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Imperial Society: Subjects and Character of Interethnic Interaction Paradigm

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This article is devoted to characteristics of “complementarity” interethnic cooperation, Russian imperial society structure and interethnic cooperation during empire’s creation. Review of researchers’ approaches to structure and interaction of imperial and non-imperial cultures within the bounds of Russian imperial society is represented in the article. This article is addressed to specialists and those who is interested in imperial culture and history.

Keywords: empire, Imperial culture, complementarity, multiculturalism, interethnic cooperation.

Point

Modern Russian society is under action of two differently directed trends: on one hand, recently Soviet community, called “socialist super-empire”, disintegrated into local political and sociocultural communities, that form their own national statehood. On the other hand, world integration processes in which modern Russia rushes to participate, become more and more visible. In other words, trend of organization and development during multicultural conglomeration which seemed to be utopian or fatal, meets world intentions now, i. e. it is not deadlock itself. It forces to estimate our own imperial society in the other way.

From the beginning of 1990th the amount of researches devoted to imperial issue (which was taboo in Soviet period) sharply increased in Russia. Political, economic, social and legal imperial institutions were analysed to

discover reasons of “attraction” and historical longevity of supranational imperial formations or to find ways of decision modern poly-ethnic conglomerates’ problems. But this problem is still strictly urgent due to some reasons. First, social transformations caused not only revision of existing social and economic basics, but also reorganization of people’s conscious. Most former Soviet Union population came to psychological discomfort because Soviet internationalist ideology discredited itself, while not everybody had an ideological basis to increase ethnical self-consciousness. Thus, while most nations tried to gain new identity over its own self-consciousness revival, the Russians who lost former “elder brother” higher status and levelled their own identity without creating national consciousness traditions faced certain problems in discovering new identity basis. This (among other things) mostly caused nostalgia for

the Soviet past and spreading of ideas to re-edit supranational conglomeration.

Secondly, methodological discusses about empire as political (way of society's state organization) and social-cultural (specific culture type) phenomena are still last that makes different authors come to opposite conclusions on the ground of the same data. In our opinion, there's an opportunity to dissociate from economical and political determinism that can not explain reasons of imperial vitality and very often social attraction. An approach to empire as isolated field of culture is the most perspective in this regard. Third, due to extensiveness of problem many theme issues are out of researchers' attention. For example, as it is seen, appeal to different references during Russian culture imperial dynamic is highly practiced. As for social-cultural processes' dynamic of non-Slavic imperial component, articles on this topic are not numerous. But it's evidently that culture is a phenomenon that tends to become fully syncretic (Stepin, 2003). It involves the society as a whole, and the empire's builders are just take the lead. They are "impregnation" source. And the explanation of empire social-cultural steadiness would not be complete without nations and other social groups' complementarity, their ability to change their approach to empire and even rearrange the empire.

In this context studying of mechanisms of creating, perception peculiarities and development dynamics of interethnic and intercultural relations in heterogeneous area such as the Russian Empire. These problem questions are the topics of our analysis.

Conception of "complementarity", in our opinion, plays a great role in understanding of ethnopsychological processes inside the empire. To wide extend it means mutual correspondence of ethnic and cultural systems, that secures their cooperation. L. N. Gumilev, while researching national relations, meant complementarity as

"subconscious mutual individual sympathy with", "unconscious propensity of people of different constitution to each other" (Gumilev, 2001. P. 238). Along with Gumilev, Y. I. Semenov mentions great role of subjective factor in national self-conscious' creating. In his opinion, national self-conscious "includes ethnical belonging as a necessary component", "perceptual component" that means irrational (perceptual) complementarity nature to be the part of this very behaviour (Semenov, 2003).

M.B. Absalyamov widens concerned conception from the ways of ethnopsychology. Researcher widens complementarity over the edge of individual in the sphere of ethnical consciousness minding it perceptual human nature. Complementarity's appearance results as individual adoption of culture values. M.B. Absalyamov notes: "Complementarity should be meant as self-determined internal culture person's peculiarity (values, value orientations, thinking, consciousness, freedom, activity etc.), his predisposition to tolerant dialogue. Complementarity is also internal ability of culture as a whole" (Absalyamov, 2008. P. 327).

It's no doubt that "complementarity" concept has a great explanatory potential within the bounds of studying and describing processes of imperial society that are irrational in their essence. But there are questions about measuring of people's "ethopsychological sympathy" and criteria of national complementarity definition. E. L. Zberovskaya notes: "It's evidently that answers on this and many other questions concerning complementarity are in the psychological, historical, culturological, sociological fields, and they require special research" (Zberovskaya, 2010. P. 174).

Example

Speaking about story of forming and development of Russian empire, it is easy to see

that among the great amount of peoples inhabited it by the end of the XVIII century it could not be the equal opinion on understanding of such important moments as including in the empire's borders; perception of empire's existence itself not to mention the problem of ethnic stereotypes' collision within the certain contact situation (Aksyutin, Anzhiganova, 2010. P. 59–64).

Some nations considered joining empire as deliverance from threatened downfall from the aggressive neighbours. Thus, the Armenians considered Russia as a state of coreligionists and the defense of ottomans, they took active part not only in its elite creating, but also in empire's building. Other nations concerned joining as submission to force and, accordingly, as unfavourable temporary circumstances. Thus, the Bashkirs and the North Caucasian nations created amount of novels about their land's subjugation by infidels. The third ones who had an experience of living in multi-national states took in necessity of living in alien's state as natural. Contact with the imperial society, imperial culture and necessity to integrate into them did not cause misunderstanding and "cross-cultural shock", though did not enchant. Their own experience of imperial creation or living within the bounds of Mongolian, Chinese or other empires was still fresh in the memory.

Mentioned statement predetermined researchers' unity in separation of Russian Empire specific features such as heterogeneity and variety with its own features of asynchronism in development of social groups – imperial inhabitants. Different imperial nations had their own visions, needs and interests, that does not exclude an opportunity to define phased regularity or common external likeness features. For example, Y. I. Semenov using identity of mental determinates defining unite communicative language creating sees three types of ethnocultural groups in the Russian

empire: 1. Nations of archaeomental language (like primitive tribes inhabiting Eastern Siberia and Far East). 2. Communities of paleomental language (which is typical for Volga region, Ural, Southern Siberia, Kazakhstan). 3. Native speakers of neomental language (North-west of empire: Poland, Ukraine, Baltic states) (Semenov, 1998. P. 29).

Asynchronicity that occurred, divergence of interests and opinion of nations inhabited empire certainly narrowed or excluded assimilated nations' participation in creating unite imperial social-cultural space. Imperial society was highly heterogeneous, and the main imperial principles (such as strong state, unity and supremacy of law, universal devotion, branched hierarchy and imperial culture values) were hardly to express, for example, in "archaeomental languages". Native speakers of paleomental languages (such as Russian peasants before Peter's The First reforms) needed these categories to be interpreted and adapted, invested with well-known forms (religious often). But native speakers of neomental languages, i.e. western imperial inhabitants adopted aims and values of the imperial construction rather organic (Semenov, 1998. P. 30). In other words, social-cultural complementarity in the Russian empire was possible in full only for nations standing on equal level of political, social, cultural and psychomental development grade. In fact it means absence or narrowness of imperial society which consisted only of western district nations.

Some other researchers try to solve the problem of coordination of nations from different grades of political and social development, their mutual adaptation to each other by defining cooperation grades between strangers and inhabitants. Also researchers singling out two levels of cooperation in whole (elite (it is also called modern, ideological, official) and local – traditional) come to different conclusions about social and cultural complementarity

functioning within these stratum. For example, E. A. Erohina mentions initially unequal in rights cooperation character between traditional native culture and bearers of modernization processes such as officials, merchants and manufacturers; cooperation between native-born traditional culture and traditional culture of Russian old-timer peasant population (Erohina, 1999. P. 143). In V. V. Trepavlov's opinion, mechanism of complementarity should be told about only in the form of elite imperial stratum and elite of associate nations (Trepavlov, 2007. P. 203).

When analysing Russian empire historical expand to the east, it's necessary to notice that native South Siberia inhabitants (excluding native-born North-West and East Siberian inhabitants) being at the junction of Central Asia cultures and civilizations had a tradition of not only sovereignty sacred by religion (such as tengrianism, shamanism etc), but also an experience of coexistence in polyethnocultural state. In different times they fell under power of their own and foreign leaders. But in the beginning of Russians' coming in Siberia building of fortresses and jails, consolidating the presence of strangers in new areas, and then intensive cooperation with Slavic population caused not only revision of geopolitical realities but also changed social-cultural situation, caused changes in the life of associate nations.

Contiguity with Russia as war and political force, cultural and social space which is not alike inevitably caused conflicts in different levels. First, it is a conflict of "cultural and psychological stereotypes". It is caused, on one hand, by contact with native speakers of other language, anthropological type, value system, world-view conscious (extrovert culture type) and other needs (Aksutin, 2009). On the other hand, an other nation is stereotypically with great part of negative theatrics (own positive characteristics are exalted during comparison) perceived as

"stranger". Second, conflict of social-political institutions, i.e. disparity of administrative systems (vertical hierarchy of cooperation with emperor in European tradition and the horizontal one – in Asian political systems). Besides, ethnopolitical conflict caused by involving of Russian strangers into hard interethnic and subethnic cooperation was very often happening. Third, it's a conflict of material interests that is expressed, for example, in pretending to inhabited areas, tributaries, etc. All these contradictions often lead to mutual violence, which is defined by A. S. Zuev as "conflict of counter actions" (Zuev, 2002. P. 179–183).

Primary contacts of different culture bearers' with each other became mass and everyday. Character of these contacts (peaceful or hostile), content (official or everyday) and social level (elite or folksy) depended of range of circumstances. Here conditions of region's entry into empire, Russian migration intensity, contingent of migrants (Cossacks, missionaries, exiles, state convicts, peasants) and many other factors told upon. In any way, Siberian ethnoses should to find a place for Russian ones in habitual notion system, in habitual vision of the world.

Researchers fairly link the beginning of radical changes to the modernization and europeanization of both social structure and culture during reforms of Peter The First (Ogurtsov, 2003). The empire lost medieval, patriarchal norms of cooperation between tzar, "native" and "alien" subjects (these were typical for reign of Ivan 3rd). This happened not only as a result of policy, but also during upgrading of administrative mechanism of Russians' settlement, social and cultural cooperation. With this processes basics of gradual crating of new identity both with joined nations and most of Russians (peasants and Cossacks), which combined ethicallity with imperial supranational identity.

The official science nowadays doesn't have a unity in views on character and way of interethnic cooperation on this stage of Siberian nations in social and cultural imperial space.

For example, Novosibirsk researcher E. A. Erohina notes that speaking about the Siberians with their traditional social structure it's necessary to mean two different levels of interethnic cooperation. The first one is marked by impact of modern culture bearers on traditional Siberian culture. This impact fully excludes possibility of social and cultural complementarity, cooperation equal in rights and synchronous development. The second level is marked by cooperation and complementarity, here representatives of Russian old-timer culture and native Siberians took place. Complementarity functioning here is determined by conservatism of mentioned traditional cultures, i.e. coincidence of basic determinants (value system, worldview conscious etc.), aims, and also by equal interest in contact, which is dictated to by equal conditions of life (Erohina, 1999).

This conclusion is confirmed in any case by modern researches, which state that important opinions of "stranger", "different", "another" and "enemy" (these are quite alike in different cultures) are not absolute, but rather relative and mobile. By widening and increasing intensity of contacts "native" changes his sign, becoming a "stranger", and the stranger becomes more "private", an enemy can become a friend or even "native" (Zivyan, 2002. P. 467). In other words, being integrated into traditional social and cultural environment, "strangers" transform from "enemies" with overblown negative characteristics into "differents" with neutral specifics, and sometimes even into "natives". Thus, researchers noted tight connection of "native" conception with relations within Siberian society. "Native" are all relatives independently of their way of life, character etc. But natives are also relatives by marriage, who can be representatives of other

nation. But that doesn't mean this stereotype is true concerning other representatives of this nation (Slavkina, 2003. P. 10).

From the second half of the 18th century Russian population of South Siberia exceeded native population more than twice. This created precondition to successfully Christianisation and assimilation of native population and determined their transformation to settled life and partial junction with peasants. Tributaries take part in imperial household and cultural relations, that caused social stratification and actuated contacts with coming populations.

Besides peasants, subjects of interethnic and cross-cultural cooperation in Siberia and Far East were Cossacks. relations between native population and Cossacks were formed as rather hostile. On one hand, Cossacks were seen as strangers-conquers, who were winners in political struggle over domination in Siberia. More that, Cossacks and peasants' household activities were quite threatening for traditional society. It is known that cattle-breeding of nomads has minimal anthropogenic impact on landscape, in contrast with transforming impact of agricultural nations (Gumilev, 2001. P. 192).

On the other hand, miscegenations were higher wide-spread among Cossacks than among other social groups. That has several explanations. First, the Cossacks were formed historically as ethnically heterogeneous community (so called soldier estate). Second, the Cossacks reinforcements took place basically by natural reproduction that was determined by aspiration for hereditary transmission of status and linked Cossacks' functions. But great amount of male-Cossacks caused decline in fertility and interethnic marriages. Third, Cossacks had more contacts with native population and took their experience of adaptation to place of living, because they had not only salary, but also their own household keeping Russian christian historical and cultural

type (Asochakova, 2010). Fourthly, the Cossacks were historically formed in cross-culture, cross-language and cross-anthropological areas that affected each certain situation.

In other words, the Cossacks' role in forming and character of interethnic relations was highly dual due to their peculiarities. The Cossacks within imperial society besides being a lower level of punishment system and also participated in land-reclamation. The Cossacks having allotments and trading sometimes were forming an average rate of interethnic and cross-cultural relations appeared with imperial statement on conquered areas.

Thereby, nearness of ethnoses in contact with their needs and activity type (transforming or adaptive), likeness of traditional social structure gave a basis for mutual interest and equal character of relations of newcomers and native population of Siberia and Far East. Peasants and minor citizens (careful Cossacks) had more in common with similar social groups of different ethnic origin than with their own nobility. But there were factors that narrowed social and cultural complementarity on this level of interethnic cooperation (joining conditions, interethnic relations subjects' structure, ethnical and political situation in region etc.) Necessity to fulfil the duties of subjects and exist under pressure of strict management autocratic state was quite a heavy burden for many Siberian nations. Nevertheless, only few episodes of separatist riots took place in Russia in the 15-18th centuries. That is an evidence of fully high level of complementarity on the lower level of interethnic cooperation.

As we mentioned, discussions among researchers about relations' complementarity within elite imperial society stratum still continue. In V. V. Trepavlov's opinion, imperial elite traditionally cooperated with its "colleagues" speaking another language because the Russian

nobility historically formed as ethnically open estate, and everybody representative of non-Russian elite can rely on being noble. "Actually, the process of Russian nobility forming itself was a gradual integration of people and families different in origin into unite aristocratic cooperation. Integration algorithm corresponded comparative openness and opportunity for joining nobility" (Trepavlov, 2007. P. 203).

On another opinion, "new imperial elite", marginal and heterogeneous in its structure, attitude and origin, saw its main aim in renewal its power and privileges. For it often external, official imperial identity was typical. Former ethnical elite, having lost its privileged position by joining Russian empire and having become Russian tributaries, searched evidence of its power and authority in traditions and common law. So long as orthodoxy and imperial legislation was fairly associated for their conscious with Russian state, patrimonial top people didn't champion new faith and ideology and bearer of basic imperial culture categories, at least on the prime period of imperial and non-imperial society contacting. Situation changes only when contacts with the Russians and increasing of local authorities' social status intensification. This should not be concerned as display of feudal nobility with the imperial elite solidarity.

Resume

Summarizing, let's notice that Russian imperial society during intense imperial territory widening corresponded as a difficult social and cultural mechanism. Widening empire, marked its presence by lines of jails and fortresses, inevitably contacted with native population of adopted areas. That faced every nation from very joining empire with necessity to adopt not only to political, but also cultural integration. «Adaptation» process consisted of several basic stages. The first one – joining itself and Russian

citizenship (voluntary, violent, temporary). The second stage is nation's incorporation in imperial society, imperial culture and state with strict hierarchy. The third stage is assimilation which became more and more active with the course of time. These processes were followed by slow but steady unification of juridical status of nation and area inhabited, unite citizenship and governance standard, Russification caused by numeral and cultural (prevailing religion, communication language) Russians' domination. These trends weakened and intensified, but constantly presented in Russian history 16-19th centuries, anyway.

As a result of multiform polyethnic state forming imperial society acquired compound, branched and heterogeneous structure, which included a wide range of cultural and anthropological types. That affected specific character of interethnic relations paradigm in imperial society which took place on several layers at once. First, it's a cooperation within the bounds of contact situation, modernized by European imperial culture pattern, bearer of which was basically imperial elite, and Siberian inhabitants' traditional culture. Traditionalistic culture model of the Siberian inhabitants was characterized by orientation on isolationism and conservation of value and cultural differences. Modernized imperial culture distinguished by an opportunity of reflexive modernization and integration based on pluralistic and rational-secular values, interethnic cooperation and supraethnic dialogue (Popov, 2011. P. 10). Imperiality (shared by authorities) as attempt of supranationalism building corresponded as an anthropological model of supraethnic identity. The imperiality bearer corresponded as a social and cultural subject with state-political identity, which competed with different ethnic, and group, and cultural identities. The imperiality had discrepant values, anthropological and culture

species, that caused its expansion into different ethnical and cultural spheres (supraethnic political and ideological identification, authoritative monocultural homogenisation, etc.), but did not have features of forth-coming purposeful constructing of ideologized cultural and anthropological supraethnic identity model. Nevertheless, by visual modernization orientation (conservative and technological modernization) imperiality had conflicting traditionalistic character, i.e. kept place for a practice of limited complementarity in cooperation with elite of foreign origin.

Second, it is a layer of adapted (transformed) cooperation of official imperial culture variant which is characterized by synthesis of modernized and traditional culture. Also imperial culture supposed limited complementarity of interethnic cooperation (native and "soldier estate").

Third, it is a layer of cooperation between traditional strangers' and peasant culture. The last one was affected by modernization in a few, that is caused wide social and cultural complementarity on this layer. Evidence of this is a quick adoption of experience and even language of native inhabitants in adopted region by the Russians, coincidence of wide amount of value categories, which are typical for "lower colonization" and native-born of Siberia (values of freedom, labour, family and motherland for nomads, Cossacks and peasants).

In other words, value categories and stereotypes, on one hand, helped to perceive visual and internal life of other nation representatives. But while meeting something new coming out of "stereotype scheme" ("different", "stranger", "alien"), "defence mechanism" of resistance and disapproval switched on. Social and cultural bases of resistance are contradictions determined by cultural differences, and also confrontation modernized and traditionalistic values appearing

between bearers of different world-views. In other words, when modelling interethnic cooperation paradigm we should mention its basic social and cultural attributes such as ambivalence, irrationality and uncontrollability. This allows to define interethnic relations as social in form (between social subjects of different level) and cultural in content, for which cultural differences are basis.

Thereby, reasonable sight on our country's history and specific of interethnic contacts allows to avoid single-valued negative characteristics of the imperial period culture. It is characterized by heterogeneity, variety of interethnic relation paradigm, but rather effectively strengthened the empire. An absence of mass separatist riots of non-native inhabitants in the empire is an evidence of that. This rather actual nowadays when multiculturalism exhausted itself and

came into strict crisis which is followed by ethnical and confessional conflicts in the heart of Western civilization. By that time the Soviet internationalistic supraethnic identity compromised itself. Contradictions in issues of interethnic relations and confessions can lead to irreversible consequences. This makes researchers come back to the issue again and again, and the interest here is not theoretical, but applied. Понять и задействовать ресурс оптимизации межэтнических отношений, который был накоплен в ходе трехсотлетнего контактного сосуществования народов России, сегодня приобретает характер насущной необходимости. The necessity to understand and set ways of interethnic relations' optimization, that was accumulated for three hundred years of Russian contact co-existence, in motion takes a form of vital necessity.

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Имперский социум: субъекты и характер парадигмы межэтнических отношений

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Статья посвящена характеристике понятия «комплементарность» межэтнического взаимодействия, состава субъектов российского имперского социума и парадигмы межэтнических отношений периода становления империи. В работе представлен обзор исследовательских подходов к проблеме анализа структуры и уровней взаимодействия культур имперского и неимперского типов в рамках российского имперского социума. Статья адресована специалистам и интересующимся историей и культурой империй.

Ключевые слова: империя, имперская культура, комплементарность, мультикультурализм, межэтническое взаимодействие.
