

GNOSEOLOGY

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RUSSIA AND RATIONAL TRANSFORMATIVE HUMAN NATURE

SUMMARY. This article is devoted to the explanation of the necessity of developing a modern national practice of using the human, and the Russian people's in particular, rational transformative function.

KEY WORDS. Russia, Russian history, ability for rational human transforming, Russian intelligentsia, national authorities, activity from the top, activity from the base, vertical power, Western European history, ideal objectivity, tradition of control and limitation of practical rational transformative function, administrative-command system, national idea.

A human being by nature is a reasonable, practical, creative being transforming everything more or less available to him. The question is about the conditions and limits of this rational transformative nature.

It is the ability of rational transforming of a human that we call culture or cultural basis. That is, a human is formed as a cultural, culture-creating being from the beginning of his evolution. The History of all peoples, ethnic groups, humans themselves, humanity as a whole can and should be considered as evolution, the development of rational transformative power.

If we look at Russian History we must see the peculiarities of the manifestation of the rational transformative power peculiar to us — a Slavic people, Russians. First of all, in the context of the development level of this power manifestation. This, as I consider it, fundamentally explains many things.

Let's turn to the destiny, the very phenomenon of our own country's intelligentsia of the 19th — early 20th Century. This phenomenon claims to be unique in the history of mankind. It is a phenomenon that is obvious and has no precedents in world History. We explain this phenomenon according to the "Vekhi: Landmarks" although the "Vekhi: Landmarks" themselves require some explanation (see the very critical collection of articles by Russian members of intelligentsia, 1908, about the same Russian intelligentsia [1]). The "Vekhi: Landmarks" is nothing else but, according to all indications, a "libel" of the Russian intelligentsia, written by representatives of the intelligentsia itself (A.N. Berdyaev, etc.). Something similar takes place nowadays in the form of statements about the country's intelligentsia, the so-called

thinking class, intellectuals of modern Russia, representatives of this class themselves (the early 21st Century).

The question now arises: why does this happen and how can this be explained? In Russia, the possibilities or special conditions for manifestation of the rational transformative and cultural transformative function essential for the existence of the intellectually advanced part of our society, as any society in general, have always been strongly limited. One especially noticeable burst of such intellectual transformative activity occurred at the time of Peter I. However, the people, the thinking part of it, have always found some areas of manifestation of the transformative creative power. This is evidenced by the memorable, so-called “Kitchen” talks of the late Soviet Union time. They have started to be discussed nowadays.

It’s not a secret, however, that the rational transformative power in our country, in contrast to Europe and later the United States, has always been held in suspicion by the authorities, under their tough, often too cruel pressure. Only creativity approved by the authorities has been allowed. That, oddly enough, has brought a lot of benefits to our motherland: the literature of the 19th Century, the poetry of the Silver Age, ballet, music, painting, and so on. This continued during the Soviet period. Our national history includes a lot of achievements in the field of scientific creativity: Lomonosov, historians of the 19th Century, D. Mendeleev, N. Vavilov, military developments of the World War II period, space and S. Korolev, even genetics and cybernetics, after the Stalinist and post-Stalinist disgrace.

At the same time, our national authorities often had to initiate themselves the rational transformative power of our intellectuals. It was so in the time of Peter I, Catherine II, after the Crimean War, in the early 20th Century. One can recall the relationship of Ivan IV the Terrible and the duke, voivode (warlord), writer and conqueror of Kazan Andrey Kurbsky. The words of Nicholas I about A.S. Pushkin — “I talked to the most intelligent man in Russia”. To say nothing of the pseudosocialist times of Stalin — “sharashkas”, projects under Beria’s guidance, the exceptional position of physicists in the 1940s-1950s, etc.

Though, there were also quite opposite situations. Ivan IV the Terrible and the above-mentioned Andrey Kurbsky, the prosecutions of A.I. Radishchev, L.N. Tolstoy, in Stalin times the prosecution of N.I. Vavilov, dozens, if not hundreds of Russian philosophers, historians, economists, poets. The Leninist “philosophical ship” of 1922 (and not only this one), whose 90th anniversary we have recently celebrated, in this context looks like an act of amazing humanity.

But the people, its intellectually best representatives, have always created something, even during the Tatar-Mongol invasion. Our national authorities regularly had to initiate the activities of Russian intellectuals from the top. It was because of the absence of natural historical activity from the base. This is our History. Such is broadly the case today.

Skolkovo—what is it? There are a lot of programs for the development of science, culture—what for, where from? They say that we do not have a normal civil society. Maybe we don’t. That’s the problem. We do not have for the most part, independent individual practice of the manifestation of rational transformative function. Many of us are more inclined to neglect, drink away, skittle away their intellectual abilities than to come to their senses and, like a German protestant, for

example, or our nearest northern neighbour Finland, gradually accumulate national capital, both material and intellectual. N.V. Gogol wrote that in comparison to Europe we have been creating lots of things, but they are swept away by some unknown force, leaving no trace. But Europe keeps even its small achievements and attaches great positive significance to them [2 187].

All Western European history is at least parity of authoritative and civil, spontaneous, people's, mass manifestation of rational transformative power of people and nations. There have been many wars because of that. We can recall revolutions: Dutch, English, French, and German ones. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment were huge popular efforts! As for Russia — Bolotnikov, Razin, Pugachev, the Decembrists. Then — 1905 and the explosion in February and October 1917. This was already in the twentieth century!

We, Russians, are often (according to Block we are Scythians) characterized as Asian by the West and even by ourselves. In Asia mass, people's, civil initiative has traditionally been repressed. This region has never had proper civil initiative. Maybe only in the past few decades. But here in Asia, there is a very interesting history of rational transformative human nature. China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore are significant historical phenomena of the implementation of rational transformative human power. There are other examples of this kind. Finland, the Nordic countries have come even to some system close to us — so-called "Swedish socialism". And, oddly enough, in "a particular country".

The variants of the development of the people's rational power in the Islamic world, in the Middle East, such as Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, etc., are also interesting.

In Russia, our intelligent people, not having an opportunity, as in Western Europe, for any good practice of rational transformative human power that is free, independent, creative, relating even to the natural, not to mention the social, world, inevitably diverted to the sphere of the most ideal objectivity, being isolated within it: manilovism is a purely Russian phenomenon (on the concept of the ideal, ideal objectivity [3]). Concentrating on the sphere of philosophy, and a very peculiar one, literature, poetry, music, art in general (but we are in a ballet sphere..., noted Gorky in 1918). Partially, and fortunately, in the sphere of science, natural for the most part. Our intellectuals have contributed a lot to world culture, to all its sectors. In addition to artistic culture there are airplanes, helicopters, radio, television. Russian natives have given a lot to mankind!

Yes, we are cosmists, cosmopolites, universal people. Suffice it to recall numerous waves of Russian emigration both forced, bonded, violent and voluntary, especially in the last two decades. This is a whole migration of peoples (millions and millions!) — Russians, Russian subjects and citizens. Indeed, we are the third Rome, and on the whole we have been given to mankind as some lesson, some prospective direction. The question is what to do next? We, who stay here, in Russia, are not going to simply die.

In such a way our intelligentsia was formed in the second half of the 19th — early 20th Century. We remain largely the same nowadays. The Decembrists "woke up Herzen". But they then tried to genuinely reform Russia. After that there were mostly talks, discussions, salons, circles. Russian populists (narodniks) experimented with a peculiar practical variant of going to the people. But their ideal, idealistic,

reflective, ideally objective nature did not allow them to implement their plans. It was simply impossible.

Christianity in Russia was also introduced from the top. Although it appeared from the base gradually turning into a mass movement. For 1000 years Russia was dominated by the increasingly stringent tradition of control and limitation of the practical rational transformative function, activities of the people, especially intellectuals, and later the intelligentsia. Intellectuals simply escaped active work (N.G. Chernyshevsky was considered by some people as deserving the position of the prime minister of Russia at that time). Our intelligentsia “soured” in the sphere of reflection, in the sphere of the ideal, ideal objectivity. And notably in the degree that had developed by that time. At first it was or seemed to be extremely worthy. They tried to do something. Some of them even took up positions of power. Among the tsar’s officials, or even “gendarmes”, there were very intellectually advanced people, as in today’s FSB. The image of Porfiry Petrovich in “The Brothers Karamazov” by F.M. Dostoevsky was not a passing character. In modern Russia, in management at all levels there are also a lot of intelligent people, including hundreds of former students of Tyumen State University. Part of the intellectual commoners of the 19th Century, unfortunately, started terror, violent civil opposition. Similar things take place nowadays. E. Limonov, a talented writer, is an example of this.

Strangely enough, it has almost always been encouraged by our national authorities. Cruel suppression of peasant revolts, thousands of political convicts, January 9 1905, the Lena execution, the Stolypin ties. Under the Soviets—Kronstadt, peasant revolts, including on the territory of the modern Tyumen region, the Stalinist repressions, the executions of the Khrushchev era. All of this is a consequence of the practice of social reformation from the top down, which is largely dominant today. There is absolutely no comparison with the “socialist creativity of the masses” ([4], and this action took place in the spring of 1918). Lenin himself had to act, as a rule, from above, by virtue of so-called “historical necessity”.

But the life of the Russian people and Russia has, at length, come to the present circumstances. “The development of Capitalism in Russia”, with quotation marks or without, World War I led to the situation when the people once again rebelled, moreover, all of them! From an ordinary peasant to a university professor (P.N. Milyukov), to an independent lawyer (A.F. Kerensky). The people, the masses, finally got the possibility to express directly their rational (or slightly rational) transformative power. (See M. Gorky, “Untimely Thoughts” [5]—what it largely led to).

Russia will thank the Bolsheviks one day for somehow “calming down” the situation and creating a historically unprecedented phenomenon (no longer the “ghost of communism”)—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—the greatest state of the 20th Century. With regard to this country (the word “this” is quite justified here) even the USA, not to mention England, France and other countries, were forced to repeatedly make concessions.

Unfortunately, Soviet power didn’t remain like this for long, even in the times of Lenin, during the Civil War. It was very limited from the beginning, and primarily from the center. It was historically primitive. The vertical power tradition again took over, the administrative-command system (ACS) was formed, the tone was set by “Stalinism”. The people, after the incredible burst of activity of their rational

transformative function, was again forced into stalls, flocks, camps (by the way, in today's Russian villages the sites for the summer stay of cattle are still called "camps"). The people, almost entirely literate, thinking, with its new—Soviet—intelligentsia, ready to continuously create in all fields of human activity, for the sake of the people, the Soviet homeland, was unjustifiably, unreasonably, offensively limited in the manifestation of its rational transformative function.

Today in Moscow, our few intellectuals, the so-called representatives of the "creative class", are rebelling again. It's a tradition. Once again, the authorities do not really know what to do: whether to silence them, as in the tsars' times, or to try to come to agreement with them. It is not clear what our modern intellectual activists want. Don't they like Putin and Medvedev? A lot of peculiar "aesthetic" arguments are often put forward in this respect. And what do they like, after all? But, as during the Tatar-Mongol Yoke, the turmoil in the early 17th Century, February 1917, the question is about Russia's destiny! To be or not to be! Things can take such a turn that Russia will disappear and there will be certain areas called "Western Siberia", "Eastern Siberia", "the Far East". We know a few empires and civilizations that have fallen apart, have just disappeared off the face of the Earth, don't we?

We are faced with the same age-old question: what to do next with the rational transformative nature of our people? Should it still be limited, its forms of activity imposed only from the top? Then we are faced with the prospect of new dead ends and revolts. Or should the initiative from the base be given complete freedom? But it is stated by the West and also by ourselves that we do not have a normal civil society. What way out of this situation can we see? In our view, it is the following: once again patience, work, and honesty. But how can we "impose", bring this ideology to the people? That is the question. We can even create a new party — "PWH Party" ("Party of patience, work and honesty"). Or — "HPW Party" ("honesty, patience, and work"). There are other variants of interpretation, for example, "The Party of patience, honesty and work".

Russia and the Russian people are often described as overly patient. We often also feel the same ourselves. In this case, it is a completely peculiar patience — the patience that is associated with the inevitable efforts of organizing a new quality of society and a new quality of people's lives, state life. As stated Hegel, every nation deserves its government. Today we are talking about the government which modern Russia deserves. The obligations of both parties are, at least, equal. Some time is needed to release the sharp confrontation between the authorities and the people, to remove it dialectically, creatively, without the total destruction of either. As before, a special role should be played by vertical national power, considering the requirements of modern civilized development.

Russia has always developed in specific territorial and geographical conditions. Russia is the largest state in terms of its territory. It imposes special requirements on the processes taking place within it, they are the requirements associated with maintaining its integrity, the coherence of its regions. It was recently mentioned by the President at the APEC summit in Vladivostok. Today, there is some vertical power in Russia, or rather, owing to V.V. Putin, it has been restored with great difficulty, which is not noticed or is not wanted to be noticed by some politicians, ideologists and political scientists both in our country and

abroad. Even the votes are distributed, which is a return to yet another model of totalitarian government type.

Of course, the latter statement can be considered as a misconception. Even Catherine II was aware of the special circumstances of Russian development related to its vast space. But she certainly followed the imperial totalitarian principle. She wrote in her order, "The Emperor is sovereign; for no other, only his personal power can act accordingly with the space of such a big state" (The order of Empress Catherine II [6, 79]).

Today, "accordingly with the space of such a big state", one must act according to today's standards combining the spatial peculiarities of Russia with the democratic principles of the country's structure and functioning. The vertical should certainly continue functioning and updating qualitatively. But one of its most important aims should be to give all possible support to the all-round development of the civil impetus, civil society in Russia. All the more so as it is itself a part of the single whole of Russia. Is it not a paradox: does the government have to form its opposition? No, it is a real contradiction that must be dialectically resolved, according to humanitarian standards of modern civilization, and gradually removed.

Vertical power in any country, especially in Russia, is a certain hierarchy, a multilevel functional structure: from the top level of the federal government, through all of the regional and municipal levels, to the lowest levels of local control (so called self-government)—making decisions by ordinary people. Vertical power's contribution to civil society's formation must lie in the fact that a greater and greater number of governmental functions, decision-making functions should become the everyday affairs of people themselves, the citizens of Russia. Especially since vertical power is the daily activity of a part of Russian citizens who are as simple and ordinary as the rest of the Russian population.

The question is in the hardness-softness ratio of vertical power and the forming of civil society (individuals, groups, associations, municipal and local government bodies). The same can be said about work collectives, work associations of various enterprises, firms and so on, operating under the conditions of different types of property, taking into account, of course, the specific character of all the main spheres of life of our society, their qualitative characteristics and dimensions.

An obvious principle is the need to enhance determinacy, so to speak, rigidity, as it rises to higher levels of vertical power. But the same principle should be observed on the contrary—the need to smooth vertical power's rigidity while going down to the lower levels of government, direct decision-making. There is a more general principle: the greater the powers of authority, the greater the rigidity in their administration, including strict control, both by the law, the media and society in general; the lesser the powers, the more flexible, the softer, the more direct forms of decision-making. For example, during the first years of Soviet power, the model of national trade unions was planned like this—as a kind of "School of communism". "Of communism" or not is a special question, but as for an elementary school of government, the organization of social processes starting with the lowest levels, this is basically the right approach.

As a brief conclusion. It is stated that Russia today does not have a national idea. It is thought that it is just in the air: to survive, to maintain our identity, to

build the country according to the demands of modern civilization, to help other countries and peoples in the solution of global and regional problems.

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