family-clan myths. The Great Mother, the Motherland is a twin of the absolute, an ultimate meaning of a nation to remain one big Family. This archetype of Russian culture is so strong that can generate special subcultures: for example, the Russian Cossacks as an estate of “the Motherland defenders”. H. Marcuse generally believed that Russia from time to time falls into totalitarianism because of our national myth of “blood and soil”. The ancient image of the Motherland in Orthodox Russia turned out to be closely associated with the Virgin Mother. Her intercession stretched over Russia is one of the most revered Orthodox holidays, connecting the idea of paternalism with the sacred femininity.

In the ancient literary monument “The Tale of Bygone Years” there are many genres, themes and images. And there is nothing — even a chronicle — that would contradict the idea of lands unity and strengthening of Rus’ and Motherland. The idea of Rus’ unity justifies the sacrifice of Boris and Gleb; it is read in the arguments of Hilarion of Kiev on the right of the Russian Orthodox Church to independence from

Byzantium; it drives all the glorified characters of the artistic chronicles for seven centuries long. The gathering of the Russian Land by all means is the main national idea, which explained the meaning of everything happening in the Russian Middle Ages.

The “gathering of the lands” means a historical core of Russia. Still, it is no less important how this gathering was carried out. As we would say now — relying on “soft power”, on the Russian people’s paternalism, who acted as “the eldest among others”. The history of relations with the indigenous peoples of Siberia at the time of their joining to Russia did not know the facts of that bloody massacre, such as, the genocide of the Indians of North or South America.

One of the old Khakass stories, described and translated in 1952 by Ivan Kichakov, a collector of heroic tales and Anatoly Chmyhalo, a writer and historian, tells us about the national hero Chinischi the Victor who defeated the Master of Black Mountain — Haratag and freed people from slavery (Kychakov, Chmyhalo, 1952). At the most critical moment there appears a “orus kizi” — a Russian man. He rescues the hero in overwhelming testing, gives wise advice and extends a helping hand in the decisive battle. Ancient legends, as we know, always have a factual basis. The last development stage for the Russian coast of the Yenisei in the 17th century was the access to the Khakas steppes and foothills of the Sayans. The Khakas made requests to Siberian commanders to put a fort in their land as a protection from the Mongols and the Dzungars, and in August 1707 the Abakan fort was built, and for the first time ever a peaceful life began there. Thus, in the ideological complex of “gathering of the Russian lands,” the messianism of the Russian nation was manifested, which carried the “cover” of the Virgin Mother and peace to all nations, with whom it now has to live for long centuries.

It is obvious that the idea of “lands gathering” in the proletarian culture of the 20th century — against the background of messianism — was easily transformed into the idea of a world labor revolution and justice. The first revolutionary days remained the time of humanistic doubts for many writers. Gorky even wrote “Untimely Thoughts”, which caused criticism of Lenin. V. Korolenko wrote to A. Lunacharsky about the fact that a person even after the revolution is assessed just as cheaply as before; Konstantin Fedin spoke ardently in his responses about the death of people and destruction of the culture in the fire of revolution. Still, despite all their doubts, there was something for them in the revolution that could not, but grab and inspire. Alexander Blok wrote about this the best way possible; he did not accept the revolution as a norm, but as an

apocalypse, an exceptional atonement in his mercilessness and holiness. Therefore, this was also close to the traditions of Russian culture. In traditional humanism Blok saw mainly individualism, in which the old civilization was mired. Similarly, Vladimir Mayakovsky, the author of “Mystery-Bouffe” immediately after the revolution, states: “The revolution, the holly laundress, washed away all the dirt from the face of the earth” (Mayakovsky, 1973: 3). The majority felt the same, but doubted. Only by the beginning of the 1930s the dissenters’ voices would stay calm. What did make them go silent? What did make Gorky’s “revolutionary romance” take the helm of a new — quite rational — proletarian literary method? And what happened to the archetype of “soft power”, embraced before in Russian culture?

The aspects of cultural revolution: from the national idea to mass movement

To understand this, let us turn to the heritage of Lev Tolstoy, to whom on April 25, 1889 Gorky sent his request: “Lev Nikolayevich! I was with you in Yasnaya Polyana and Moscow; I was told that you are sick and cannot host a reception. So, I decided to write you a letter. ... We made our minds on resorting to your help, you have a lot of land, which, as they say, is not cultivated. We ask you to give us a piece of this land. Then: besides purely material help, we hope for a moral one, for your advice and instructions, which would facilitate our successful achievement of the goal, as well as the fact that you will not refuse to give us the books “My Confession”, “My Faith” and others not allowed for sale ... From the behalves of all — Alexey Maximov-Peshkov, a tradesman of Nizhny Novgorod” (Perepiska..., 1986: 33). Gorky had what to ask from Tolstoy: the classical Russian literature found the highest manifestation of many of its motifs, plots and literary types in Tolstoy’s late works, as well as in the heritage of Fyodor Dostoevsky. The main questions are “who lives well in Russia? who is to blame and what to do?” — received there not only a profound artistic development, but also a philosophic ending.

Of all the aspects of this problem — “personality and environment”, “personality and crowd”, “personality and people”, “intelligentsia and people” — perhaps, the most mysterious one is the idea of people. There is something mystical in it; it appears as personification from the age of a given morality, of “God and soul”. Such morality is innate; it relates to suffering and atonement of the “humiliated and insulted”, “temptation of non-violence”, patriarchal traditions. A person cut off from this original moral principle is tempted by “demons.” The main one among the others is violence;

and all violence is punished by the very act for which it is being done. Lev Tolstoy is convinced that only the reform of human consciousness and humanity, the formation of a new-type personality, which absorbs the “idea of people”, can withstand the “idea of people”.

The Russian soul bears plenty of senses. In addition to the “god in the soul” and natural morality, there is an idea of communal system of life; there is also an understanding of balancing justice, as well as patience and rebellion. It is these features of the national image that played the main role when the movement of “revolutionary masses” began. At the very beginning of the 1920s, Yevgeny Zamyatin in the novel “We” comprehended one of the hidden tendencies embodied in the concept of “equality” — equalization, the dominance of dullness and oppression of free individuality. By the 1930s, spontaneous enthusiasm of democratic movement of the early Soviet power was replaced by clearly regulated enthusiasm of strengthening totalitarian system. The “Soft power” was channeled: now it was only for “members”: for the working class and communists. Depending on their affiliation, members of the society were divided into people of the “first” and “second” classes. This is confirmed, by the way, by the documents and materials of the party, in which, at the turn of the 1930s, the new word — “komchvanstvo” (arrogant and bureaucratic attitude toward business affairs) was flashing over and over again. Mikhail Bulgakov writes about this caste superiority in his “Heart of a Dog” — so monstrous is Schwonder’s arrogance of the master of the world, which has fallen on the soil of the spiritual ground of Sharik and Klim Chugunkin.

In proletarian literature of the end of the 1920s, “classiness” went neck-to-neck with hatred. There was no talk of humanism or “soft power”. But this situation did not exist for long, so it confirms an important fact: the idea of other cultures cannot exist in the role of a national one for any time.

Understanding of a new “proletarian humanism” was reported by Gorky and consolidated at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers that resolved in: “We became the only humanists of the world, proletarian humanists” (Perviy..., 1934: 154). According to the time, hatred was recognized as the leading feature, which determined the main quality of “courageous humanism” in new literature. However, it was not only it — Gorky also spoke of pride in belonging to a new society, about the joy of consciousness of this “new elitism” and love for his comrades.

It was very significant: to stop preaching only class and start talking about “humanism”, raising the very soul of Russian culture! Yes, this humanism was with

the prefix — “proletarian”, but it rehabilitated the very word “humanism” in the Soviet ideological field.

As for the content of this concept, polemical position of proletarian writers was obvious. The tragic, traditionally considered as nearly synonymic to aesthetic and the main mechanism for revealing everything truly human in the soul, they perceived only as a “bookkeeping for human grief”. The author of this expression, Anton Makarenko, accused the classics of being helpless in depicting happiness, even in love. He did not admit the thought that happiness by its very nature could not be the subject of artistic image, since the latter was based on conflicts and contradictions. Makarenko strongly insisted on the mastery of Soviet literature in depicting happiness: “We have learned to be happy in the highest sense when we can be proud of happiness... It belongs only to us, sincere and direct members of a classless society” (Makarenko, 1956: 758). The hero’s happiness is the result of his belonging to a certain class, society, and it almost does not depend on the moral choice of the individual and his achievements.

How smartly did the new national doctrine please the standard of traditional “Russianness” and messianism of Russian literature! How tempting was the idea of proletarian revolution exclusivity, social-class “elitism” with its maxims — “for the first time”, “new world”, “the greatest and the only fair”! Virtually, the lead of universal classiness spread into a proper cultural matrix. “The Old humanism said: “I do not care what you do, it is important for me that you are a man. The socialist humanism says: “If you don’t do anything and don’t do anything, I don’t recognize a person in you, no matter how smart and kind you are” (Fadeev, 1959: 924) — these words were written by Alexander Fadeev. However, the “old humanism” also found a place in Soviet literature, since it became an indispensable attribute of the enemy’s image, the main antagonist and constant companion of the “hero of the masses”.

Socio-cultural transformation of satire: the image of the enemy

The ideal in “denominator” of Russian life explained why the Russian person more easily believed the bad than the good. That is why in Russian literature since the “Tale of Bygone Years” lives by a powerful satirical origin. Daniel Zatochnik, in his “Praying”, wrote about extra-class value of a man, with irony telling about the “mercies” of the rich, the evil of his wife and unfaithfulness of friends. The irony permeated the “biting style” messages of Ivan the Terrible to the boyar Andrei Kurbsky. In the story “The Story of Shemyakin Court” the judge is drawn as a savvy businessman; a bitter

confession of the poor man who was driven to despair is seen in the lines of “The Alphabet of a Naked and Poor Man”; “The Message of Trust to a Friend” is filled with satire and denunciation. Still, there was a special effort about the welfare of the Russian state of Antiochus Kantemir, a Russian knyaz, poet, translator, diplomat, enlightener of the early 18th century, who wrote his immortal satires. Science and poetry in the life of Kantemir were as valuable as they could benefit Russia and its people. Antioch Dmitrievich sought to eradicate ignorance, drunkenness and superstition, satirically exposed the deception of merchants and the corruption of bureaucracy. In the letter to N. Yu. Trubetskoy he writes that a good official should become concerned that the truth “blossoms” in favor of the people, so that the tears of the poor “do not fall to the ground”. Having written nine satyrs not published in life, but well known in the lists, having translated many of the modern satirical French and antique works into Russian, the educator saw his own benefit only in “common good”. It was the Kniaz Kantemir who introduced a high word into Russian literature — “citizen”: “Everything that I write, I write as a citizen, beating off everything that can be harmful to my fellow citizens” (Krugosvet).

After Kantemir, the satire was represented by the comedies of Fonvizin and Griboedov, which were replaced by grotesque images of Gogol and Saltykov-Shchedrin, the first in a large school of satires of the 19th century. The talent of Pavel Ivanovich Melnikov, who wrote under the pseudonym “Andrey Pechersky”, also developed to the depths of this school. At first, a teacher of a provincial gymnasium and a local historian, and then one of the leading experts on Old Believers and an official in the tsar’s office — Melnikov was just like Kantemir, an administrative Quixote — he sincerely believed that the path of public service was almost the only one for every progressive person who wanted to bring to the motherland even a small, but real benefit. It was in the daily struggle with abuse and utopian dreams that the original writer Andrei Pechersky was born. The success of the story “The Krasilnikovs” in the spring of 1852 captured Petersburg — it was read in great demands. And then, after the death of Nicholas I in 1856, they started talking about the abolition of the law, about reforming the court, the censorship oppression was weakened — and right there the collection of poems by Nekrasov “The Poet and the Citizen”, “The Governor’s Essays” by Saltykov-Shchedrin and a series of stories by Melnikov-Pechersky came out.

Melnikov wrote: “I feel a lot of similar with Saltykov: that to Shchedrin, then to Pechersky” (Mel’nikov, 1976: 27). In his later novels, Melnikov, through the mouth of the leisurely narrator, Andrey Pechersky, tells of the wildness of provincial life as “in

one's innocence", as if ignoring the poisonous, dangerous turns of criticism among idyllic pictures and folk song devices.

This branch of Russian satire, which was formed by the end of the 19th century, seems not to be at all ridiculous — it is rather striking and terrifying. It is this "serious quality" of satire that Soviet literature inherited. Of course, the grotesque line in the literature of the 1920s will continue, primarily in the verses and plays of Vladimir Mayakovsky supported by the new government, but only because it will be welcomed as campaign material. The play "Banya", released in 1929, was read by Mayakovsky in the evenings in clubs, museums, on radio and factories, even resolutions were passed on it — "against narrow-mindedness, empiricism, bureaucracy — for heroism, for pace, for socialist perspectives" (Mayakovsky, 1973: 6).

In the 1920s, the Odessa stories of Isaac Babel and the satirical scenes of Il'f and Petrov, the ironic plays and stories of Mikhail Bulgakov and Mikhail Zoschenko would still be popular. Following them, Yuri Olesha laughed at the animation of objects and the results of labor in his "Envy". In this story, a satirical image of sausage produced by Andrei Babichev, hanging from his palm, to a symbolic scale, grows like something alive, crawling out of incubators, "swaying with a chest's rocking trunk". For the character it is — "the bride", "the beauty", as well as "Chetvertak" food factory, which he invented, has an ultimate meaning of his life.

But the farther from the congress to the congress of Soviet writers the literature of the USSR was, the less it wanted to see in its ranks that "ridiculous satire" and even just irony. It can be evidenced from the fate of Mikhail Bulgakov and Mikhail Zoschenko. The doctrine of socialist realism considered the revolutionary transformations of society as a serious matter. Therefore, the satire on social themes was squeezed into a rigid cultural and regulatory framework: the flow of satire was extremely narrowed and mostly migrated to obscene folklore. On the basis of "satirical seriousness" and the pathos of "social horror" during this period the image of enemy was shaped.

This image was subject to strict regulatory requirements. First, the background of the work — most often the scenes of revolution, civil war, industrialization, collectivization. Against such a background, an atmosphere of danger, threat, anxiety looked more inspiring. Further, the humanism of Russian classical literature is invariably included in the block of "enemy" ideas. This was clearly written by the critic, arguing that humanism, mercy for a person, for his suffering, for a single tear, shed by a child, which makes it necessary to refuse to enter social paradise, is in essence the thinnest cover that hides the predator's face, and socialist literature has

yet to “get even” with all the problems of the world literature, with all its “damned” questions (Gorky, 1938: 300).

A child’s teardrop is mentioned in the collection of Gorky’s essays “If the Enemy Does Not Surrender, He Will Be Destroyed” is not accidental at all. The philosophy of Fyodor Dostoevsky at the 1934 congress was officially condemned. However, they did not like Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy either, but internally, all the same, V. Lenin wrote about him, calling him “the mirror of the Russian revolution.” The theme of “humanistic pity”, starting with “The Story of the Simple Thing” by Boris Lavrenyov (1923), was included in many works of the next decade, including the novel under the same title by Valeria Gerasimova. Her characters refer to Dostoevsky’s “false humanism” as an “all-eating cancer”. It is the masking enemy, Pomerantsev, the “intelligent and hating enemy”, Tatiana’s murderer, who lectures about Dostoevsky’s genius.

The images of intellectuals from the “formers” — only one root of the ideological concept of the enemy in literature. From the mid-1930s, another types joined it — a former loyal co-traveler, even a like-minded person, often a right-wing opportunist or a Trotskyite. This trend is finely felt by the writers of humanistic opposition. In the “Juvenile Sea” by A. Platonov an Umrishchev falls into the category of “the enemies of socialism”. This philosophical old man, one of the Platonic eccentrics, generally found himself in the steppe region due to “obscurity”. Considering him an enemy of socialism, the “new people” endlessly accuse him, and put up with him as an inevitable evil. The whole Umrishchev as a symbol of the enemy, as meaningless since it is random, is essentially necessary for a totalitarian system, the goal of which is struggle, the means is man.

By the mid-1930s, the image of the enemy acquires new carriers in connection with the topic of collectivization and the transfer of communist ideas to peasant soil. Unlike the worker, the peasant is a second-rate person, a raw material from which the great worker of socialist society has yet to be made. This is exactly the way A. Malyshkin poses the problem in “People from the Backwoods”; F. Panferov’s “Bars” (rus. “*Bruski*”) are also such features in this sense.

Thus, the attitude to events from the position of peasants was declared harmful, “kulaks”, and considerations of proletariat on the peasant question were purely peasant. On this basis, proletarian criticism fell upon the overwhelming majority of the leading writers, including M. Sholokhov, S. Sergeev-Tsensky, A. Veseliy, A. Platonov. The works of this movement, in contrast to the mainstream of Soviet literature, provide a basis for reflection on the categories of tragic error, guilt and moral choice.

It is impossible to understand these quests in isolation from the Soviet “proletarian humanism”. As you can see, Soviet literature not only preserved, but brought to the limit the line of political declamation and, on the contrary, gradually negated the line of social satire. Again, Russian literature in the Soviet version retained a common vector, although it changed the semantic poles.

Cultural and ideological orientation of the “thaw”

Even more difficult was the relationship between the method of socialist realism with the traditions of Russian literature of the 19th century in the period of “thaw”: the critic asked to “enrich the content” on the backs of the classics, but somehow timidly and uncertainly. The complete works of Leo Tolstoy were published. Keeping silent about hatred and class character in the concept of Gorky, criticism now highlighted pride and joy, a desire to “catch the age”. Literary controversy of the “thaw” was the first step to artistic consciousness liberation. Along with the appearance of “Terkin in the Great Beyond” by A. Tvardovsky, “One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich” by A. Solzhenitsyn, the names and works of I. Babel, A. Vronsky, I. Kataev, V. Kornilov, M. Koltsov were revitalized in literature. At this time, Chinghiz Aitmatov was thinking about his future mankurt character who forgets his culture. In the Soviet literature of these years, the leading romance, which guessed the human, just like in the early Gorky romanticism, which was welcomed. It was just an annoying description of the first publications by “countryside writers” that irritated. The unrestrained optimism of the time, which learned new words — “chemistry”, “cybernetics”, “cosmonautics”, “artificial intelligence” — gathered shouting audiences for poetic evenings. And the criticism of the “thaw” asserted in a Gorky manner: “The heroism and romance of communism demands heroics and romance from literature”. It will take another two decades for some traditional archetypes of national culture to regain their rights, while others (for example, the image of “Motherland”) lost their relevance due to the trend for all Western and harsh everyday life of “building capitalism” and consumer society (Smola, 2018: 50).

Conclusion

As we can see, several semantic cultural traditions and a number of national images and ideas emerge from a single archetypal root — the Russian national idealization. Generation of these ideas and images is a characteristic of not only antiquity: it happens all the time, and especially actively — at turning points in

national history. It occurs according to a certain pattern, when historical situation brings to life a certain cultural archetype, giving rise to its ideological interpretations, which nevertheless somehow correlate with a stable cultural matrix of people. The Bolsheviks, for example, failed to make a sexual revolution, as they had thought. In the early years of the Soviet government, revolutionary youth tried to actively implement “sexual communism”. Alexandra Kollontai, the first woman-minister in history, called for it — she was the people’s commissar of the state charity in the first Soviet government (1917–1918). In Petrograd at that time, there were 92 divorces per 100 marriages, the procedure of which was greatly simplified. Still, the rumors all over Russia that in the commune “everyone will sleep under one cover” led to the mass unrest. It came to armed resistance — and propaganda gradually began to replace the mystery of free love with the creation of a new family — the “units of socialist society”.

Cultural archetypes can be extremely stable, although sometimes an external stimulus is needed to actualize them. What “slumbers” in the collective consciousness turns out to be in demand through the years by new historical circumstances. National ideas may differ greatly from each other in different periods of national history, but, as a rule, they are always associated with certain cultural roots.

There is much in the sustainable sociocultural matrix of those people whose history goes back over a thousand years. In the archetypes of Russian culture there is the blue of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin — the one that marks that communal life of the world and ideals of justice. But there is a revolutionary crimson of “rebellion”, mixed with utopian social ideals. Therefore, it is obvious that, first of all, the very nature of people, their ideals imply historical fate, which no one can impose and from which no one will give deliverance, because it is determined primarily by the choice of the people in a critical era. Thus, it is necessary more often to grasp the heritage of those Russian thinkers — philosophers and writers — who help to see in the clear light of truth the secret depths of national ideas, to comprehend other than heraldic meanings of symbolic combination in the Russian tricolor — of three great colors of Russian history — blue, red and white.

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Национальная идея в России: культурно-исторический генезис и факторы актуализации

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Статья посвящена проблеме национальной идеи в России в контексте устойчивых культурных смыслов. Предмет исследования определен актуализацией в современном российском общественном сознании различных, порой противоречивых идейных концептов, берущих начало как в дореволюционное время, так и в советский период. В статье ставится под сомнение известный тезис о том, что пролетарская культурная революция означала полное разрушение русской традиционной культуры. Цель принятого исследования, таким образом, уточнить философско-культурологическую природу основополагающих национальных идей различных эпох российской истории. На материале литературного процесса в России XIX–XX вв. методом сравнительно-философско-литературоведческого и культурологического анализа с использованием семиотического и феноменологического подходов в статье выявлены единство и различие контекстов русской национальной идеи разных эпох; уточнены аспекты ее ведущих культурных смыслов, особенности их трансформации и актуализации в XX–XXI вв. Подтверждена гипотеза о том, что в различные эпохи русской культуры прослеживается наличие ее устойчивых элементов — глубоко укорененной национально-смысловой «матрицы». Аргументируется наличие связи с ней мыслей, высказываемых философами, писателями и политиками разных эпох. Как следствие,

утверждается, что именно в силу этой связи такие мысли приобретают статус национальных идей. Вывод о том, что связь с основными смысловыми центрами национальной культуры — утверждающая или отрицающая — актуализирует идеи предшествующих эпох в исторической перспективе развития национального самосознания, может быть использован в научных исследованиях по данной проблематике, в обучающем контексте соответствующих курсов истории, политологии и культурологии, а также в практике современного общественного процесса в России.

Ключевые слова: национальная идея, культурная революция, идеал, социокультурная норма, русская классическая литература, советская литература, пролетарский гуманизм, советский человек, женский литературный образ.

Научная специальность: 09.00.13 — философия и история религии, философская антропология и философия культуры.
