

**Russian Thought
in Europe**

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Badania

Russian Thought in Europe

**RECEPTION, POLEMICS,
DEVELOPEMENT**

Edited by

Teresa Obolevich
Tomasz Homa
Józef Bremer

Akademia Ignatianum
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Foreword

Original Russian thought came into existence fairly late – as late as the 18th and 19th centuries. Creating their own conceptions, Russian thinkers readily referred to various philosophical traditions: the Eastern Christian one as well as the schools and currents that emerged in the West. At the same time, one can observe a reverse phenomenon: Western intellectuals too – philosophers, theologians, men of letters – in one way or another would refer to the oeuvre by Russian writers. This process, which in its broadest sense can be described as the reception of Russian thought in the West (above all in Europe), was begun still in Vladimir Solovyov’s lifetime (19th century) and has continued till this day.

The notion of reception, employed in this publication, is quite broad in its sense. It means both the influence of Russian philosophy on the works by Western fellow writers, and the criticism and polemics undertaken by the latter, as well as the development, study and research into the thought created in the Russian milieu. All these aspects have come to be reflected in the book hereby presented for the Reader. The texts have been sent in by the researchers – philosophers, theologians and literary scholars – from various research centres in Eastern (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus), Central (Poland) and Western Europe (the Netherlands, Italy). All the articles make up four subject matter groups.

The first part (“Patristic Inspirations in Russia and Europe”) treats of the Russian project concerned with the Neo-Patristic synthesis, its effect on the contemporary Greek philosophico-theological thought, as well as the reception of St Theophan the Recluse’s views in Poland.

The second part (“Russian Writers in the West”) depicts the influence of some brilliant writers of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century – Alexander Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Lev Tolstoy – on the intellectual quest undertaken by European and American humanists (e.g. Friedrich Nietzsche, Thomas Mann, Romano Guardini, Emmanuel Lévinas, Józef Tischner)

The third part (“Russian Religious Philosophers’ Output in Europe”) embraces studies concerned with the development of the thought of Alexei Khomiakov, Vladimir Solovyov, Semyon Frank, Nikolai Berdyaev and Lev Shestov in Western culture.

The last part (“Dialogue Between Russia and Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries”) presents and analyses the inspirations and collaboration between Russian and Western philosophers, theologians, men of letters and publicists, as well as the criticism and polemics with selected aspects of Russian thought, undertaken by European intellectuals.

As we present this book, we wish the Reader fruitful reading and inspiration for further research into Russian thought within a broad cultural context.

Teresa Obolevitch
Tomasz Homa
Józef Bremer

Patristic Inspirations in Russia and Europe

Aleksey Kamenskikh
Perm State University (Perm, Russia)

The Image of the Second Rome through the Prism of the Third

Since the 1920s in various fields of Greek culture (in the rediscovered novels and stories by A. Papadiamandis, in the works of Ph. Kontoglou and N. Pentzikis in iconography and painting, of D. Pikionis in architecture, of B. Tatakis, Ch. Yannaras, J. Romanides, J. Zizioulas and others in philosophy and theology) one may see a development of a tendency which may be characterised to a first approximation as “Neo-Byzantinism.”¹ In general, the main principle of this movement might be formulated as following: Greece is not an ordinary nation and cannot build its identity according to the model of a neo-European national state (in spite of the fact that just this process actually occurs in 20th c.). The fundamental principle of Greek culture is recognized in *the Byzantine Orthodoxy* as supra-territorial and moreover supra-ethnic cultural model.

It is very interesting that many of the mentioned Greek intellectuals find a detailed development of philosophical, theological, artistic aspects of this model in the writings of Russian religious philosophers and byzantinists of 19th and 20th c. – from the early Slavophiles (like I. Kirejevsky and A. Khomyakov) up to Russian émigré authors like G. Florovsky, V. Lossky and L. Ouspensky. It seems significant that Greek authors “recognise” in writings created by the representatives of “the Third Rome” the cultural model appropriate for “the Second one,” perceive this model as *own*.

In this paper I’d like to touch several most interesting moments of such perception and – as far as it goes – to describe some key principles of this play of reciprocal reflection of Russian and Greek cultural identities.

¹ See X. Γιανναράς, *’Ορθοδοξία και Δύσηστη Νεώτερη ’Ελλάδα*, ’Αθήνα 1999 [Ch. Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West in New Greece*, Athens 1999]; монах Диодор (Ларионов), “Пути” греческого богословия, “Богослов.Ru. Научный богословский портал,” <http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/2593536.html#_ftn14>.

I

To some extent “the Neo-Byzantine movement” might be considered as a kind of reaction to the failure of the political and cultural project that had its beginning in the Greek revolution of 1821 and its tragic result in the destruction of Greek communities in Asia Minor in 1923 (afterwards also in Constantinople). From the first steps of the Greek revolution the aim of struggle for independence had a distinctly *national* character; it was not a restoration of the Byzantine Empire, but a foundation of the state of the Greeks.² It was no mere accident that the founders of the Kingdom of Greece called themselves not *the Romaioi* (or *the Christianoi*), as did the Byzantine Greeks whose identity was established by the awareness of themselves as the Orthodox Christians and heirs of Rome, but *the Hellenes*. As any political project, the idea of the future Greek national state had its perspective and retrospective aspects. The first, a quasi-Napoleonic Μεγάλη Ιδέα, “the Great Idea,” provided for a reunification in one political whole of all parts of the scattered Greek nation. The new state, with Constantinople as the capital, ought to embrace all territories of the Balkans, the Archipelago, Asia Minor and the northern shore of the Black Sea. The second, “retrospective” aspect of the project presupposed reinterpretation of the Byzantine Empire image which was perceived now not in its real polyethnic and multi-linguistic manifoldness, but first of all as *the state of the Greeks*. (It’s not wonderful that the development of this nationalistic tendency provoked the split within *millet-i Rûm*, the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire: Bulgarians, for example, began to see in the Orthodox episcopos and in the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople himself ethnic Greeks predominantly³). Some key points of the attempts to realise this project are: the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece (1832), “the Bulgarian schism” and the series of Greek-Bulgarian conflicts (from 1860s), the failed intervention in Odessa (1918–1919) and the tragic endpoint – the downfall of the Pontic Greek communities, the massacre in

² Surely, I mean here only the prevailing tendency, the most significant among the Greek population of the Peloponnese and the Central Greece. Ideas of the so called Phanariots, rather influential at the first stage of the Greek national struggle, up to the end of the 20th c. were pushed to the sidelines, along with with the Phanariots themselves. See S.W. Sowards, *Twenty-five lectures on modern Balkan history (the Balkans in the age of Nationalism)*, Lecture 6: East-Lansing, Michigan State University, 1996–2012, <<http://staff.lib.msu.edu/sowards/balkan/>>.

³ Л.А. Герд, *Константинополь и Петербург: церковная политика России на православном Востоке (1878–1898)*, Москва 2006, Chapter VI, pp. 239-307.

Smyrna and all “the Asia Minor catastrophe” (Μικρασιατική καταστροφή) in 1922–1923.⁴

Perhaps it is no accident that *Fotis Kontoglou* (Φώτης Κόντογλου, 1895–1965), in 1922 a young painter and a teacher who was to become one of the most influent figures of “the Neo-Byzantine” movement, was among more than one and a half million Greeks who departed from Asia Minor. By that time F. Kontoglou had gained experience of studying at the Athens School of Fine Art, travelling in Western Europe, working in Paris as a book illustrator. But, as F. Kontoglou’s biographer Nikos Zias writes, “the tragedy of the Greek Asia Minor has a tremendous effect on him, separating him radically from the West, on the one hand, and, on the other, making him feel responsible for the continuation, even in another space, of the long-lived tradition which had withstood the dissolution of the Byzantine Empire and survived for four centuries and was now in danger of being completely lost as it had been uprooted from its own place...”⁵ In the spring of 1923 the painter visited Mount Athos, and his artistic career took a new direction: “Experiencing a kind of holy intoxication on Athos, [Kontoglou] set about copying wall-paintings and icons and made it his task to unravel the secrets of Byzantine art, while at the same time he painted the Athos landscape, the monasteries and their monks, and wrote short tales brimming over with life and poetry.”⁶

In the coming years he removes wall paintings and creates numerous frescoes and icons on wood in tens of churches all over Greece, works at the Byzantine Museum of Athens, at the Coptic Museum in Cairo, organizes the Byzantine Museum in Corfu, undertakes the monumental wall painting of the Athenian Municipality, writes numerous works on the hagiographic heritage of Byzantium. By efforts of Fotius Kontoglou and his pupils the “neo-Byzantine” style has become predominant in the contemporary Greek iconography.

For the purpose of this paper it is very important that the “methodological horizon” for Kontoglou’s views on the phenomenon of the Orthodox icon was formed to a large extent by the writings of Leonid Ouspensky – Kontoglou’s friend, a Russian icon-painter, historian of icon and a lecturer in iconography in the Orthodox institute of St Dionysius in Paris. In

⁴ S.W. Sowards, *Twenty-five lectures on modern Balkan history*, Lectures 6 and 14.

⁵ N. Zias, *Fotis Kontoglou and the Modern Greek Painting*, in **Memoriam of Kontoglou**, Athens 1975. English translation (by H. Mathioudakis): <http://www.myriobiblos.gr/texts/english/zias_kontoglou.html>.

⁶ N. Zias, *Photis Kontoglou: Reflections of Byzantium in the 20th century*, Athens 1997, p. 15.

1948 Kontoglou supervised the Greek translation of Ouspensky's brochure *L'Icone, Vision du Monde Spirituel*, which was published twice (in 1948 and 1952) in Athens. Some scholars note the influence of Ouspensky's works on Kontoglou and emphasise that "the bulk of Kontoglou's writings were published *after* this encounter with the writings of Ouspensky."⁷ It is noteworthy that through Ouspensky's writings Kontoglou was affected *by the whole tradition* of Russian philosophy and theology of icon, elaborated in the writings of Eugene Trubetskoy, Sergei Bulgakov and Paul Florensky.⁸

Actually, a reader of Kontoglou's writings on iconography encounters the concepts familiar to him from P. Florensky's *Iconostasis* (though some of these concepts are treated in a simplified and strictly polemic mode). Both Florensky and Kontoglou suggest that the Byzantine iconography was not a stepping-stone on the way to the innovations of the Italian Renaissance, but the highest point in the development of religious art. Its essence is symbolic realism. The Renaissance art has an immanent, naturalistic and illusionistic character (which expresses itself, for example, in the use of a "direct," linear perspective that makes the spectator the central point of the world; in the use of natural phenomena such as clouds and sunrays for the presentation of the divine, etc.), and developed in close connection with the philosophical, rationalistic immanentism of its time. Unlike the "modern,"⁹ Renaissance art, Byzantine iconography intends to present the transcendent spiritual world (and the icon as a visible image of the invisible; it is "a window" in this world); it has liturgical and *anagogical* character¹⁰. The absence of linear perspective and shadows, transformed

⁷ E. Freeman, *Redefining the Icon. The Problem of Innovation in the Writings of Florensky, Ouspensky and Kontoglou*, New York 2009, p. 33.

⁸ Е.Н. Трубецкой, *Умозрение в красках. Вопрос о смысле жизни в древнерусской религиозной живописи*, Москва 1916 (E. Trubetskoy, *Icons: Theology in Color*, transl. by G. Vakar, New York 1973); П.А. Флоренский, *Иконостас*, in idem, *Имена*, Москва 1998, pp. 341-448 (P. Florensky, *Iconostasis*, transl. by D. Sheehan, O. Andrejew, New York 1996); С. Булгаков, *Икона и иконопочитание*, Париж 1931 (S. Bulgakov, *The Icon and its Veneration*, in idem, *Icons and the Name of God*, transl. by B. Jakim, Michigan 2012, pp. 1-112); Л. Успенский, *Богословие иконы Православной Церкви*, Переславль 1997 (L. Ouspensky, V. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icon*, transl. by G.E.H. Palmer and E. Kadloubovsky, New York 1982).

⁹ Kontoglou explores the terms "modern" and "naturalistic" as synonymous. So, he may speak about "Hellenistic modernism" and "modernism" of Baroque icons as relative phenomena.

¹⁰ Ph. Kontoglou, *What Orthodox Iconography Is*, "The Word Magazine: The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America," September 1964, pp. 5-6, <http://www.orthodoxiconsonline.com/articles/Kontoglu_whatisonography.asp>.

proportions of human bodies do not mean lack of skill of icon-painters. These stylistic features of *hagiographia* (along with all the other means and forms of the Orthodox liturgical art) lead a human to experience the living reality which is not a continuation of this immanent space (hence the absence of direct perspective), the world where shadows don't exist and where each creature undergoes "beautiful transformation."

As a moment not of conceptual dependency but rather of congeniality of Kontoglou's and Florensky's positions we may note a specific relation of these authors to art of the avant-garde. Both authors find a kind of similarity between the traditional Christian art and avant-garde artistic searching in negation of naturalism and aspiration to the invisible.¹¹

II

Another point of the specific Greek reception of Russian intellectual tradition as a modus of the Byzantine one (and hence, in turn the reason for the declaration about "the vital force of the Byzantine spirit") we find in the last chapter of the famous *Byzantine Philosophy of Basil Tatakis* (Βασίλειος Ν. Τατάκης, 1897–1986). The book of Tatakis was published at first in 1949 in French as a supplement volume of Émile Bréhier's series "Histoire de la philosophie." In his work Tatakis undertook a pioneering attempt to study the history of Byzantine philosophy in its entirety over some one thousand years. Before that Byzantine philosophy was considered by professional historians of philosophy a far periphery in relation to the mainstream of philosophical movement, "an aberrant offshoot of Western philosophy, a storehouse for the treasures of Hellenism, which from the 13th through the 15th century, would, when needed, nourish Western thought."¹² An enormous number of philosophical sources were not

¹¹ Cf. the paraphrase of Plato's *Phaedrus*, 247b-e in Florensky's *Iconostasis* (Π.Α. Φλορενσκίη, *Иконостас*, p. 352) regarding both forms of non-naturalistic art, church and avant-garde. It was no accident that the recent conference devoted to Florensky (Venice, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia, 3-4.02.2012) was named "Paul Florensky – between icon and avant-garde." On the other hand, some signs of the "avant-garde past" may be traced in Kontoglou's paintings. As N. Zias claims, some features characteristic of the "Byzantine" style of Kontoglou ("lack of perspective and consequently the lack of a third dimension, (...) the absence of a single light source, and the use not of tonal gradation, but of color contrasts that often serve to complement one another") were acquired by the painter during "his exposure to Modern Art in Paris" (N. Zias, *Photis Kontoglou: Reflections of Byzantium in the 20th century*, p. 16).

¹² É. Bréhier, *Preface to the French edition*, in B. Tatakis, *Byzantine Philosophy*, transl. by N. Moutfakis, Indianapolis 2003, p. viii.

published and awaited research in manuscript libraries all over the world. Thanks to Tatakis use a large number of almost unknown texts entered the research spotlight. He succeeded in presenting Byzantine philosophy as an autonomous discipline, distinct from Christian theology. He initiated an approach in which theories and arguments of Byzantine thinkers began to be taken philosophically seriously; their writings were no longer simply studied as works of the past of mainly antiquarian or historical interest, but were studied rather as philosophical works on their own merit. As a brilliant historian of ancient philosophy, Tatakis showed the ways, different from the Western ones, in which the classical heritage of Platonism and Aristotelianism was accepted and interpreted by medieval Byzantine authors.

Now *Byzantine Philosophy* of Tatakis is considered by specialists a classical book on the subject; it opens the chronological lists of historiographic surveys of contemporary studies in Byzantine philosophy¹³ and in many aspects preserves its academic value. But within the framework of our paper the last chapter of the monograph – “Byzantium after Byzantium” – is of main interest.

Summing up all the previous chapters, Tatakis concludes that he has been able to demonstrate that the traditional-for-European-history-of-philosophy estimation of the role of Byzantium as *only* a mediator in transition of scientific and philosophic ideas in diachronic (from Antiquity to Renaissance) and synchronic (from the Persians, Arabs and the Chinese to the western Europeans) plans is incorrect. In the realm of thought Byzantium created a special type of intelligence that contributed to the formation of Arabic philosophy and western Scholasticism. It played an important role in the blossoming of Italian Renaissance.

But the historical role of Byzantine intellectual tradition is not limited to the active influence on the Western and Eastern neighbours during the Middle Ages. Tatakis' most interesting statement is that Byzantine philosophy outlived the fall of the Byzantine Empire; Byzantium “*has continued to exist in our time.*”¹⁴ The cultural model framed by Byzantium was preserved by the Greek Church and affected the Turks themselves, who patterned their own empire on this model. Moreover, as a cultural and spiritual structure it may be transmitted through any spatial borders and

1. ¹³ See K. Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy and Its Ancient Sources*, Oxford 2002, p. 7; И.А. Иванов, *Византийская философия в современных зарубежных исследованиях*, <<http://www.academia.edu/1152411/>>.

¹⁴ B. Tatakis, *Byzantine Philosophy*, p. 264 (italics is mine – A.K.).

really became the inner basis of many national cultures of the Slavic and Eastern world: so, “Czarist Russia, molded by Byzantium, remained, in all facets of its life, the true image of fallen Byzantium until the dawn of the 20th century.”¹⁵

Tatakis asserts that without the study of Byzantium “it is totally impossible for one to delve into the intimate and most essential aspirations of the Neo-hellenic and Slavic spirit, the spirit of all Orthodox people.”¹⁶ He recognises the “brilliant description” of tragedies of these (Slavonic? Neo-hellenic? Byzantine?) souls in the works of Dostoevsky; he emphasises the statement of Ivan Kirejevskij, an early Slavophile of 19th century, that the future Russian philosophy will be based upon the ecclesiastical writers of Byzantium. He finds, at last, the expression of the same spiritual intention in Nikolai Berdyaev’s philosophical quest.¹⁷ Having recognised Russian philosophers of 20th century as rightful heirs of their Byzantine ancestors, Tatakis optimistically concludes: “we can safely maintain, therefore, that the philosophy, or rather the spirituality, of Byzantium has not yet uttered its final word.”¹⁸

III

In the conclusion of this paper I’d like to discuss some Russian connotations of “the Byzantine idea” in works of the group of eminent Greek theologians and religious philosophers belonging to the “generation of the 60s” – *Christos Yannaras* (Χρήστος Γιανναράς, b. 1935), *John Romanidis* (Ιωάννης Σ. Ρωμανίδης, 1927–2001), *John Zizioulas* (Ιωάννης Ζηζιούλας, b. 1931) and *Nellas Panagiotis* (Νέλλας Παναγιώτης, 1936–1986). These authors (sometimes referred to as “the neo-Orthodox”) perhaps may be considered among the most interesting representatives of contemporary Christian thought. High philosophical level, theological boldness, fusion of intellectualism with strict emphasis on practical, living character of

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁷ “It is easy to recognize that this spirituality is none other than Byzantine” (ibidem).

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 265. We may add that Émile Bréhier, head of the edition project “Histoire de la philosophie” and an eminent scholar, in his preface to *Byzantine Philosophy* completely accepts Tatakis’ view on Russian religious philosophers (“that ecumenical movement of which Russia had so many representatives around 1900”) as bearers “of an autonomous and sturdy spiritual structure, one that resists historical disasters and is captured so well by the title of this book’s final chapter: ‘Byzantium after Byzantium’” (É. Bréhier, *Preface to the French edition*, pp. ix-x).

Christian κήρυγμα are those features of their works which helped the Orthodox tradition in Greece in the 2nd half of the last century become attractive for many young people. Michel Stavrou mentions, among the factors that determined the intellectual formation of these theologians, the publishing of numerous modern-Greek translations of the works created by representatives of a movement called “the neo-patristic synthesis” (Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, John Meyendorff).¹⁹ Ch. Yannaras also mentions in his autobiographical notes that in 1968 he arrived in Paris, already being familiar with the writings of Russian emigrant theologians and religious philosophers.²⁰ Yannaras met and conversed with Paul Evdokimov (the last representative of the first generation of Russian emigrants in Paris), was friendly with L. Ouspensky, N. Lossky (Jr.), P. Struve, O. Clément. But the most significant and important event experienced by while in communication with members of the Russian Orthodox community in Paris (an the end of 1960s already mainly francophone) was not connected with some doctrines or theoretical constructions; the discovery which changed his life was that of a social kind; it was a special type of community united by the Eucharistic event – the Orthodox parish.

This ecclesiastic reality of the Christian parish that can be realised in any place and among any people becomes the main object of Yannaras’ philosophical research and theological care. Here, by the way, we again meet the image of ideal Byzantium found by a Greek among the Russians.²¹

¹⁹ М. Ставру, *Предисловие*, in Х. Яннарас, *Вера Церкви. Введение в православное богословие*, transl. by Г.В. Вдовина, Москва 1992, <http://azbyka.ru/hristianstvo/sut/vera_tcerkvi_02-all.shtml>. It is to be noted that these relations in many cases became immediate and personal. So between 1960 and 1964 John Zizioulas did his doctoral research under Georges Florovsky at Harvard. J. Romanides was also a pupil of Florovsky (see J.S. Romanides, *F. Georges Florovsky: The Theologian in the Service of the Church in Ecumenical Dialogue. Lecture at St. Vladimir’s Seminary 23 May 1980*, <http://www.romanity.org/htm/rom.29.en.f_georges_florovsky.htm>).

²⁰ Х. Яннарас, *Православный Париж*, <http://krotov.info/libr_min/28_ya/an/naras.htm>.

²¹ Cf. Yannaras’ favorite trope “Hellenism is οὐτόπια:” from the classical antiquity “Greek idea” had no strict topological sense; it was connected to a greater extent with the special type of social organization and culture – and therefore might be realised anywhere. Cf. also J. Romanides’ concept of “Ρωμηόσυνη” (“Romanhood”) as an extra-territorial and extra-ethnic essence of the Greek national identity (J. Romanidis, *Romiosini, Romania, Roumeli* (in Greek), Thessaloniki 1975).

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Janna Voskressenskaia
Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele (Milan, Italy)

The “Other” Person. The Reception of Russian Neo-Patristics in J. Zizioulas’ Theology

Introduction

One of the most important contributions that Russian philosophy made to the horizon of the worldwide thought came from what is commonly called the “Russian philosophy of religion,” one of whose fathers can be considered V. S. Solovyov. Beginning with his earlier works, such as *Lectures on Godmanhood* (1878), various questions regarding the relationship between mankind and God were raised under some new light. On the one hand, this gave a new breath to the ancient research of the all-encompassing Unity, which clearly had to be founded in God; on the other, it became necessary to study the meaning of the human participation in history along with the final human destiny.

For Solovyov, redemption could not be a result of some mechanical movement of events, for this would deprive human beings of their free will. In fact, in this context the fall seems to be almost “necessary” in order to give an opportunity to all men to turn back to their Father, to the real source of the Truth, after a long walk through all the errors and distortions of it.

God’s design, in this conception, somehow guarantees the course of the world’s life and keeps it invisibly embraced in Sophia’s hands, until the end of times, when all the creation will sit beside the Father’s throne. Thus, Sophia, God’s Wisdom, is “ideal or perfect humanity, eternally contained in the integral divine being, or Christ.”¹

The consequence of this theory is that it completely cancels the possibility of any real and concrete evil, as the evil here is destined to extinction at the end of times. The evil in this way seems to have no reality at all, as

¹ See V. Solovyov, *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, transl. by P. Zouboff, Hudson – New York 1995, pp. 113-114.

it was just a temporary condition useful in order to make people become conscious of their divine origin. Only Solovyov's last work, *Three Conversations* (1889), shows us a tragic side of the existence that the author seemed to deny in his previous books.

Solovyov's ideas largely influenced the thought of more than one generation of Russian philosophers, but two names in particular are interesting within the argument we are going to see. These names are P. Florensky (1882–1937) and S. Bulgakov (1871–1944). Both of them indeed elaborated powerful and fascinating sophiological theories of creation.

The problem that came out some years after their works had become widespread was to understand whether the theories of these great thinkers did really echo the position of the Orthodox Church on what Sophia is. The most obvious and perilous risk was that of turning back to Hellenistic (Platonic and Neo-Platonic) or even heretic points that described the ontological relations between the world and God in terms of an intermediation of ideas, expressing the connection existing between God's nature and creatures. The real danger incoming from this kind of theories in the Christian conception of God consists in chaining God to the created world, eliminating the radical persistent difference between the Creator and the created reality, which also means the denial of *creation ex nihilo* as expression of God's will.

In order to contrast this ambiguous conception that succeeded at the beginning of the 20th century, the great theologians such as G. Florovsky and V. Lossky elaborated their theories based on the revision of the Cappadocian Fathers of Church. The attention that the two Russian authors paid to this tradition resulted in a philosophy whose foundation should be found within the Eucharistic experience, or, more generally, a philosophy based on the intellectual explanation of the Chalcedonian Creed. For them both, indeed, philosophical thought is complementary to the genuine experience of the Christian faith.

The interest in the Cappadocian Fathers determined the title of this kind of philosophical approach, called by the same exponents a "Neo-Patristic synthesis," and its success in the ecumenical dialogue, as it referred to the Christian theological authorities before the Church split.

Nowadays, one name in particular inherited this theological and philosophical "school of thought" that brings to life a new interest in the Fathers of the 4th century. The name that is going to become the protagonist of our discussion is J. D. Zizioulas, a metropolitan of Pergamon, who did his doctoral research into the same G. Florovsky at Harvard University, being both an heir and critical continuator of his renowned teacher's theories.

In this essay we will mainly analyse the thought by J. Zizioulas, one of the greatest Orthodox theologians of today. Considering the complexity and richness of his theories, it becomes necessary to choose several topics in order to show the continuity existing between the ideas of the previously mentioned Russian philosophers and his own thought. Indeed, more attention will be paid to the relationship between the Creator and the created universe, to the meaning of the "personhood" both in the Trinitarian and mankind-related questions and, eventually, the meaning of history, strictly connected with the meaning of human freedom.

Before we begin presenting Zizioulas' thought, it is necessary to better understand the positions of his predecessors and the dogmatic battles they were reduced to fighting.

G. Florovsky and V. Lossky: discussions on the problem of "sophiology"

The fact that there have been different theorizations of Sophia's presence in the world, as can be seen on the pages by Russian philosophers, is of great importance. Nevertheless, the theme's being in constant closeness with the themes widely discussed by the Hellenistic authors often brought it to a point of fusion or approach with the Greek cosmology. Our main interest here is to understand the points triggering diatribe against the Neo-Patristic synthesis. In this paragraph we will discuss the most controversial points that different authors of various sophiological propositions propounded, along with the criticism whereby Florovsky and Lossky moved to their theories.

The great apology of Christian Truth, delineated by Solovyov, met with enormous success in those circles of intelligentsia that were trying to reconcile philosophy with its theological basis, the attempts made against all the positivist and socialist theories widespread at that time in Russia, as well as in the whole of Europe.

The idea of Sophia as showed by Solovyov can be summarised as follows:² God, in order to exist not only in an abstract, ideal, way, needs to

² In fact, different hermeneutical approaches can result as appropriate to this point of Solovyov's thought. Indeed, the conception of Sophia seems to undergo some nuance changes in his different works. We adopt here the vision that the authors, we are going to highlight, strongly criticised in order to get closer to our main topic.

express Himself, to give life to another, who will receive his revelation. As a consequence, the creation of the world becomes unavoidable, as well as the fall, taking place already in eternity, before the time appeared. Indeed, Sophia is an eternal, ideal man, brought to life by means of the Son, for the Father does not directly reveal Himself in the created world and cannot be glimpsed by creatures. Here one of Solovyov's memorable extracts comes to mind and is worthwhile mentioning here: "Thus, Sophia is ideal or perfect humanity, eternally contained in the integral divine being, or Christ. Since it is beyond doubt that God, to exist in actuality and reality, must manifest Himself, manifest His existence, that is, must act in other, the existence of this other is thereby established as necessary. And, since speaking of God, we cannot have in mind the form of time, because whatever we say about God presupposes eternity, the existence of this other with respect to which God manifests Himself must be acknowledged as necessarily eternal. This other is not absolutely other for God (that would be inconceivable), but is God's own expression, or manifestation, with respect to which God is called the Word."³

In this way humans acquire great importance in the universe, as "the center of the world and the periphery of Divinity – is humanity."⁴ Indeed, mankind is called by its Creator to devote itself to God, as He is the only real source of Truth and Life. In fact, Sophia is always present in the world as its unifying principle and should be accordingly recognised by all men, which is actually just a question of time. Indeed, the final *telos* of history, in the meaning of its destiny, can already be foreseen now: the whole created world will turn back to its Father as all human beings, thanks to a personal, individual act of faith will do. All the errors committed by humankind are necessary in order not to make of this all-embracing redemption just a mechanical event.

Solovyov's ideas became a fertile land for the flourishing works of different Russian philosophers of religion. In this perspective, there is another protagonist of sophiological theories to be mentioned. P. Florensky's masterpiece *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth* (1914) is one of the greatest works ever, where Sophia is described as the Grand Root of the synthesis of everything created, the Guardian Angel and the Ideal Person of the world, its same shape, the formational foundation, one in God and many in creation. Even though an undeniable ecclesiological vision of Sophia is

³ V. Solovyov, *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, pp. 113-114.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 114.

clearly present in Florensky's theory, another critical element of it is interesting for our topic.

The status of the fourth *hypostasis*, the created one,⁵ which from the point of view of the first three *hypostases* – substance, intelligence and spirituality of the created world, completely cancels the ontological gap between God and his creature.

Another author whose contribution to sophiology was truly precious is S. Bulgakov. His position is especially clear in his late work *Unfading Light*, but we will discuss him later on.

A common point for all these theories is the vision of God as Unity that unifies all creatures in order to keep it somehow safe and to guarantee the same unity and the possibility of reaching God, as no radical ontological abyss seems to persist between God and men, called to become Godmanhood.

In the following paragraphs we will see how this approach was criticised by Lossky and Florovsky. This brief exposure will let us emphasise the main elements of their theorisation, which means those elements that we will find somehow in Zizioulas' theology. Indeed, both these authors strongly influenced the work of J. Zizioulas, as it will be seen during the analysis of some fundamental categories of his thought.

V. Lossky and his critics on Bulgakov's sophiology

As already stated, Bulgakov's work *Unfading Light* represents one of the apexes of sophiological writings. This book, largely criticised by the same Orthodox Church authorities, became also fundamental for the Neo-Patristic diatribe against sophiology.

Here, Bulgakov tries to give a definition of Sophia as God's essence, the Divine *Ousia*. Bulgakov writes: "*God is Sophia* signifies that God, hypostatic love, loves Sophia, and that she loves God with an answering, though not hypostatic, love. (...) The third form of love is Sophia's answering love for God, as the inner connection of the Divine thrihypostatic Person with His nature. On the part of nature, on the part of *Ousia* as Sophia, there is of course no place for personal love (the type of love exhibited in the

⁵ П. Флоренский, *Столп и утверждение истины* [*The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*], Москва 2005, p. 284.

first two forms of love), for there is no person here: Sophia is not a ‘fourth hypostasis,’ just as in general she is not a hypostasis at all. However, she too loves.”⁶

Lossky states⁷ that it is strictly necessary to fight against this kind of theological positions that make a mixture of two radically different God’s attributes: essence (*ousia*) and person. In no way can Sofia be considered either the essence or the person. Indeed, the conception of Christian love assumes that hypostasis as well as creatures should consciously correspond to God’s love. So that if we assume that Sofia is just a passive element mechanically attracted to the Creator in grace of His love, we turn back to the ancient Hellenistic position. On the other hand, if we endow Sophia with a status of an autonomous and conscious entity, or hypostasis, we simply introduce a fourth element in God, aside from Trinity.

Thus, eventually, we should consider Sofia as one of the Names of God for the sake of economy.

Furthermore, the reassuring presence of Sophia in the world as an eternal humanity in God, makes of a redemption just a play and eliminates the differences between God’s and human’s natures. Indeed, Bulgakov maintains that men are created in eternity, but destined to a temporal being. For Lossky, only if we affirm that men are created in time, but are created in order to win eternal life, we assert a distinction between God and mankind.

In general, for Lossky, Sofian systems replace the personal relationship between God and men with a natural-cosmological connection between the Divine Sofia and the created one. In this perspective different problems remain unsolved. One of these is the presence and origin of evil, as well as the responsibility for the fall, which seems to be a burden on God’s shoulders.

Lossky insists, founding his statement on the Chalcedonian Definition, as well as on Cappadocian Fathers’ writings, that it is strictly necessary to keep distinguished the conceptions of hypostasis and of the nature in God. Only in this way will it be possible for us to achieve a grasp of the same anthropology.

⁶ S. Bulgakov, *The Lamb of God*, transl. by B. Jakim, Michigan 2008, p. 105.

⁷ See V. Лосский, *Спор о Софии* [*The Sofia Debate*], Москва 1996.

Father G. Florovsky and his theory on creation: critics on Solovyov's theories

Florovsky recognised that the attempt made by Solovyov in his theories of unifying philosophical method with Christian dogmas was an effective and authentic response to the religious yearnings and anxieties of his age. But there was a strong incongruity with the Orthodox thought in it.

The Christian concept of history, as well as of eschatology, which we will see as prominent also in Zizioulas's theories, becomes a subject of strong distortion in Solovyov's works. Indeed, the question of nature of evil remains ambiguous. For Solovyov, evil consists in a wrong order of values that men make. The real essence of evil is the positioning of what is limited instead of what is absolute. That means that the source of evil is to be found in the claim of the self that wants to occupy the place of All-Unity. From this perspective evil has no reality at all, but exists only as a misrepresentation of the Good that will be definitely elevated at the end of times. In Solovyov's theories, the fall becomes an opportunity for mankind to make a spiritual trust deeds and to recompose the right value scale in order to see and to reach its peak: God. History has a clear sense and we have been given a key to disclose it (Sofia, the Church): history is the way by which we have to get to our Father.

To Florovsky's mind, there is no place in Solovyov's philosophy (except for his last work rendering a gloomy design of the antichrist reign) for the real tragedy that in fact should be the most proper way to describe the human being. He argues that creatures are capable of ontological suicide, that redemption is not a necessary final destination of mankind. And this same fact shows that we were created completely free, as well as totally different from God. Florovsky writes: "The mystery is in the reality of creaturely freedom. Why should it be wanted in the world created and ruled by God, by His infinite wisdom and love? In order to be real, human response must be more than a mere resonance. It must be a personal act, an inward commitment. In any case, the shape of human life – and now we may probably add, the shape and destiny of the cosmos – depends upon the synergism or conflict of the two wills, divine and creaturely."⁸

This conflict, or synergism, is made possible by the same act of creation: God created the world by His will (not "through" it, there is no ontological continuity between Creator and creatures) as a concrete, real nature, totally

⁸ G. Florovsky, *The Last Things and The Last Events*, in idem, *Collected Works*, vol. 3: *Creation and Redemption*, Belmont 1976, p. 264.

different from His, in order to let it make use of their freedom. Thus, the reality of this freedom is guaranteed by the absence of any condition that could make of a created world a kind of emanation of God's nature. This freedom makes possible a religious experience: an encounter of two radically different natures.

In order to explain and to confirm his own position, Florovsky adduces St. Athanasius' authority:⁹ the irreducible difference between God's will and God's nature is the reason of two different ways of "giving birth" that God have and exerts. Indeed, only the Son can be considered born by God's nature, while the created world is an expression of God's completely free will, so that the world could never even come into existence, as there is no necessity of it in the Divine "ontological structure."

The overcoming of Origen's ambiguous position on creation – somehow dangerously coming close to the sophiological theories, which we have briefly seen here – can only take place through the reading of the Church Fathers, especially of the Cappadocian tradition of the 4th century, where the definition and distinction between nature and the person (*hypostasis*) are given.

Only in this way will history obtain the right meaning and significance. Indeed, history is a place of free human action, and it is here that we should decide whether to live following our finite, limited, nature, or whether to enter into personal contact with God and his love in order to achieve our hypostatical status in Christ.

J. D. Zizioulas: the "otherness" as ontological foundation

In his theological disquisitions, J. D. Zizioulas inherited several points of the Neo-Patristic tradition, begun with the two great Russian philosophers and theologians already mentioned: G. Florovsky and V. Lossky. Here we will mainly analyse Zizioulas' work *Communion and Otherness. Further studies in Personhood and the Church*,¹⁰ as the very title of this essay suggests.

As we will see, his attention to the Cappadocian tradition together with the accentuation he makes of the gap existing between the Creator and creatures are just some of the first indications of the patrimony received

⁹ See G. Florovsky, *St. Athanasius' Concept of Creation*, in idem, *Collected Works*, vol. 4: *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont 1975, pp. 39-62.

¹⁰ J.D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, New York 2006.

from the Neo-Patristic school. In fact, as we will analyse, also his concept of history and evil are the echoes especially of Florovsky's positions that we have already seen.

This author, whose main philosophical and theological trait consists in a great reevaluation and elaboration of the concept of "personhood," bases his anthropology on a Trinitarian Orthodox dogma. The "otherness" and the relationship that can take place within the radical difference became key-points for the comprehension of his thought. For Zizioulas, only Christology can give us an acceptable answer to all the queries concerning our identity.

There is one simple question that all of us sometimes ask ourselves and this question is: "Who am I?" In these few words, in fact, there are three fundamental elements that compose all our yearnings for ontological knowledge. Indeed, three words composing it correspond to our three very questions: "who" – is the expression of our encounter with the world that surrounds us as from birth; we are called to affirm ourselves in an already given world, we need to understand our place in it, the position we have in relation to all the other creatures we unavoidably meet. "Am" – expresses our desire for safety, for victory over nothingness; it shows how we want to stay in our being, but it doesn't solve another problem: there are many beings in the world – what really makes us what we are? The "Me" of the "who am I?" question is our claim in order to understand the nature of our unrepeatable identity. Put together, the elements "am" and "I," hide the invocation of the immortality of individuals.

In order to answer this question we should turn back to the Cappadocian Fathers, who, Zizioulas states, made a true philosophical revolution in the 4th century. The Christian creeds that today appear common, at those times were to be established and confirmed. The usage of Greek terms and conceptual apparatus in order to describe the new cosmology, based on the concept of *creation ex nihilo*, in some cases led to heretical positions (Origen is one of the most famous examples of this misunderstanding). Terminological changes had to be made.

Indeed, for the first time, thanks to the Cappadocian Fathers, the common Greek philosophical term "hypostasis" began to be identified with the "person." The difference they highlighted persisting between God's nature and God's hypostasis became fundamental for the definition of the "causality" in relationship with the differences between the birth of the Son and the act of the creation of the universe.¹¹

¹¹ The concept of the *monarchy* of the Father caused the concept of "causality" come

Indeed, only the Son receives life from the Father within the same nature, while the creaturely world is a result of God's free act in accordance with His radically free will. In the ancient Greek thought *kosmos* was connected to God, and presupposed God's presence in it, while the *creature* only presupposes God's act that makes come into existence something that is different from Him and that is out of Him. Indeed, the creature does not exist *in* God, but *behind his face*. Thus, the two natures – the one of God's and the created – are totally different. God creates something that is truly free in this sense: there is no forced connection between God and the world, only a free decided encounter can put them in relationship.

The position that Zizioulas upholds, also proper to the Neo-Patristic authors, as we saw previously, helps to explain the origin and nature of humans freedom. Indeed, Zizioulas maintains that the absence of freedom in the creative act would automatically mean the loss of the ontological difference both for the Creator as well as for His creatures. The gap between the two can be overcome only through the personhood, that is by means of a conscious and desired encounter of two hypostases, otherwise the two natures have no possibility of meeting, as they are totally different.

In accordance with the Chalcedonian Definition, Christ is acknowledged in two natures that came together into one person and one hypostasis. He is the only way of *theosis* for humankind.¹² Our nature was created in time and is limited by the grip of death. Nevertheless, even though created in time, we were not created in order to belong to natural laws, as we were given freedom and personhood; such freedom and such personhood allow us to abandon natural life and to devote ourselves to the really hypostatical life, that means life in Christ.

Our freedom, without God, would lose its ontological meaning. The fall is nothing but a refusal of God by Adam, that is the refusal of "otherness"

inside the Trinity. Thus, it became possible to individuate a primeval *arche* within the Trinitarian structure that was no longer identified with *ousia*, but with the Father, that is with the First Hypostasis, with Person. The causality in God can proceed in accordance with his nature (as in the case of the same Trinity) or due to his free decision, as it happens for the created world. In any case, the "cause" is not the same *ousia*, or nature of God, but the Person. This helped to keep the radical ontological distance between the Creator and creatures. Zizioulas strongly maintains this assertion, like his Neo-Patristic predecessors (remember the problem of Sofia and the lack of the distinction between God and the world).

¹² The ecclesiology by J. Zizioulas is strictly based on Christology, just like Florovsky's one, but it would be necessary to open a long discussion around the question, which here cannot take place. Indeed, we will not see any of the ecclesiological aspects that the author elaborates.

as the constitutive element of being. The self obtained ontological priority over the "Other." This turned humans into individuals, monads, in search of some connection.

The problem of many theories that have attempted to lend some unity to this human condition of solipsistic split is that whatever attempt to find a common background becomes dangerous for identities, difficulties arise as to where the differences should be kept safe. Another peril lies in identifying a "person" with its "qualities." Indeed, the same "qualities" can be shared by different persons so that it cannot be considered as an identifying principle. The concept of the "person," indeed, is irreducible in Zizioulas' perspective. It is still true that we are not able to separate the question of "who" from the question "what" in our wonderings around the meaning of "personhood." Nevertheless, we should clearly understand that these questions should be kept distinguished.

So, how can the real meeting between "persons," hypostasis, take place? The answer Zizioulas gives us is simple. Only Christ, as defined by the Chalcedonian Fathers, can guarantee the unity together with the preservation of the personhood.

Indeed, mankind is called by its Creator in order to achieve *theosis* and redemption, to get safe and free from the death circle. Loving Christ in our erotic motion, we establish the personhood of the persons we love. Only His radical difference can save all the other differences. Nevertheless, the call towards *theosis* is never a constriction, there is no forced salvation for humans. The image of God is not "what" men are, but "how" they are,¹³ so that men can decide whether to follow the direction of "how" God exists, or even whether to proceed on the way of their own "what," which is the natural way of time and death.

Zizioulas quotes Florovsky regarding the existence of evil and its effects. Indeed, even though evil has no several and autonomous concreteness, it produces effects on the world, creating what God had never created, that means, trying to complete His creature with the shadows.

Zizioulas does not accept theories that show how at the end of times all the creatures will be saved. He insists that radical evil is possible, that damnation is a concrete possibility for human beings. No forced salvation can take place, as God created us totally free and he wants to keep our freedom intact. The refusal of God, also after the Final Judgment, is not a mere myth, but a possible position man can take towards his Creator. Creatures

¹³ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, p. 213.

can commit ontological suicide, which means they can stop living (as the real life is life in Christ, free of death), but, and this point is very important, they cannot stop being, as God already gave them existence, and he never created death.

Only being re-born, baptised, and adhering to the body of Christ, that is the Church, we stop living following our ephemeral nature, in order to become a real hypostasis in Christ.

In this theoretical frame, history is not just a place of progressive and necessary getting closer to the Creator, but the arena where mankind can discover their radical freedom and act exerting their very own will, as well as artists who create, but tragically their creatures are offspring of this world.

Zizioulas suggests that Christology is the only way towards eternal life, as well as the only *telos* that history has.

Conclusion

In our brief analysis we have tried to delineate the long philosophical chain that extends from Solovyov and all the Russian religious thinkers to Florovsky and Lossky, up to Zizioulas, but which is actually rooted in the great theologies of the Church Fathers. Their authority became fundamental for the Neo-Patristic synthesis and the ecumenical dialogue, which was made possible by this position.

Our attention was paid especially to the relationship between God and creatures and the consequent status of humankind in the world, as well as the meaning of history, as elaborated in the works of the mentioned authors.

What we saw is clear: these philosophers and theologians maintain the radical gap existing between God and the created world. This same gap guarantees the freedom for humans and excludes any possibility of necessity in history.

The “Otherness,” indeed, even though in a hidden way, is a real thread of this essay. Only a strong concept of the ‘otherness’ as a person can, on the one hand, save us from the heretical positions regarding the connection between God’s and creatures’ natures, and, on the other, give us an alternative to postmodern elaborations of the “self,” as a completely closed monad threatened by every other “self.”

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Justyna Kroczak

University of Zielona Góra (Zielona Góra, Poland)

Saint Theophan the Recluse's oeuvre and reception of his thought in Poland

Even though the tradition of Polish research into Russian Orthodox theology¹ is admittedly not as extensive as the one into Russian religious philosophy,² there are researchers devoted to it. Experts in that field are chiefly priests and religiously involved people. Therefore, there is nothing surprising about the fact that main Russian Orthodox theology research centres are the ones that gather Polish Orthodox theologians. These are, in particular, the Department of Orthodox Theology at the University of Białystok, Orthodox Seminary in Warsaw,³ Institute of Orthodox Theology at the Christian Theological Academy,⁴ Ecumenical Institute of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (formerly Warsaw Theological Academy). These are the places where Orthodox theology is studied, lectured and analysed, and where works related to it are published. An extensive number of publications is printed, including books and articles. Major journals include “ΕΛΠΙΣ” – Journal published by the Department of Orthodox Theology at the University of Białystok, “Studia Theologica Varsaviensia” (formerly “Collectanea Theologica”), “Rocznik Teologiczny ChAT.” These titles certainly do not exhaust the subject; there are many more popular journals

¹ The third issue of the “Elpis” journal (2000, no 3) treats of the history and current state of Orthodox faith in Poland.

² Cf. L. Kiejzik, J. Uglík (eds), *Polskie badania filozofii rosyjskiej*, part 1, Warszawa 2009; part 2, Warszawa 2012; H. Paprocki, *Recepcja rosyjskiej myśli religijnej w Polsce*, “Elpis” 11-12 (2005), pp. 193-203.

³ Cf. H. Paprocki, *Studium teologii prawosławnej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego*, “WPAKP” 4 (1973), pp. 62-67.

⁴ W. Niemczyk, *Chrześcijańska Akademia Teologiczna w Warszawie*, “Rocznik Teologiczny ChAT,” vol 4 (1962), pp. 5-20.

directed to Orthodox congregation in Poland. First and foremost, one should mention “The News of Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church” and “Orthodox Review,” but there are also publications of a local scope.⁵ The leader among the publishers promoting Orthodox spirituality is definitely Bratczyk from Hajnówka. However, the most essential part here is the experts forming this particular research circle. They are known to be the organisers of Orthodox scholarly life: Jerzy Klinger (1918–1976), Jerzy Nowosielski, Józef Keller, Henryk Paprocki, Doroteusz Sawicki, archbishop Sawa (Hrycuniak), Jerzy Tofiluk, bishop Jerzy Pańkowski, Marian Bendza, Krzysztof Leśniewski, Rościśław Kozłowski and many others. Of the Catholic circles one should mention the late Jan Pryszmont.

When plunging into the subject of Orthodox Russian theology one needs to bear in mind that it is embedded in a wider scope of issues – the issues of Eastern Christianity. Thus, the four-volume introductory bibliography of Eastern Christianity, compiled by Reverend Grzegorz Sosna, affiliated with the congregation in Ryboły,⁶ seems to be an excellent starting point for launching research on Orthodox faith. Its last fourth volume was published in 2003, i.e. it does not include a number of most recent works. Apparently, there seems to be little chance for new, continuing and updated volumes of the bibliography. Despite that, the ones published are a fundamental source of knowledge of the reception of Orthodox Russian theology in Poland. In the abundance of information available, one can discover that Russian spirituality in all its forms has evoked interest in Polish researchers, mainly theologians but also literary and linguistic experts (e.g. Waław Hryniewicz OMI,⁷ Hanna Kowalska-Stus,⁸ Ryszard Łużny⁹).

⁵ Other Orthodox journals in Poland are “Wiadomości Metropolii Prawosławnej w Polsce” (“Authority of Autocephalus Polish Orthodox Church”), “Cerkownyj Westnik” (a journal published by the Orthodox metropolis of Warsaw), “Biuletyn Informacyjny. Koło teologów prawosławnych,” “Bractwo Młodzieży Prawosławnej. Wiadomości Bractwa,” “Biuletyn Informacyjny. Bractwo Prawosławne śś. Cyryla i Metodego,” “Ikos. Pismo Młodzieży Prawosławnej.”

⁶ G. Sosna, *Wstępna bibliografia chrześcijaństwa Wschodniego. Druki polskojęzyczne okresu współczesnego*, vol. I, Białystok – Ryboły 1994; vol. II, Białystok–Ryboły 1996; vol. III, Białystok – Ryboły 1998; vol. IV, Białystok 2003.

⁷ Cf. W. Hryniewicz, J.P. Gajek (eds), *Teologia i kultura Starej Rusi*, Lublin 1993.

⁸ Cf. H. Kowalska, *Kultura staroruska. XI–XVI w. Tradycja i zmiana*, Kraków 1998; H. Kowalska-Stus, *Kultura i eschatologia: Moskwa wieku XVII*, Kraków 2007.

⁹ Cf. R. Łużny (ed), *Pierwsze tysiąclecie chrześcijaństwa (988–1988) na ziemiach wschodniej słowiańszczyzny od Rusi Kijowskiej do Rosji, Ukrainy i Białorusi*, Lublin 1994; idem (ed), *Dzieło chrystianizacji Rusi Kijowskiej i jego konsekwencje w kulturze Europy*,

It seems that investigating religiousness involves, at least at the beginning, examining religious phenomena, life and works of people connected to it – monks, ascetics and reformers. In the case of Russian Orthodox faith¹⁰ one might have to focus on Sergius of Radonezh,¹¹ Seraphim of Sarov,¹² Nilus of Sora, Paisius Velichkovsky,¹³ Tikhon of Zadonsk, Ambrose of Optina¹⁴ and also on such theological thinkers as Aleksandr Bukharev,¹⁵

Lublin 1988; W. Jakubowski, R. Łużny (eds), *Literatura staroruska wiek XI–XVII*, Warszawa 1971; *Słowo o Bogu i człowieku. Myśl religijna Słowian Wschodnich doby staroruskiej*, transl. by R. Łużny, Kraków 1995.

¹⁰ Cf. T. Wyszomirski, *Prawosławny kościół rosyjski*, “Novum” 2 (1978), pp. 139-144.

¹¹ A. Kempfi, *Patron Rosji św. Sergiusz z Radoneża i jego życiorys pióra Epifaniasza*, “Rocznik Teologiczny ChAT” 1 (1984), pp. 167-180; G. Fiedotow, *Święci Rusi (X–XVII w.)*, transl. by H. Paprocki, Bydgoszcz 2002; P. Florenski, *Ikony modlitewne św. Sergiusza*, transl. by Z. Podgórzec, “WPAKP” 1-2 (1976), pp. 71-100; M.W., *Święty Sergiusz z Radoneża*, “WPKP” 1-2 (1975), pp. 85-92; D. Piekarska-Winkler, *Ruski ideał świętości* “Rocznik Teologiczny ChAT,” vol. 48, 1-2 (2006), pp. 127-137.

¹² J. Klinger, *O istocie prawosławia*, Warszawa 1983, p. 183 ff., J. Nowosielski, *Inność prawosławia*, Białystok 1998, p. 46; J. Andrejuk, *Doświadczenie mistyczne św. Serafina z Sarowa*, MA thesis defended in Christian Theological Academy, Warszawa 1983; B. Doroszkiewicz, *Mistyka św. Serafina z Sarowa*, MA thesis at Christian Theological Academy, Warszawa 1981; K. Leśniewski, *Droga do zbawienia w świetle zachowanych pouczeń św. Serafina z Sarowa*, “Arche. Wiadomości Bractwa” 4-5 (1999), pp. 20-23; Święty Serafin z Sarowa, *Żywot i pouczenia*, transl. by S. Strach, Bratczyk – Hajnówka 1999; Serafin Sarowski, *Ogień Ducha Świętego*, transl. by H. Paprocki, Białystok 1992; Z. Glaeser, *Święty Serafin z Sarowa i jego pouczenia ascetyczno-duchowe*, “Summarium” 22-23 (1993–1994), pp. 53-63; *Święci Rosyjscy. Serafin z Sarowa*, “Zorza” 1 (1988), p. 8; A. Kempfi, *Św. Serafin Sarowski eremita i cudotwórca. Karta z dziejów rosyjskiej prawosławnej duchowości*, “Rocznik Teologiczny ChAT” 2 (1985), pp. 151-178; *Biesiady z Motowilowym*, transl. by H. Paprocki, “WPAKP” 1-2 (1981), pp. 151-178; Serafin Sarowski, *O poście*, transl. by J. Charkiewicz, “List informacyjny. Pismo Rady Diecezjalnej Młodzieży przy Diecezji Białostocko-Gdańskiej,” vol. 3, 1 (1989), p. 1; K. Jasman, *Istota życia chrześcijańskiego według św. Serafina z Sarowa*, “W Drodze” 6 (1992), pp. 74-78; Pustelnik z Zagorska (św. Sergiusz), “Papieskie intencje misyjne” 4 (1985), p. 15; J. Stabińska, *Święty Serafin Sarowski*, “Przewodnik Katolicki” 3 (1975), p. 6.

¹³ Paisjusz Wieliczkowski, *O modlitwie umysłu albo modlitwie wewnętrznej*, transl. by J. Kuffel, Białystok 1995.

¹⁴ J. Charkiewicz, *Starzec Ambroży Optiński*, “Wiadomości PDB-G” 4 (1999), pp. 10-12; *Recepty św. Ambrożego*, ed. by D. Wysocka, “Przegląd Prawosławny” 4 (2001), p. 30; P. Jarocewicz, *Święty Ambroży z Optino jako duszpasterz prawosławny*, MA thesis at ChAT, Warszawa 1994; I. Cieślak, *Starcy pustelni optyńskiej*, Kraków 2005.

¹⁵ W. Hryniewicz, *Boska liturgia życia*, “Więź” 1 (1975), pp. 67-79.

Ignatius Brianchaninov,¹⁶ Basil Krivoshein,¹⁷ Nikolay Arseniev,¹⁸ Nikolay Afanasyev,¹⁹ Aleksander Men²⁰ and, above all, Theophan the Recluse. One can find some information about these in Polish, however, these are only notes and single articles. The essential Orthodox phenomena consist of hesychasm,²¹ spiritual fatherhood, onomathodoxy,²² the Jesus Prayer,²³ whereas the most important places are the Optina Monastery in Kozielsk,²⁴

¹⁶ P. Nikolski, *Miejsce medytacji w prawosławnej kulturze ascetycznej*, in T. Kostkiewicz, M. Saganiak (eds), *Medytacja. Postawa intelektualna, sposób poznania, gatunek dyskursu*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 73-79; J. Pańkowski, *Życie, działalność i twórczość św. Ignacego Brianchaninowa*, "Elpis" 13-14 (2006), pp. 185-225.

¹⁷ A. Świtkiewicz, *Próba rekonstrukcji myśli Grzegorza Palamasa w artykule B. Krivocheine'a pt. Asketyckoskoje i bogosławskoje uczenieje sw. Grigorija Palamy*, "Przegląd Filozoficzny – Nowa Seria" 3 (1997), pp. 155-166.

¹⁸ Cf. H. Paprocki, *Bibliografia czasopisma teologicznego "Elpis" 1926–1937*, "Elpis" 1 (1999), pp. 27-43 (at that time, years 1926–1937, there were many articles dedicated to Nikolai Arseniev); M. Arseniew, *Doświadczenie religijne Apostoła Pawła*, "WPAKP" 3-4 (1978), pp. 3-22.

¹⁹ R. Kozłowski, *Z eklezjologii o. Mikołaja Afanasjewa*, "Elpis" 7-8 (2003), pp. 69-86; M. Afanasjew, *Kościół Ducha Świętego*, "WPAKP" 3 (1974), pp. 3-23; M. Afanasjew, *Kościół Ducha Świętego – c.d.*, "WPAKP" 4 (1974), pp. 24-43.

²⁰ A. Mieñ, *O modlitwie domowej*, "List informacyjny. Pismo Rady Diecezjalnej Młodzieży przy Diecezji Białostocko-Gdańskiej" 1 (1995), pp. 24-25.

²¹ K. Leśniewski, *"Nie potrzebują lekarza zdrowi..." Hezychastyczna metoda uzdrawiania człowieka*, Lublin 2006; J. Klinger, *O istocie prawosławia*; I. Trzczińska, *Wstęp*, in J.-Y. Leloup, *Hezychazm. Zapomniana tradycja modlitewna*, transl. by H. Sobieraj, Kraków 1996, p. 10; J. Tofiluk, *Hezychazm i jego wpływ na rozwój duchowości*, "Elpis" 6 (2002), pp. 87-106; S. Choruży, *Hezychazm dzisiaj: asceza prawosławna jako dziedzictwo ogólnochrześcijańskie*, transl. by Ł. Leonkiewicz, "Zeszyty Naukowe Centrum Badań im. Edyty Stein," vol. 7 (2011), pp. 9-33; J. Kadyłak, *Hezychazm*, "WPAKP" 3-4 (1977), pp. 34-46; O. Cyrek, *Hezychastyczna koncepcja przeobstwienia (theosis) w ujęciu Grzegorza Palamasa (1296–1359) i jej wpływ na paletę barwną ruskich ikon XIV i XV wieku*, "Rocznik Teologiczny ChAT," vol. 54, 1-2 (2012), p. 200.

²² T. Obolevitch, *Od onomatodoksji do estetyki. Aleksego Łosiewa koncepcja symbolu. Studium historyczno-filozoficzne*, Kraków 2011; eadem, *Sergiusza Bułgakowa i Aleksego Łosiewa filozofia imienia*, in L. Kiejzik (ed), *Palamas, Bułgakow, Łosiew. Rozważania o religii, imieniu Bożym, tragedii filozofii, wojnie i prawach człowieka*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 77-87; L. Kiejzik, *Przyczynek do problematyki filozofii imienia: tożsamości i różnice stanowisk Sergiusza Bułgakowa i Aleksego Łosiewa*, in L. Kiejzik (ed), *Palamas, Bułgakow, Łosiew*, pp. 88-101.

²³ Metropolitan Sawa (Hrycuniak), *Modlitwa Jezusowa*, in K. Leśniewski, J. Leśniewska (eds), *Prawosławie, Światło prawdy i źródło doświadczenia*, Lublin 1999, pp. 143-155; J. Nowosielski, *Inność prawosławia*, p. 37; D. Sawicki, *Modlitwa Jezusowa i jej wpływ na rozwój duchowości*, "Elpis" 6 (2002), pp. 39-52; P. Andronowska, *Modlitwa Jezusowa*, "WPAKP" 4 (1975), pp. 4-23.

²⁴ A. Ochał, *Rola Pustelni Optina w życiu i działalności wielkich pisarzy rosyjskich*, in A. Kubiś, M. Rusecki (eds), *Chrześcijańskie dziedzictwo bizantyjsko-słowiańskie. IV*

Mount Athos located on Chalkidiki peninsula²⁵ and The Trinity Lavra of St Sergius.²⁶ Unlike studies on thinkers' views, studies on places and phenomena are more systematic and evoke more interest. The limited scope of the article does not allow for analysing all the mentioned issues and their significance to Russian Orthodox faith. The aim of this paper will be more modest – to describe Polish reception of only one Russian theologian – Saint Theophan the Recluse.

Saint Theophan the Recluse, also called the Monk, is not a well-known figure in humanities studies in Poland. One will not find any notes about him in the famous lexicon *Ideas in Russia*, yet a more theological encyclopaedia *The Book of Saints Names* contains a few words about his canonisation in 1988.²⁷ This year is considered significant in the history of Russian Orthodox Church. It was then that the one thousandth anniversary of Christianity in Russia was celebrated. It was an opportunity to make new saints; among others, Theophan the Recluse become one. The details of this event are to be found in the periodicals "Za i Przeciw" from 1989²⁸ and "Zorza" from 1988.²⁹ Reverend Bolesław Kumor in his *History of the Church*³⁰ very briefly outlines religious life in Russia and Theophan's piety. It is noteworthy to mention Mikołaj Borowik's MA dissertation *Bishop Theophan the Recluse as priest*, defended at Christian Theological Academy in 1983. Nonetheless, these are only marginal works that do not extend the reception range of Theophan's work in Poland.

The authors, on whom some more information should be cast, due to the object of their research, definitely include Reverend Piotr Nikolski, PhD and Reverend Professor Jan Pryszmont, unfortunately now deceased.

Kongres Teologów Polskich Lublin 12–14 X 1989, Lublin 1994, p. 254; M. Gogol, *List do optińskich starców*, transl. by E.K., "List Informacyjny. Pismo Rady Diecezjalnej Młodzieży przy Diecezji Białostocko-Gdańskiej" 1 (1989), p. 4.

²⁵ G. Krańczuk (ed), *Mnisi Góry Atos o duchowości prawosławnej*, Hajnówka 1995.

²⁶ Cf. P. Florenski, *Łavra Troicko-Sergiejewska i Rosja*, in idem, *Ikonostas i inne szkice*, transl. by Z. Podgórzec, Warszawa 1981, pp. 11-29.

²⁷ H. Fros, F. Sowa (eds), *Księga imion Świętych*, vol. 5, Kraków 2004, p. 467.

²⁸ *Kanonizacje Rosyjskiego Kościoła Prawosławnego (Dymitr Doński, Andrzej Rublow, Maksym Grek, Makary, Paisjusz Wielickowski, Ksenia, bp Ignacy Brianczaninow, Ambroży Optyński, bp Teofan Zatwornik)*, "Za i Przeciw" 5 (1989), pp. 8-9.

²⁹ *Nowi święci rosyjscy. 1000-lecie chrztu Rusi*, "Zorza" 1 (1988), pp. 10-11.

³⁰ B. Kumor, *Historia Kościoła*, vol. VII, Lublin 2001, p. 441.

The first one is a Russian graduate from both the Orthodox Seminary in Warsaw and Christian Theological Academy, currently working in a parish in Świdnica (near Wrocław). His efforts focus on translation of Theophan's works. The latter was a Professor of Warsaw Theological Academy, and a respected father figure in the field of a moral theology. He wrote a monograph in Polish about Theophan and a number of articles related to him.

Reverend Nikolski, in his translation of *The Path to Salvation: a Manual of Spiritual Transformation* included an extensive introduction on the subject of Theophan's life and work. One can learn that George Govorov (it was his real, secular name) was born in 1815 in Chernavsk into an Orthodox priest's family. The little boy followed in his father's footsteps and graduated from the seminaries in Livny and Orel. There, he chose Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk as an example to follow; influences of his teaching will be evident in mature works of Govorov. After graduating from the Seminary he was sent to Kievan Theological Academy for further studies, which can be perceived as a lucky coincidence, since he was thought of as a rather not very talented but an average student.

The Kiev Theological Academy has had a long and splendid history. It is the oldest institution of its kind in the Russian Empire. It was created from the older Kiev-Mohyla Collegium (later known as Kiev-Mohyla Academy) by Peter Mohyla (1596–1646), who was under the influence of the Roman Catholic theology.³¹ This western religious fascination of the founder had been noticeable in the school's operation, despite the fact that when Govorov studied there, such tendencies turned out to be merely marginal.³² The atmosphere at the Academy fostered development of strong personalities; it is at this place that Govorov's talents and skills came to light for the first time, and mainly it was a talent for writing. One should bear in mind that he did not appear as a personality craving for acknowledgement and honours, instead he was focused on prayer and spiritual exercises, as a result of which he decided (in 1841) to become a monk, and to adopt a new name – Theophan. A few months later he took holy orders. His capability to reconcile all the spheres of his activity without neglecting any of them reflects the impressive indomitableness of his character and internal discipline. Undoubtedly, there are no saints without these virtues!

³¹ J. Pryszynt, *Prawosławna teologia moralna. Próba określenia specyfiki*, "Collectanea Theologica" 2 (1975), p. 37.

³² P. Nikolski, *Wprowadzenie*, in Św. Teofan Rekluz, *Droga do zbawienia*, transl. by P. Nikolski, Kraków 2002, p. 17.

Shortly after graduation from Kiev Theological Academy Theophan undertook pedagogical work, in which field he also demonstrated special talents. Therefore, he was promoted and finally invited to take part in the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem. In the meantime, Theophan got involved in constructive polemics with Ignatius Brianchaninov (1807–1867), an archimandrite at Saint Sergius hermitage in Saint Petersburg. The difference of opinion between them was based on their opposing attitudes towards foreign influences on Orthodox theology. Theophan seemed to be open to them, while Ignatius strongly criticised western spirituality. Hence, the names of these two scholars can be quite often seen next to each other.

Despite his intensive professional life full of responsibilities, Theophan continually developed spiritually (by improving his ascetic way of life) and intellectually (by studying foreign languages – French, Hebrew, Old-Greek and other languages). The aforementioned Mission in Jerusalem was a good opportunity to intensify studies and to express all his talents. That is why his work was valued, he himself was appointed archimandrite, and after a year the president of Seminary in Olonets. It should be emphasised one more time that Theophan's personality seemed to be rather gentle, meek, given to contemplation and reflection, and so administrative responsibilities could not bring him full satisfaction. Indeed, he yearned for something completely different, and yet the power of circumstances did not allow him to fulfill his desires. The situation slightly changed when he was nominated as Russian Embassy chaplain in Constantinople. The future saint's assignment consisted not only in his priestly duties, but he was also supposed to give a report on the ideological conflict between Constantinople and Bulgaria. It pertained to the autocephaly of the Bulgarian church. At that time *The Spiritual Life and How to Be Attuned To It* was written. The book included correspondence between Theophan and Duchess P. S. Lukomskaya.

However, there was a continuation of administrative responsibilities; in 1857 Theophan was appointed president of Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, and was put in charge of the task of translating and publishing works of Byzantine historians, as well as of the project of translating Bible into Russian. As one might suppose, all these activities involved enormous amount of work and spared him very little time for prayer. The peak of success occurred when he became a bishop of Tambov. Despite continuous successes, Theophan was living in a very modest and ascetic way, and his desires were completely different – he was attracted by monastic life and

not by earthly ranks. Eventually, in 1866 this goal was reached – with the consent of the Church authorities he renounced the episcopal office and moved to the hermitage in Wysha, in the diocese of Tambov. There, he devoted himself to prayer, contemplation and theology. The new hermit's existence was organised according to a rigorous schedule, which provided for prayer and writing. Theophan worked on commentaries on the Books of the Bible, on moral and ascetic treatises and, on the translation of works by masters of spiritual life. The Russian translation of *Philokalia – Dobrotolublye* is viewed as Theophan's *opus magnum*. He worked on it between 1877 and 1889 (the earlier and substantially shorter translation into Old Church Slavonic had been made by Paisius Velichkovsky). The translation did not appear to be a verbatim rendition, but a paraphrase intended to convey the most subtle shades of meaning of the Church Fathers' message, and aimed at providing readers with as much spiritual benefits as possible.

Finally, in 1872 a certain breakthrough happened in Theophan's life – he decided to break off relations with other people. He would only accept his confessor in his cell. He sacrificed himself for prayer and theological work lasting almost twenty hours per day; he continued this schedule of activities for almost thirty years. He died in 1894. A century later the Russian Orthodox Church proclaimed him a saint.

The image of Theophan that emerges from our description is unambiguous – he was a strict ascetic figure, and a scholar highly significant for Orthodox theology. However, investigations of his life and work are not homogeneous. They differ depending on the researcher's religious affiliation. Reverend Pryszmont, for instance, viewed him mostly as a moral theologian and from that standpoint he analysed Theophan's thoughts. The monograph *Christian life as realisation of the salvation. Moral doctrine of bishop Theophan the Recluse*,³³ written in 1979 appears as an attempt to depict moral theology of the Saint in a methodical lecture. The aforementioned book was written on the basis of the habilitation thesis defended in 1973.³⁴ The author was analysing qualities of Theophan's moral thoughts, and the most essential he acknowledged was christocentrism. The Polish theologian claimed that life in Christ is considered to be the basis for salvation; Theophan came to that conclusion by studying Holy Scriptures, works

³³ J. Pryszmont, *Życie chrześcijańskie jako realizacja zbawienia. Doktryna moralna biskupa Teofana Pustelnika*, Warszawa 1979.

³⁴ J. Pryszmont, *Doktryna moralna prawosławnego biskupa (Teofana Pustelnika) przedmiotem pracy habilitacyjnej teologa rzymskokatolickiego*, "Rodzina," 22.07.1973, no. 29, p. 3.

of the Church Fathers, and his own spiritual experiences. Christian life was thought to be a *realization of the salvation*, which is fulfilled through the Church. This statement seems to be one of the assumptions of Theophan's ecclesiology. At the end of the book, Reverend Pryszmont discusses the current state of research; he quotes mainly Russian, French and German titles, but it is Tomáš Špidlík, the author of the monograph on Theophan in French,³⁵ who appears to him as the greatest authority in that field. The review of *Christian life as realization of the salvation* was written by Ewa Smykowska and published in the "Więź" periodical in 1980.³⁶ Summing up the dissertation, the author writes that the essence of Theophan's moral thought was the idea of salvation which seems to be a distinct objective and calling for every Christian.

The publication of this monograph was preceded by a series of articles in journals such as "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia" and "Collectanea Theologica."³⁷ In a passage from 1975, Reverend Pryszmont narrowed his considerations down to Russian moral theology. He investigated the history of Christianity beginning with the times of Sergius of Radonezh and ending with Theophan the Recluse. Predictably enough, the longest passage was dedicated to Saint Theophan. One can read that "this most eminent of Russian moralists of the 19th century" combined writing activity with monastic life, since in Eastern tradition the true theologian is not only a theoretician, but also "a wise man in God's eyes – a gnostic."³⁸ Reverend Pryszmont, quoting *Pismo k raznym licam*, attempted to analyse the history-redemptive basis of Christian life from Theophan's perspective. However, for further information about Saint one shall refer to two articles from years 1977–1978. His originality of thought, outstanding writing skills and reflections are emphasised there.³⁹ His literary output can be divided into three categories: ascetic and moral works, commentaries on the Bible, and

³⁵ See T. Špidlík, *La doctrine spirituelle de Théophane le Reclup. Le Cœur et l'Esprit*, Roma 1965.

³⁶ E. Smykowska, *By poznać prawosławie* (review of J. Pryszmont, *Życie chrześcijańskie jako realizacja zbawienia. Doktryna moralna biskupa Teofana pustelnika*), "Więź" 1 (1980), pp. 108-110.

³⁷ J. Pryszmont, *Prawosławna teologia moralna. Próba określenia specyfiki*; idem, *Bp Teofan Pustelnik – moralista prawosławny (1815–1894). Życie i twórczość*, "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia" 15 (1977), pp. 113-135; idem, *Podstawowe założenia doktryny moralnej bpa Teofana Pustelnika*, "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia" 2 (1978), pp. 139-163.

³⁸ J. Pryszmont, *Prawosławna teologia moralna. Próba określenia specyfiki*, p. 41.

³⁹ J. Pryszmont, *Bp Teofan Pustelnik – moralista prawosławny (1815–1894). Życie i twórczość*, p. 114.

translations of the Church Fathers' works.⁴⁰ The Polish theologian focused on Theophan's translation of *Dobrotolublye*, which exerted enormous influence on the revival of spiritual life in Russia.⁴¹

In a later work, *The history of moral theology*⁴² written in 1987, Reverend Pryszmont devoted a separate paragraph to elaborate on the specificity of Orthodox moral thought, and as one may predict the main figures included "the most eminent Russian moralist" although he did not write that many regular books.⁴³ The Polish theologian claimed that Theophan's thought could be considered as "a pillar of Orthodox faith."⁴⁴ These considerations were supplemented in the article *Transformation of spiritual man*,⁴⁵ written in the wake of the 4th Congress of Polish Theologians in Lublin in 1989. In the paper one can read that Theophan sufficiently justified the combination of moral theology with spirituality – his life shows that.⁴⁶ Yet, the most interesting statement is that Catholic theology might draw some elements from the Orthodox one by shifting the focus from orders and norms to the essence of Christian life.⁴⁷

Then, in an article from 1978 Reverend Pryszmont emphasised the meaning of the so-called economy of salvation, i.e. God's project on the reconstruction of fallen human nature.⁴⁸ Generally, the idea of Christian conversion as a "reconstruction of human nature" formed the basis of Theophan's ascetic thought.⁴⁹ Divine grace appears as a device in this process, but it is not given to man directly; one should learn how to utilise it. Divine grace is utilised most effectively by the so-called *podviznik*, ascetics, people whose lives were marked by heroism.⁵⁰ There can be no doubt that Theophan called for very strict rules of Christian life although "evangelical

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 120.

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 125.

⁴² J. Pryszmont, *Historia teologii moralnej*, Warszawa 1987.

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 286.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 287.

⁴⁵ J. Pryszmont, *Przemiana człowieka duchowego. Specyficzne wartości bizantyjsko-słowiańskiej duchowości i myśli moralnej*, in A. Kubiś, M. Rusecki (eds), *Chrześcijańskie dziedzictwo bizantyjsko-słowiańskie*, pp. 110-123.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 123.

⁴⁷ J. Pryszmont, *Podstawowe założenia doktryny moralnej bpa Teofana Pustelnika*, p. 162.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 140.

⁴⁹ J. Pryszmont, *Pokuta w Prawosławiu*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie," vol. 89, 1 (1977), p. 52.

⁵⁰ J. Pryszmont, *Podstawowe założenia doktryny moralnej bpa Teofana Pustelnika*, p. 150.

radicalism” is characteristic of all moral philosophy in Russia.⁵¹ The most complete lecture on religious life can be found in *The Path to Salvation*, which Reverend Pryszynt acknowledged as the crucial work by Theophan. *The Path to Salvation* is directed at anyone who yearns to live a real Christian – i.e. mystical – life. Christianity is equivocal to mysticism and thus constitutes normal reality for all Christians, while supernatural spiritual life ought to be one’s aim during earthly existence, and *The Path to Salvation* helps to achieve it. In other words, it appears as an ultimate destination for believers. This work is accessible for Polish readers thanks to another researcher, Piotr Nikolski.

He has already translated two of Theophan’s mentioned works – *The Path to Salvation*⁵² and *On prayer*.⁵³ Both of them were published by the Benedictines from Tyniec. Their publishing house is well-known for presenting works of masters of spiritual life belonging to both Eastern and Western tradition. Translation of passages from Theophan’s letters, as well as comprehensive information about his life and thought can also be found in the Polish edition of Špidlík’s book: *L’idée russe: Une autre vision de l’homme*⁵⁴ and in *Les grands mystiques russes*⁵⁵ (translation by Janina Dembska).

The Path to Salvation might be called “sustenance for the soul,”⁵⁶ as Anna Radziukiewicz referred to it. One may find there instructions on how to live a real Christian life. The text suggests, on the one hand, that one should not indulge in carnal pleasures, yield to passions, emotions and idleness, cease praying; on the other hand, it reads that one should have a spiritual father and collect all spiritual activity in one’s heart. Not only are these instructions directed to ascetics, but also to all Christians following Theophan’s way of thinking. Undoubtedly, some of them seem to be practically unrealisable in secular life although a religiously-involved man may always strive to approach perfection. At this point, Theophan’s radicalism mentioned by Reverend Pryszynt becomes visible. Moving to the second translated book *On prayer*, one can read that prayer appears

⁵¹ Ibidem, pp. 159-160.

⁵² Św. Teofan Rekluz, *Droga do zbawienia*.

⁵³ Św. Teofan Rekluz, *Słowo o modlitwie*, transl. by P. Nikolski, Kraków 2003.

⁵⁴ T. Špidlík, *Myśl rosyjska. Inna wizja człowieka*, transl. by J. Dembska, Warszawa 2000.

⁵⁵ T. Špidlík, *Wielcy mistycy rosyjscy*, transl. by J. Dembska, Kraków 1996.

⁵⁶ A. Radziukiewicz, *Dla przebudzenia grzeszników*, “Przegląd Prawosławny” 3 (2003), p. 22.

as a “measure of spiritual life.”⁵⁷ The exercises developing the mind, heart and will can also be found in this text.⁵⁸ Moreover, all this guidance and advice are typical of Eastern, monastic tradition; exactly the same ones can be found in admonitions of Church Fathers over the centuries.

The translations of Theophan’s works are not the only achievements of Reverend Nikolski, who also wrote two articles on an interesting issue. In the first one, *The place of prayer in Orthodox ascetic culture*, the Polish researcher puts emphasis on the overriding importance of the Jesus Prayer and hesychasm in the Saint’s life and thought.⁵⁹ He provides detailed description of the problematic relation between Western and Eastern spirituality, exemplifying it with Theophan’s and Ignatius Bryanchaninov’s standpoints. The views of the 19th-century theologian have become a basis for Reverend Nikolski in his article *The Meaning of Ascetic Tradition in Ecumenical Dialogue*.⁶⁰ Theophan’s thought is likely to be distinguished by tolerance towards Western spirituality and its dissimilarity. It might be that certain impact on those views came from the studies at Kiev Theological Academy, or that it stems from innate kindness and goodness in relation to otherness.

Saint Theophan the Recluse seems to be one of the figures in the 19th-century Russian religious sphere who made a considerable contribution to the development of Orthodox faith and to strengthening of hesychastic tradition. Thus, apparently, the most appropriate horizon to examine his thought can be hesychasm. Despite the fact that the investigations of his doctrine do not always follow this path, other aspects are also emphasised: ecumenism, moralising, asceticism. What is the prospect and trends in future research? It is a tough question, since Polish reception of Theophan’s works has not developed yet enough to offer an answer, and to reveal prospects of development.

However, one can imagine that Theophan’s strict asceticism, the uncompromising nature of his doctrine (which does not mean intolerance, as mentioned before) naturally cannot be perceived as interesting to a wide range of readers, although its author epitomised Christian ideal of anchoritic life and continuation of hesychastic tradition. It seems that researchers

⁵⁷ Św. Teofan Rekluz, *Słowo o modlitwie*, p. 10.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, pp. 43-68.

⁵⁹ P. Nikolski, *Miejsce medytacji w prawosławnej kulturze ascetycznej*, p. 86.

⁶⁰ P. Nikolski, *Znaczenie tradycji ascetycznej w dialogu ekumenicznym*, <<http://www.old.cerkiew.pl/prawoslawie/autorzy2.php?autor=kp.%20Piotr%20Nikolski>>, accessed: 20.01.2013.

involved in the field of broadly-defined history find interesting aspects of Theophan's thought. Some perspectives on their interest also emerge owing to his open attitude to Catholicism and ecumenism; these ideas are reflected in his works which at the same time constitute a reflection of a uniquely spiritual life. Moreover, future translations of his works seem quite probable.

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Russian Writers in the West

Olga Khvostova
Saratov State University (Saratov, Russia)

Varngagen von Ense's reception of Pushkin's thought and Russia

The long article *The Works of Alexander Pushkin* by a German critic, historian, journalist, diplomat in the Prussian civil service and a moderate liberal K. A. Varngagen von Ense (1785–1858) was published in the journal that had been founded by Hegel – “Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik” (“The Yearbook of scientific criticism,” 1838, vol. 2, no. 61-64). The article triggered a revival in the German philosophical circles, being immediately read in Russia and published in two different translations: in the magazines: “The Son of the Fatherland” (“Syn Otechestva,” 1839, vol. 7, no. 1) and “The Notes of the Fatherland” (“Otechestvennye Zapiski,” 1839, vol. 3, no. 5). But if the first translation made by an editor N. A. Polevoi was terribly bad as it showed the German author rather than Pushkin,¹ the best translation of “The Notes of the Fatherland” at that time was made by young M. N. Katkov, one of the future ideologists of Russian conservatism. In the foreword he wrote, “the solemn consciousness of the greatness of our country is expressed there by a foreigner’s reprimand; a decent assessment of our Pushkin is delivered.”²

¹ See A. Polevoi’s review of “The Chronicles of Russian magazines:” “Varngagen’s article shows the most wrong, misconstrued criticism, a one-sided view of Pushkin that is an absolute ignorance both of Russian literature and Russian history. We offer the article of Mr. Varngagen to our readers as (...) an example of the decline of modern criticism and philosophy in Germany” (Н. Полевой, *Летопись русских журналов*, “Сын Отечества,” vol. 7, no. 1, section 4 (1839), p. 44).

² К.А. Варнгаген фон Энзе, *Сочинения Александра Пушкина*, “Отечественные записки,” vol. 3, no. 5, section 8 (1839), приложение *Отзыв иностранца о Пушкине*, p. 4. Subsequently, Varngagen’s article and Katkov’s preface are quoted with the magazine pages included in brackets.

The German criticism according to Varngagen von Ense³ perceived Pushkin in the context of philosophical and historical arguments about Russia. Having transformed Goethe's idea of "world literature" and the interaction of cultures, the German critic realised that Pushkin was the voice of the worldwide historical role of Russia, carrying out the synthesis of the whole Russian life: "In fact, he is an expression of the fullness of Russian life, and that means he is national in the highest sense of the word" (10). According to Varngagen the imperial power of Russia set its peoples with their faith, culture and traditions (East and West, North and South, the Caucasus, the Ukraine, Bessarabia), which "has the most beneficial effect in this respect, which helps us to see here in which internal relation with the state the living poetry is" (13). This idea is traced by the German critic in many works such as *Eugene Onegin* and *Boris Godunov*, *The Prisoner of the Caucasus*, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, *Gypsies*, *Poltava*... Essentially, it was the first time after the poet's death, and long before Pushkin's speech of Dostoyevsky, when Varngagen introduced the idea of the *universality* of Pushkin's spirit, which nurtured both Russian and world cultures. One only has to compare what marquis de Custine said about Russia and Pushkin in 1839,⁴ as well as the Russian poet's other contemporaries who believed him to be an "imitation" (of Byron, Goethe, Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott), to the thoughts of the German critic to understand that owing to Pushkin's genius "the Russians learnt to value themselves as a nation" (7).

The criticism of Varngagen von Ense is one of the first and forgotten foreign articles and reviews in Russia to be included in the three volumes of the posthumous edition *The Works of Alexander Pushkin* (St. Petersburg, 1838), issued by V. A. Zhukovsky. At that time it was welcomed also by Belinsky in his critical review "The Russian Magazines:" "We cannot help it, despite the lack of time and place, not to talk about this wonderful

³ The critics who wrote about Varngagen almost did not touch upon the question of the significance of his articles on Pushkin for the Russian thought. See В. Нейштадт, *Пушкин в мировой литературе*, Москва 1938, pp. 256-260; H. Raab, *Varngagen von Ense und die russische Literatur*, "Fremdsprachunterricht" 11 (1958), pp. 568-573; G. Wiegand, *Zum deutschen Russlandsinteresse im 19. Jahrhundert. E. M. Arndt und Varngagen von Ense*, Stuttgart 1967; А.Б. Ботникова, *Фарнгаген фон Энзе и русская литература*, in С.Г. Лазутин (ed), *Вопросы литературы и фольклора. Воронеж 1972*, pp. 96-114; В.А. Аветисян, *К вопросу о рецепции Пушкина в Германии*, in О.С. Муравьева (ed), *Пушкин: исследования и материалы*, Санкт-Петербург 1995, vol. 15, pp. 156-158.

⁴ P.B. Struve noted the controversy on Pushkin between Varngagen and marquis de Custine. See П.Б. Струве, *Дух и слово: статьи о русской и западно-европейской литературе*, Paris 1981, pp. 65-68.

article, which is doubly important for the Russian public – both as its sensible and correct assessment of the great poet and the foreigner's appreciation – that is a precious thing for our patriotic feelings.”⁵ Not coincidentally was this article translated again by Katkov on Belinsky's initiative. Belinsky was absolutely right in the choice of the translator who could bring the inspiration of the “noble German review” of Pushkin to the Russian reader. It was in 1840 that Katkov and Belinsky became divided on the ideological opinion forever.

In a brief note *From the Translator* Katkov refers Varnpagen to the number of the chosen ones in whose souls “it is stored as a relic, the contemplation of the spiritual face of the poet” (3), and who “judges Russia and its phenomena, not as a member of the nation, but as a member of the whole humanity” (4). Young Katkov is in tune with Varnpagen's idea of “the spiritual image” of Pushkin as “the poet belonging not to a period, but to the whole mankind, not to a country, but to the whole world.” According to the translator the “world-wide” scale of Pushkin's personality and the memory of him are correlated with the fate of Russia: “As well as the people of Russia are not any nation's inferior, Pushkin is not any poet's inferior in the world” (4).

It is the issue of the need and ways of cooperation between the two nations – the German and the Slavic one, the two cultures, the languages and literatures that is the main pathos of Varnpagen's article. Referring to his compatriots, he both highlights the special quality and strength of Germans in the study of different nations and languages, even the oldest ones, and laments: “(...) still we have done so little to become spiritually closer to the Slavs” (6). From a geopolitical point of view, Varnpagen regards it as a reckless pursuit of the Germans to the West, to the “dangerous enemy” and turning away from their eastern neighbours, with all the evidence of historical, natural, geographical preconditions for the rapprochement. He anticipates that this convergence will happen in the future, because Russia is a fast and growing power. Germany has not yet developed into a large nation-state, and it will happen soon as well.

Varnpagen notes the process of mutual influence exerted upon each other by the German and Russian cultures. They are, first of all, “the famous translations” from Schiller, Goethe, Uhland made by V. A. Zhukovsky. The translation work of the Russian poet had remained almost unnoticed in

⁵ В.Г. Белинский, *Русские журналы*, in idem, *Полное собрание сочинений*, Москва 1955, vol. 3, pp. 182-185.

Germany, likewise the fact that “we did not see that great value in his own works” (7). For the Germans Zhukovsky did not become an expression of the Russian national spirit. They did not appreciate his authentic remaking of the original, that of being clear to the Russian consciousness. But Varn-gagen noted that “the melody and beauty of Zhukovsky’s poetry can be heard even by an alien ear” (9). The German critic unexpectedly notes the translation of a fragment of Goethe’s *Elena* made as an attempt by a poet and a critic S. P. Shevyrev as that of high quality. He marvels at the beauty of his terza rima (the translation of Dante’s *The Sign Above the Gates of Hell*). But he continues again: “By this there was only the honour done to us that made us, the Germans, happy and we did not take into any account to see what was going on” (7). In the same issue of “The Notes of the Fa-therland” Shevyrov’s *The Travel Notes* was published. There he talks about his visit to Goethe’s house. Thus, this indicates that the German critic was well acquainted with the contemporary literary situation. Varn-gagen’s ar-ticle mentions some German translations made by Russian poets, first and foremost, by Karolina Pavlova (née Yanish).

Despite the complication the perception of poetic syllables that Varn-gagen sees in the difficulty of learning the language, where the Russian lan-guage is an obstacle, he adds that “there is no other language that would be such an ample reward for the labors of its study” (8). The part of the paper concerning the analysis of the current condition of the Russian language shows Varn-gagen as a foreigner but one who brilliantly mastered it, and who learnt its power and beauty. The German critic singles out the Russian language among the other Slavic languages; “it can compete with the most educated of the current European languages” (8). The Russian language has its roots in the Old Slavonic language and is extraordinarily euphoni-ous: “It combines an abundance of consonants that we choke pronouncing our German words, with the amplitude of the vowels, in which the Italian language flows” (9). A German ear caught in the Russian language the met-ric prosody shared with the German language. Varn-gagen was convinced that it was the Russian language itself, its perfection and the result of its evolution that caused the emergence and the golden age of poetry.

The problem of the Russian-European integration becomes the cross-cutting theme in Varn-gagen’s works. Speaking about the poets of global stature, the critic uses the concept of the “overall formation” as the quality of poetic skill, achieved through the assimilation of both folk elements and ethnic and world poetic traditions (10). The exponents of the *overall forma-tion* in Germany were Goethe and Schiller; in Russia there was Pushkin.

Varnagen placed Pushkin in the highest echelon above all of his predecessors, successors or contemporaries grouped around him, as he represents the fullness of the Russian life, being “the national one in the highest sense of the word” (10). The German critic distinguishes between two concepts: “folk” and “national” – as a two-step process in the development of national consciousness: “If by ‘folk’ one understands that which is transmitted through the centuries in its original ingenuousness, without any development, that which at the highest levels of its formation cannot be named national, because the noblest part of the people, in which the national spirit awakened and the spiritual eyes were opened, cannot stay satisfied anymore” (10). The translator Katkov in his note explains these words in keeping with Hegel: “(...) the national is all that which was impressed by the self-conscious, developing spirit of a nation as an organic part of the whole humanity, as a *nation*” (10). Only on the basis of this definition, according to Varnagen’s logic one may grasp the true meaning and be able to interpret Pushkin’s works. It is a pure and simple methodological basis of the critic’s reflection on the correlation between what is folk and national, national and global in culture.

During the creation of the novel *Eugene Onegin* and the tragedy *Boris Godunov* it was nationality and historicism that became fundamental principles of Pushkin’s creative thinking, and that replaced the romantic worldview. Pushkin’s own definition of “nationality” was formulated by him in a rough draft: “The climate, the form of government, the faith give each nation its peculiar physiognomy, which is more or less reflected in the mirror of the poetry. There is a way of thinking and feeling, obscurity of customs, beliefs and habits that belong only to a particular nation.”⁶ Pushkin sarcastically responds to the controversy surrounding the issue in the journals (F. Bulgarin, P. Vyazemskii, N. Polevoi, W. *Küchelbecker*): “One of our critics seems to believe that nationality lies in choosing items from the country’s history, while others see it in words, which means they become happy being able to speak Russian or to use Russian expressions.”⁷ This is a superficial understanding of the national spirit.

With the examples from Russian and European literature (Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Calderon, Ariosto, Racine) the poet proves that “the nationality that is in the writer is a dignity, which may well be valued among his compatriots – for others, it either does not exist or may seem as a defect.”

⁶ А.С. Пушкин, *Собрание сочинений*, Москва 1962, vol. 6, p. 68.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 267.

“while a German man of letters is indignant at Racine’s heroes’ courtesy, a French one laughs, seeing Coriolanus calling out his opponent in Calderon. All this, however, is a stamp of the nationality.”⁸ Pushkin examines this concept not only in relation to the development of the specifics of cultural identity, but also more widely – in the interaction between peoples, different literatures and cultures. This characteristic of Pushkin’s worldview was noted by a philosopher S. L. Frank in his work *Pushkin about the Relationship between Russia and Europe*: “Nationality in this general sense does not imply an isolation from foreign impact, an isolation of national culture. On the contrary, the substance of the national spirit, like mouse and man, feeds on any externally borrowed material, which it processes and takes in, not losing it, but on the contrary, developing it according to its national identity.”⁹ The genius-artists’ capability to gain an insight into the very being of life of another nation and to be able to embody the “substance of the national spirit” Varngagen sees in the relation to the poet as well.

The author strongly refutes the idea of the imitative nature of Pushkin’s works, accompanying his rebuke with a courteous remark: “The Russians themselves, due to either modesty or caution often call Pushkin an imitator” (10). Varngagen probably has in mind the romantic criticism of P. Vyazemskii, P. Pletnev, M. Pogodin declaring the dependence of Pushkin from Byron. It is significant that the Slavophiles repeatedly expressed their requirement for Pushkin to develop national and historical themes. In the final review of the poems compiled by I. Kireyevsky in 1828, the poet’s all oeuvre is divided into three periods. The poem *Ruslan and Lyudmila* is ranked as belonging to the first period of the Italian-French school. *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* belong to the second period which is considered “an echo of Byron’s lyre.” And only *Gypsies* opens the third “Russian-Pushkin” period along with *Eugene Onegin* and *Boris Godunov*.¹⁰ Therefore, Kireyevsky – the founder of the Slavophilism also subjectively relates the poems in order of their originality (the correlation between original and Byronic elements), disparaging Pushkin’s actual breakthroughs.

The German critic acknowledged Pushkin’s originality and brilliance, finding him an original artist along with Shakespeare, Goethe, Byron,

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ Р.А. Гальцева (ed), *Пушкин в русской философской критике. Конец XIX – начало XX вв.*, Москва 1990, p. 456.

¹⁰ И.В. Киреевский, *Нечто о характере поэзии Пушкина*, in idem, *Избранные статьи*, Москва 1984, p. 32. First published: “Московский журнал,” part 8, no. 6 (1828), pp. 171-196.

Victor Hugo: "above all, an essential property" that gives the originality to Pushkin's works is a "spiritual harmony," "cheerful courage" (12).

Before the publication of Vargagen's article in the Paris magazine "Le Globe" on May 25th, 1837 Adam Mickiewicz' obituary *Pushkin and Literary Movement in Russia*, signed as "Friend of Pushkin" was released. Mickiewicz was shocked by Pushkin's death, being also one of the first foreigners who responded to it in the press. Indeed, since 1826 Mickiewicz "knew the Russian poet quite well for an appreciable length of time."¹¹

In his article Mickiewicz divides Pushkin's creative career into some periods, where the initial stage begins with *Lyceum* and ends in *Mikhailovskoyei*, marked by Byron's influence. Still, Mickiewicz speaks of Byron's "spirit" impact on the romantic works of the poet as well as the signs of "Byronic form" in the "southern poems" rather than a direct imitation. It was only during the creation of the novel *Eugene Onegin* that Pushkin "began moving towards its own form and finally reached the originality."¹²

In the last period, according to Mickiewicz, Pushkin "became integrated with Russia, taking roots in his native soil (...). Some internal upheaval must obviously have taken place (...). The bullet-defeated Pushkin inflicted a terrible intellectual blow to Russia. Of course Russia has wonderful writers now as well (...). However, no one of them can replace Pushkin." At the end of the obituary Mickiewicz depicted a spiritually mature figure of the Russian poet, artist, thinker, citizen, historian and a person, "Listening to his arguments on foreign or domestic policy of his country, one might put him down as a man who turned grey working in the public arena and daily reading of the reports of all the parliaments."¹³

Developing the idea of Pushkin's originality, Vargagen writes about the strong influence that the folk life, the power of the Russian Empire and its vast territory have on the nature and content of his poetry: "To him equally comprehensible and equally familiar are both South and North, Europe and Asia, wildness and refinement, ancient and modern; depicting a great variety of subjects, he reflects the domestic ones" (13). The German critic correlates the natural laws of the state and of poetry development as those of the "inside out." But the reverse process is also important: the

¹¹ А. Мицкевич, *Собрание сочинений*, Москва 1954, vol. 4, p. 95.

¹² Ibidem, pp. 95-96.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 96. See М.А. Цявловский, *Пушкин и Мицкевич*, in idem, *Статьи о Пушкине*, Москва 1962, pp. 157-206; Д.П. Ивинский, *Пушкин и Мицкевич. История литературных отношений*, Москва 2004.

creative genius of Pushkin, having absorbed the elements of various cultures, the peoples living in the Russian Empire as well as the “native soil” went beyond its borders, having implemented a national synthesis. Therefore, in his poetry variously materialized is the “rich world” of “both rural manners and brilliant modern high society, great chambers and the shade of gypsy booths” (13).

Varnpagen regrets that there is no chronological order in the arrangement of Pushkin’s works in the collection of his works. Also, they are not fully differentiated as to the categories, and glaring is the “lack of notes.”

Being a “strict mirror of Russian life,” the work is “remarkably authentic and picturesque”(15) according to the critic, who evaluates the novel *Eugene Onegin*, retelling its content. Varnpagen’s “critical look” is captivated by the images (of both “earthly” Onegin and “dreamer” Lenskii, and “Larin’s two beautiful and lovely daughters” Tatiana and Olga), by some motifs and “colourful mix of funny and sad, ironic and touching, national and idealistic notes” in the author’s narrative (16). The role of everyday Russian life in the creation of the characters and the novel’s plot is emphasised as one of its most important peculiarities. Among all the characters Tatiana is distinguished especially – “this is a completely authentic creation, absolutely graceful and charming” (17). The critic interprets Lensky’s image in relation to Pushkin’s fate that makes him sound even pathetically: “The story of Lensky’ death, its circumstances (...) almost literally came true for the poet himself, which can hardly be read without a shiver in this respect” (18).

Varnpagen could feel what is usually difficult to translate into a foreign language: the richness and diversity of the palette of the author’s voice in the novel (including fantasy, humour, the narrative’s tempo and condensation, ironical and epigrammatical digressions). It is the epithet “excellent” that accompanies Varnpagen’s comment when he describes a picture of nature in *Eugene Onegin*: “(...) spring, winter night, the rural silence are given to us in their ingenuousness and vividness with a few short touches – we live, we breathe in them as the poet just calls a thing – and it turns into a charming word picture” (17).

In his evaluation of the tragedy *Boris Godunov* Varnpagen is not so emotional, but rather strict. Its “free form” gives the critic an opportunity to define the genre, which is a drama: “(...) there is no division into acts and the individual scenes follow continuously one after another; the scenery constantly changes as well; the very time of action embraces a period of some years” (18-19). The critic remarks the dramatic innovation in the

composition of Pushkin's tragedy (the three-unities rule does not apply here, neither does the dynamic development of the plot) long before the Pushkin scholars.

Varngagen is aware of the historical material that became the core of the tragedy's plot. Analysing it, the critic selects those scenes that move the action. The first four acts are the "Introduction" that brings us into "the middle of events that determines the people's character" (20). In the first and fourth acts – "Palace of the Kremlin" – there are two boyar characters of Shuisky and Vorotynsky that stand out here: the change in the behaviour of the former depends on the situation (both scenes before Boris gave his consent to come to the throne and after he took the crown). Varngagen is astonished by the power of the "character-drawing truth" in the fifth act "Night. Cell in the Monastery of Chudov." Then, the critic's attention is focused on the episodes of the tragedy connected with the fate of the impostor, Gregorii Otrepiev.

As a part of the tragedy Varngagen distinguishes a "Polish scene" "Night. The Garden. The Fountain" calling it "above all praise:" "Here Pushkin stands on the same highest level with the world greatest poets" (21). The conflict of Gregory's "fire of mighty passion, the hearty and sincere devotion" and Marina's "proud ambition" provides a "new impetus" to the further development of the plot, "the impostor's desire" (21).

There is a deep dramatic effect in the scene "Moscow. Palace of the Tsar," in which the dying Boris speaks to his son: "there are the most gentle fatherly worries, the deepest royal wisdom expressed in the last words of Godunov. He gives the crown to his son..." (22). The subsequent analysis of the tragedy resulted in Varngagen's revelation of the depth of the contradictory, complex characters created by Pushkin with "Shakespeare-like" paints: "the depiction of the characters, as mature as diverse" (23).

Varngagen sees the meaning of both the final scenes "The Kremlin. House of Boris," "The Guard at the Door," and the final remark "The people are silent!" in the ethical-philosophical sense, as similar to the "new Nemizida's anticipation of the new crime" (22-23), in recognition of the historical inevitability of punishment for the bloody rulers. Therefore, the two plotlines, "two tragic lines" – those of Boris and Lzhedmitrii according to Varngagen are so closely intertwined. The critic was close to the precise understanding of the tragedy. Historicism as the basis of Pushkin's view of the world of art excluded the idea of inevitability of fate. In his review *On the second volume of Polevoi's "The History of the Russian People"* Pushkin writes about human mind capabilities and power of Providence,

the recognition of the actual laws of life: “The human mind, as common people believe, is rather a seer than a prophet. Seeing the general course of nature helps it to speculate thoroughly – which it often justifies along the passage of time, but cannot foresee a case – a powerful and immediate tool of Providence.”¹⁴ That is why it is the people’s verdict, an unjust conviction of the new rulers at the end of the tragedy, expressed by people’s silence rather than “the eyes of the world destiny” (23). The impostor is as doomed to die as his predecessor on the Russian throne.

In conclusion to the drama’s analysis Varngagen returns to the core idea of the article concerning the national origin of the poet’s outstanding creations: “For the Russians Pushkin’s tragedy has the advantage of being highly (...) national” (24). Unfortunately, Pushkin himself foresaw that his dramatic innovation would not be fully understood by his compatriots: “Disgustedly I bring myself to give the tragedy to the world and though generally I always was disinterested in success or failure of my works, but I must say that the failure of *Boris Godunov* would be thin-skinned for me, and I’m pretty sure about it.”¹⁵ It was only after Pushkin’s death that the poet’s oeuvre was appreciated by the Varngagen’s keen mind: “We, foreigners, feel the heartbeat of the Russian heart in every scene, in every line. Seeing such a perfect mix of the greatest gifts we cannot fail to be surprised and feel regret that Pushkin wrote only one such a tragedy, not a number of them” (24).

In a review of the second volume of the poet’s collected works Varngagen provides a detailed “report” on Pushkin’s poems – *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, *The Prisoner of the Caucasus*, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, *Brothers seek*, *Gypsies*, the verse novel – *The Count Nulin*, *The House in Kolomna*, *Angelo*, *Poltava*.

Certainly, Varngagen is one of the foreign founders of the literary-critical thought about Pushkin, who in many respects anticipated the Russian historic and literary comprehension of the achievements of romantic and realistic innovations, as well as specific approaches to understanding the genre of the poems in the poet’s oeuvre. Varngagen fairly refers the plot of the first poem *Ruslan and Lyudmila* to the “sphere of Russian fairy tales, and Russian heroic times” (26). At this stage “Pushkin is not in his power yet” (26).

In the successive plot analysis of the poem *The Prisoner of the Caucasus*, the dramatic nature of the love conflict is shown by the critic. There,

¹⁴ А.С. Пушкин, *Собрание сочинений*, vol. 6, p. 324.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 299.

prominence is given to Circassian's image, her sacrifice, the spiritual endeavor; the Prisoner's romantic character is truly represented (the flame of passion, his disappointment in love, the break with society, the desire for freedom), "The Circassian says to the Russian about her love for him (...) But he cannot reciprocate her feeling; in his chest, where the other image lives, the flame of passion died; he cannot love the Circassian, because in response to her love he needs another love – the purest and supreme one" (26).

The collision of East and West in the *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* is also revealed through a love story: the "mad jealousy" of the Georgian Zarema of the religious humility of the "daughter of the Polish magnate" (27) Maria.¹⁶ Vargagen's stylistic manner here reveals his romantic worldview: "the story is extraordinarily beautiful: it is a fascinating description of Tatar manners and slaves' singing, the hidden atmosphere of harem. Remarkably, it is the most miraculous image of female beauty and the breath of love that fans the whole" (28).

Among Pushkin's four romantic poems it is *Gypsies* that is characterised by the critic as "the most powerful and original work" (29). And again, his attention is drawn to the explosion of passion, the collision between two characters – Zemfira and Aleko. The "fiery temper is shown as the worrisome impulse of passion" (30). Vargagen dramatically realises the tragedy of the doomed romantic hero in the final part of the poem: "The whole story is shown in a masterly manner; and in its strongest parts it becomes quite dramatic. With each line the action is dramatised; the events pass like a terrible loud storm, leaving only night and silence behind" (29).

Retelling the plot of *Poltavai*, from the very start Vargagen is inaccurate in connecting the scenes of the hetman's matchmaking and Maria's escape with her guilt manifested before the father. The critic supposes that Kotchoubey was offended by both the cunning and the fact of his daughter's escape. This is perhaps the only case where in the note the translator M. Katkov points to Vargagen's accuracy: "Mazepa wooed (...) and Maria's parents were insulted by the fact. Her escape was a consequence of her rejection of Mazepa. In general, it is clear that Vargagen studied this great work with less attention than the other ones" (30). The German critic calls Maria hetman's "dear spouse," and Kotchoubey – his "father-in-law." Indeed, the matchmaking is the beginning of the action. In his

¹⁶ For details see E. Никитина, О. Хвостова, *Две героини – два мира в сюжетной динамике поэмы А.С. Пушкина "Бахчисарайский фонтан,"* in Z. Nowożenowa (ed), *Wschód – Zachód. Dialog języków i kultur*, Słupsk 2006, pp. 74-78.

interpretation of the love story in *Poltava*, Varngagen ignores the blasphemy and sacrilege of Mazepa's actions. The old man took the young Mary from home, not having received the consent and blessing from Maria's parents. Mary didn't get married and could not walk down the aisle with Mazepa. She was his god daughter, so their relationship according to church and the moral code of the times was considered doubly illegitimate, with the capacity for being recognised as incest. Varngagen distinguishes the "historical significance" of the poem ("the military events are depicted with the living evidence"), but sees it in connection with a private plot line (Maria – Mazepa – Kotchoubey): "History and tradition are combined here" (31). In Varngagen's critical speculation the preference is fairly given to the fate and character of Maria; "the self-right and the strength of her passion, her stubborn persistence are then re-awakened with the utmost power of childlike love and despair" (31). The critic pays attention to the dramatic scene of Kotchoubey's execution, the story of which has "the painful effect on the soul with its gruesome details, but the overall impression produced by it is highly poetic" (31), and Maria's ensuing madness. In the third song of the poem he is impressed by the meeting between crazy Maria and Mazepa near Kotchoubey's farm and their dramatic conversation rather than the Battle of Poltava (in contrast to many critics and scholars). Varngagen shares Pushkin's historical concept of Peter's role in the historical events; "enjoying by a high reputation, the memory of Peter the Great shines; and as well as Charles XII, he is remembered. In vain, people ask about Mazepa's coffin, but covered in honour, Kotchoubey and his friend Iskra are entombed in the tower..." (31). "The supreme justice" is executed (32).

Varngagen perceives the content of the third volume – lyrical poems – holistically, as a manifestation of the "boundless power" of Pushkin's genius, which embodied "the hidden recesses" of his soul, the subtle shades of the sensations experienced ("the fate upheaval, or misery and sadness of the courageous heart, or courage and hope of the strong soul") (32). As before, the German critic is amazed and astonished by the expression of the depth of the Russian spirit, "a lyrical feelings of the people" in Pushkin's poetry: "So deeply, so powerfully revealed Pushkin in his songs the heart of his people – it is evident due to the fact that these songs penetrated throughout Russia, they fly there by word of mouth and arouse enthusiasm and inspiration everywhere" (32).

Varngagen surveys the genre's "diversity" in Pushkin's poetic forms, from the first poet's attempts at writing to his mature masterpieces: "From

the violent Bacchus praises, from the lofty odes and elegies to the simplest tune, from a friendly message to the biting epigrams, from the prophetic eastern character to the song dedicated to the minute and the event" (33). The critic marvels at Pushkin's rhyming wealth, and the poetry's metric system.

The author shows that this genius can depict everything that surrounds him, and to it all his soul responds with the great power: "The glory of creation, the absoluteness of nature, a feeling of love and a gust of sadness, the greatness of Russia, delusions of life, agony of denial and despair, and then again relief in friendship and art, freedom of thought and enravishment of irony" (33). Pushkin's semantic diversity or – as modern scholars call it – his "aesthetic universalism"¹⁷ does not know any boundaries, reaching the worldwide, all-human scope.

Among the love, lyrical masterpieces, Varnpagen focuses not on the romantic embodiment of uncontrolled passions, but on the harmonious fullness of feelings, high admiration for female beauty in such poems as *The Talisman* (1827) and *Madonna* (1830).

The critic sees "great natural capacity" in the program's poem *To the Sea*. It is Pushkin's words of farewell to his romantic ideals: the powerfully delineated image of the sea that is in tune with the poet's mood. It is not a coincidence that there two names; two emblematic figures of the epoch are highlighted – they are Napoleon and Byron: "And like a thunder afterwards / Another genius left us bare."

The critic continues to develop the theme of Napoleon in connection with the poem *The Hero* (1830): "There is no other poet in the world who would rhyme the death of Napoleon in as a dignified manner as Pushkin did (...), accentuating good points, he depicts all the grandeur of the hero who ailed, and declaring him as a tyrant, being not able to embrace the freedom and peoples, to understand the Russians, he forbids any reproach against the one who so magnificently atoned for his fallacies; in the final part the poet invokes glory to the one who called the Russian people to a higher development, who from the darkness of the exile left the eternal freedom to the world" (35). Varnpagen recognises the main idea of Pushkin's poem about the Polish rebellion *To the Slanderers of Russia* and *Borodinsky Anniversary* (1831) as the subordination of a "separate tribe's" freedom to the general purpose of the Slavic peoples. The poet's anger is not against the rebels, he resents foreign slanders and enemies of Russia. Varnpagen

¹⁷ Н. Скатов, *Пушкин. Русский гений*, Москва 1999, p. 7.

admires Pushkin's patriotism "without prejudice to the freedom of other peoples:" "Here he is the Russian to the very roots of his being, flaming for his fatherland, the triumphant victory, demanding the obedience, but not that of leading to shame and slavery, but to the supreme power and law enforcement for the common glory and prosperity" (35).

In his article Varnpagen associates the idea of the Russian with an appeal to the personality of Peter I in the poem *The Feast of Peter the Great* (1835). The critic consistently traces Peter's motif in Pushkin's works. Without neglecting the issues of poetics, artistic perfection, Varnpagen constructs the concept of Pushkin's historical views: the fate of Russia, its people and social unrest over the upcoming changes in social and political life, the ratio of private individual destiny and national affairs. The ruler's greatness is founded on the benevolent attitude towards both his subjects and the defeated enemies.

Therefore, the poet "embodies in the most powerful, touching images a solemn act of forgiveness and reconciliation, scattering them in the form of fast, sweet, happy song. It was the first time when in this song such a spiritual nobility and greatness had been so happily combined with the highest gift of the Muses" (36).

Varnpagen awaits the next volumes – new small poems, works of Pushkin's prose, *The History of the Pugachev*, the material for the conception of the *History of Peter the Great*. He sees the poet's honouring in writing a biography with all the finest details, and that is the challenge for future generations: "The memory of the great man's life is sacred and of high value for noble nations, and we can see that those people who deserve this title tried to keep in mind not only political affairs and military acts of bravery, but also the literary events and the quiet private life of a person" (36).

The translator Katkov assures his compatriots, appealing to them: "What a shame! We were ahead in our evaluation of Pushkin! But if it's God will, this will be the last time, if it's God will we will finally feel the power of the authentic and self-conscious mental activity" (4-5).

Such a multifaceted reception of the national content in Pushkin's works, still a rudimentary *Russian thought about Pushkin and Russia* of his contemporaries anticipated the further deepening of the Russian identity in the works and days of N. V. Gogol, V. G. Belinsky, S. P. Shevryov, P. V. Annenkov, A. A. Grigoriev, N. G. Chernyshevsky, F. M. Dostoevsky, M. N. Katkov, V. S. Solovyov, D. S. Merezhkovsky, S. L. Frank, G. P. Fedotov and many others. Varnpagen von Ense's works were valued not only by the Westerners and liberals, but also by Slavophiles and conservatives.

His article helped the arrangement of the whole direction of Russian philosophical criticism, which has not been exhausted yet.

Transl. by Margarita Feller

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Sergei A. Kibal'nik

Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House), Russian Academy of Science and Humanities (St Petersburg, Russia)

On Dostoyevsky's Anti-Rationalism, its European Philosophical Parallels and its Followers¹

I am not certain whether the concept of “irrationalism” is quite appropriate to be applied to Dostoyevsky. I would rather speak of antirationalism. I share the approach to this issue offered by Semyon L. Frank, who in his work *Russische Weltanschauung* wrote: “The Russian way of thinking is absolutely anti-rationalist. This anti-rationalism, however, is not identical with irrationalism, that is some kind of romantic and lyrical vagueness, logical disorder of spiritual life. It doesn't involve either a tendency to deny science or inability to carry out scientific research.”² It is quite obvious that Russian antirationalism revealed itself in literature, and most openly in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's works. Western researchers often speak of Dostoyevsky's irrational messianism. I am not certain that Dostoyevsky in his *A Writer's Diary* is trying to prove that Constantinople has to belong to Russia in an irrational way. On the contrary, developing Nikolai Danilevsky's theory of panslavism, Dostoyevsky sounds quite rational; all the time he appeals to logic. That is why Tolstoy did not have to change his generally rational way of thinking to beat Dostoyevsky's approach to the Balkan war in the last part of *Anna Karenina*.³ And let us not forget that very soon Dostoyevsky himself denied his own former messianism in his *Speech on Pushkin* of 1880. This makes rather problematic not only Dostoyevsky's irrationalism but his messianism as well.

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² С.Л. Франк, *Русское мировоззрение*, Санкт-Петербург 1996, p. 165.

³ See С.А. Кибальник, *Споры о Балканской войне на страницах “Анны Карениной,”* “Русская литература” 4 (2010), pp. 39-44.

Dostoyevsky's antirationalism was obviously one of the main sources of Lev Shestov's critique of speculative philosophy, rationalism and ideology. Shestov actually borrowed the central idea of his very monotonous philosophical essays from literature, first of all from Dostoyevsky and Chekhov.⁴ He expressed his critique of rationalism in his first books *Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche* (1903) and *The Apotheosis of Groundlessness* (1905) mostly based on Chekhov's and Turgenev's literary works. As Sergey N. Bulgakov once noted: "Lev Shestov was himself a very rationalist author who did not have much to say except for his perpetual accusations of rationalism."⁵ Apparently, Shestov, who lived abroad for almost a half of a century and published most of his French- and German-written works in well-known western philosophical magazines and publishing houses, contributed a great deal to the reputation of Russian literature in the West as an irrationalist one.

I

In order to understand the nature of Dostoyevsky's antirationalism one should analyse his early works, that is his tales and short stories of the 1840–1850s. As it is well-known, Dostoyevsky began his literary career with the tale *Poor Folk*, which was to a great extent based on the ideas of the French utopian socialism. Valentina E. Vetlovskaya has shown that Dostoyevsky is very sympathetic in this work even to the communist ideas of Babeuf and his followers.⁶ Therefore, the ideological basis of Dostoyevsky's first tale which brought him great success is quite rationalist. However, it is corrected and complicated by means of portraying the main characters' deep and genuinely expressed human feelings.

Resuming his literary career in the second half of the 1850s, Dostoyevsky already had a very critical attitude to utopian socialism and to any rational formulas of human happiness. But he couldn't express this openly: it would look as a betrayal of his former ideals and, most importantly, of

⁴ See С.А. Кибальник, *Художественная феноменология Чехова*, in В.Б. Караев, С.А. Кибальник (eds), *Образ Чехова и чеховской России в современном мире. К 150-летию со дня рождения А.П. Чехова. Сборник статей*, Санкт-Петербург 2010, p. 18.

⁵ С.Н. Булгаков, *Некоторые черты религиозного мировоззрения Л. Шестова*, "Современные записки," vol. 68 (1939), pp. 305-323.

⁶ See В.Е. Ветловская, *Идеи Великой французской революции в социальных воззрениях молодого Достоевского*, in Г.М. Фридендер (ed), *Великая Французская революция и русская литература*, Ленинград 1990, pp. 282-317.

his former friends who attended Mikhail Petrashevsky's parties; many of them were still in Siberia. That is why he wrote his tale *The Village of Stepanchikovo* as a cryptoparody. In a concealed manner he parodies the ideas of utopian socialism as well as personalities of some members of Petrashevsky's circle,⁷ and other Russian socialists like Vissarion G. Belinsky. Dostoyevsky once said that "life in Icar's commune or in a phalanstery seems to him more horrible and disgusting than any hard labour."⁸

While using the term "phalanstery" Dostoyevsky obviously referred to Charles Fourier's ideas, and mentioning "Icar's commune" he meant the novel *Voyage en Icarie* by French utopian socialist Etienne Cabet. This utopian novel was quite a successful attempt to make ideas of French socialists popular among the people. Its first edition came out in 1840, and its fifth edition, which was published in 1848, was very soon prohibited by censorship. In Russia this book was well-known and read by most of Petrashevts.⁹ *Voyage en Icarie* is one of the main pretexts of Dostoyevsky's *The Village of Stepanchikovo*. It's worth mentioning that the Russian name "Степан" has a direct equivalent in the French language, and this equivalent is "Etienne." Thus, the title of Dostoyevsky's tale is a transformation of Pushkin's *History of the Village of Goryukhino* (*История села Горохина*, sic! – S.K.)¹⁰ made in such a way that conceals a discrete reference to the French best-seller by Etienne Cabet.

The composition of both works is very similar. The protagonist appears in a different world where he doesn't understand anything, and is asking many questions trying to figure out what is going on around. However, in *Voyage en Icarie*, where evil existed before, but was eliminated by a kind supreme ruler Icar, the protagonist is delighted with everything. Now in Icaria, in full accordance with the ideas of Ch. Fourier and H. Saint-Simon, "the Reason reigns."¹¹ In *The Village of Stepanchikovo* even a naïve and young narrator Sergey very soon understands that Rostanev's house is "something like a bedlam." But Stepanchikovo Rostanev's landlord, a kind

⁷ See С.А. Кибальник, "Село Степанчиково и его обитатели" как криптопародия, in Н.Ф. Буданова, С.А. Кибальник (eds), *Достоевский. Материалы и исследования*, Санкт-Петербург 2010, pp. 108-142.

⁸ А.П. Милуков, *Литературные встречи и знакомства*, Санкт-Петербург 1890, p. 181; idem, *Материалы для жизнеописания Ф.М. Достоевского. Биография, письма и заметки из записной книжки Ф.М. Достоевского*, Санкт-Петербург 1883, p. 89.

⁹ See *Дело петрашевцев*, vol. 1, Москва – Ленинград 1937, p. 89, 370, 563; vol. 3, Москва – Ленинград 1951, p. 143.

¹⁰ Pushkin's tale was at first mistakenly published under the title *История села Горохина*.

¹¹ See E. Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie*, Paris 1848, p. 111.

of an ideal man as he was portrayed by French socialists (“his soul was pure as a child’s soul”), is willing to make everyone happy as well. And in this respect he resembles Icar “whose passion was love for human mankind. Since his childhood he could not see another child without approaching and caressing him, embracing and sharing with him even that little he owned.”¹² Like “the kind Icar” Rostanev cannot understand why “a man is such an evil. Why I am so often evil while it’s so good to be kind?”¹³ Rostanev is the Russian Icar but the unfortunate Icar who is trying to make everyone happy not in the whole country, but in his own estate only, and nevertheless fails.

His last name (“*Ростанев*”) is almost a full anagram of the word “*равенство*” (“equality”). He calls almost everyone, including his peasants, “*brother*.” He is ready to make any concessions and compromises with all inhabitants of his house. But he is treated by them as a nonentity, and is even prohibited to marry his beloved woman. The more he concedes to his dependant Opiskin, the worse he is treated by him. Rostanev is trying to give Opiskin good money under the condition that he moves out from his house. But it results only in increasing Opiskin’s power which makes Rostanev call him now “Your Highness.” Incidentally, the kind Icar also “in his youth could not see an unhappy man without himself suffering from his misfortunes and without trying to console him. Once, meeting a poor man almost naked and dying of cold in the street, he gave him his clothes, which he got only two days before, and returned home full of joy, but almost naked.”¹⁴

The last chapter of the tale is called “Foma Fomich creates everybody’s happiness” (“*Фома Фомич создает всеобщее счастье*”). “*Всеобщее счастье*” is an obvious reference to the French Enlightenment and revolutionaries’ concept of “*bien-être general*.” But the content of this chapter is rather sarcastic. Russian Icar Rostanev eventually forces Opiskin to let him marry Nasten’ka by kicking him out of his house (literally pushing him in his back). Only after such a shock does Opiskin slightly change and become more “reasonable.” There are, in the tale, plenty of other details which clearly indicate that *The Village of Stepanchikovo* is a cryptoparody of *Voyage en Icarie*. I will mention only one more: it appeared to Opiskin that Rostanev looks like a Frenchman (and therefore has too little love for his country), and Opiskin ordered him to shave off his side-whiskers.

¹² Ibidem, p. 211.

¹³ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Village of Stepanchikovo*, New York 1995, p. 111.

¹⁴ E. Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie*, p. 129.

Let us try to answer the question: why could Dostoyevsky not accept people's happiness made by "the kind Icar" who realised in his country the idea of communal property, "brotherhood" and other socialist and communist ideas? Of course, partly because the main characteristics of this rational world: everyone is watching over everyone, writers are appointed by a supreme ruler, books are censored, prohibited and even burnt, and sexual partnership is allowed by law only with spouses (just in case men are allowed to dance with men only) didn't look to Dostoyevsky as an ideal world. But there was another reason: it looked too rational for him. One thing was not taken into account in Icaria. It is the complexity of human nature and psychological contradictions between people. Dostoyevsky's antirationalism in *The Village of Stepanchikovo* is obviously a reaction against excessive rationalism.

In Icaria there are no lazy people, "cause work is so pleasant," there is no "poisoning of a spouse, perfidious courting, destroying jealousy or duels!" There are, however, passions and human attractions. "When I compared him with Valmor, as Dinaise confesses in her letter to his sister, Reason brought me to your brother; but a sort of irresistible force pushed me towards your friend."¹⁵ Instead of struggling for the beloved woman, the narrator decides to leave. But Valmor beats his generosity and self-denial. All of a sudden he decides to marry Dinaise's cousin Alaé, so such a radical change of heart is for him a piece of cake. Thus, a love triangle is transformed into two couples who are going to marry at the same day.¹⁶ What can we find in *The Village of Stepanchikovo* instead? We see that all the time Opiskin blames Rostanef for showing ambition and being an egoist, and appeals to him to restrain his passions. Rostanef accepts this and is trying to become "more kind." But in reality it is Opiskin who is possessed with an ambition to dominate over Rostanef. And not even for the sake of money as Tartuffe in J. B. Molière's famous play, but "being tempted to pull faces, to act, to present himself", as Misinchikov put it.

Charles Fourier was certain that "it's impossible to oppress human passions which are God's voice: facing an obstacle in one point they turn to another point and go to their purpose destroying everything instead of creating something."¹⁷ He believed that one should create social and economic

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 329.

¹⁶ We will see a little later an analogous "rational" solution in Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is To Be Done?* obviously also dependent of Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie*.

¹⁷ See Ch. Fourier, *Le Nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire*, in idem, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 6, Paris 1848, p. 111.

conditions which would allow the satisfaction of everyone's passions, and this will result in a harmonious combination of human individualities. In *The Village of Stepanchikovo* Dostoyevsky creates a situation where everyone in Rostanev's house follows his own ambition and self-esteem no matter whether he or she is oppressed with his or her economic conditions or not. The harmonious combination of human individualities doesn't take place there, and the characters are not capable to direct their passions to achieve some suitable purposes. Dostoyevsky's discrete parody of Ch. Fourier's doctrine is aimed first of all at its rational character.

Criticising rational happiness of the socialist utopia Dostoyevsky, nevertheless, drew on some secondary elements of French socialists' doctrines. Thus, H. Saint-Simon in *Lettres à un Américain* pointed out that "proletarians inspired with the passion to achieve equality after they had got power proved that something worse than the former regime was quite possible."¹⁸ Doesn't it sound like one of the sources of Dostoyevsky's *The Village of Stepanchikovo*?

II

As a frequent visitor to Mikhail Petrashevsky's house, Dostoyevsky once made a speech "on personality and egoism" where "he wanted to prove that among us there is more ambition than human dignity, and that we ourselves are inclined to self-denial and destruction of our own personality caused by egoism and absence of clear purposes."¹⁹ This idea was inspired by another influence. It has already been indicated that this speech was composed by Dostoyevsky under the impression from a famous book *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum (The Ego and Its Own)* by Max Stirner which came out at the end of 1844;²⁰ a copy of this book Dostoyevsky may have been borrowed from M. Petrashevsky.²¹ The only thing which was underestimated by N. Otverzhenyi is that the contents of this speech, as Dostoyevsky later formulated it, is not only permeated with the elements of Stirner's idea of egoism but at the same time is directed against it.

¹⁸ C.-H. Saint-Simon, B.-P. Infantin, *Oeuvres, publiées par des membres du conseil institué par Infantin; publiées et précédées de deux notices historiques*, vol. XIII (I), Paris 1869, p. 178.

¹⁹ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 30 т.*, Ленинград 1972–1990, vol. 18, p. 129.

²⁰ Н. Отверженный, *Штирнер и Достоевский*, Москва 1925, pp. 27-28.

²¹ А. Семевский, *М.В. Буташевич-Петрашевский и петрашевцы*, Москва 1922, pp. 168-170.

It is quite obvious that Stirner's book to a great extent shaped Dostoyevsky's other tale – *Notes from Underground*.²² This tale is the most remarkable and passionate manifesto of Dostoyevsky's anti-rationalism. It is interesting to compare it with its German philosophical source trying to figure out to what extent Dostoyevsky's antirationalism was shaped by Stirner's book. N. Otverzhenyi thought that not only Dostoyevsky's "extreme individualism, moments of deep disbelief, a passionate hymn to the creative specificity of human personality," but "the dominance of intuition over reason as well" "closely resemble the central issues of Stirner's philosophy."²³ He shows that Stirner's rational and individualistic nihilism became the type of consciousness Dostoyevsky fought throughout his whole life: in *Crime and Punishment*, *The Possessed*, *The Adolescent*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*. But an author of introduction to this research work A. Borovoy sounds quite reasonable when he points out that "Stirner and everything that is related to his thought is only a part of Dostoyevsky who fought the rationalist nihilism of Stirner."²⁴

Comparing the one book to the other, we have to admit first of all that Dostoyevsky's *Underground Man*'s discourse is widely based on Stirner's philosophy of extreme individualism and nihilism. The very title of Dostoyevsky's *Notes from Underground* has something in common with the title of Stirner's book. And this title as compared to the title of Stirner's book has some polemic patterns. Stressing loneliness and solipsism of his character, Dostoyevsky underlines that "the Ego's Own" can be only "underground." A critical approach to Stirner's doctrine is thus expressed in the very title of his literary masterpiece.

The *Underground Man*'s passionate exclamation: "Is the world to go to pot, or am I to go without my tea? I say let the world go to pot as long as I get my tea every time"²⁵ – reminds of an introduction into Stirner's book: "My business is not the divine and not the human one, not business of truth and kindness, justice, freedom and so forth. It's exceptionally mine, not common but the only one – as well as I am the only one. To me there

²² Н. Отверженный, *Штирнер и Достоевский*, p. 29.

²³ Ibidem, p. 74. Unfortunately, this was not acknowledged and taken into account in the commentaries on *Notes from Underground* in Dostoyevsky's *Complete Works* in 30 volumes, where the name of Stirner was only once mentioned along with the names of Kant and Schopenhauer. See Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 30 т.*, vol. 5, p. 380.

²⁴ Н. Отверженный, *Штирнер и Достоевский*, p. 6.

²⁵ F. Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground and The Grand Inquisitor*, transl. by R.E. Matlaw, New York 1960, p. 108.

is nothing higher than me.”²⁶ Thus, Dostoyevsky’s antirationalism partly directed against western rationalism has its origins in Western thought as well. The difference between these two phrases as well as between Stirner and Dostoyevsky in general is as follows. Stirner’s passionate and emotional discourse is mostly logical and rationalist. Revolting against Hegel’s system Stirner was at the same time very dependent of Hegel. His main idea is just an extreme conclusion from his metaphysical reasoning.²⁷ But very passionate and at the same time logical exclamations of the Underground Man are only a part of Dostoyevsky’s narrative. Dostoyevsky’s antirationalism in the *Notes from Underground* seems to be partly directed against Stirner’s contradiction between mainly the irrational spirit of his book and its rational form.²⁸

However, under passionate exclamations of the Underground Man we paradoxically discover a sort of a logical formula as well, an opposition of the “real life” principle to the “idea,” the “theory.” “*Two times two makes four*” in the Underground Man’s discourse is identified with “*the goal*,” “*the thing to be attained*” and with the “*beginning of death*,” while “*twice two makes five*” is identified with the “*incessant process of attaining*” and with “*real life*.”²⁹ Doesn’t it sound rather antirational than irrational? The Underground Man doesn’t deny “*two times two makes four*.” He declares: “*I admit that two times two makes four is an excellent thing*” (although he considers it “a piece of insolence” at the same time). And he finds it insufficient to describe the complexity of real life: “(…) *two times two makes five is sometimes also a very charming little thing*.”³⁰ And thus, in

²⁶ M. Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*, transl. by S.T. Byington, <<http://www.df.lth.se/~triad/stirner/theego/theego.html>>.

²⁷ В. Саводник, *Ницшеанец 40-х годов. Макс Штирнер и его философия эгоизма*, Москва 1902, p. 72.

²⁸ Pavel Novgorodtsev saw in a philosophy of early anarchists a mixture of rationalism and irrationalism: “Being irrationalist in its social perspectives, a philosophy of anarchy is combined with the most decisive rationalist optimism, with unconditional belief in life-saving strength of abstract dogmas. Like in socialism the extreme irrationalism is mixed up with the extreme rationalism” (П.И. Новгородцев, *Об общественном идеале*, part II “Кризис анархизма,” Москва 1991, p. 627). But he regarded the early anarchists as mainly irrationalists: “A utopian belief of anarchism is characteristic of the early anarchist, especially of Stirner and Bakunin. The later development of anarchism leads it to a change. The true element of anarchism was irrationalism. But as far as the revolutionary enthusiasm is weakening, anarchism is moving towards more concrete doctrines which could replace a decline in religious belief with a thorough elaborating of details. One can see this already in P.-J. Prudhon’s works” (ibidem, p. 628).

²⁹ F. Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground and The Grand Inquisitor*, p. 108.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 30.

the essence of Dostoyevsky's passionate advocating "*real life*" against "*an idea*" one can surprisingly notice a great deal of antirationalism as well as even some rationalism. He turns reason against reason. All this also partly explains why Dostoyevsky's fiction is very often perceived as philosophy.

One can say perhaps that the Underground Man is a kind of Russian Stirner. But Stirner is equal to "the Ego" while the Underground Man is not equal to Dostoyevsky.³¹ However, even the Underground Man himself sees in *reason* only one out of many human faculties: "You see, gentlemen, reason is an excellent thing, there is no disputing that, but reason is only reason and can only satisfy man's rational faculty, while will is a manifestation of all life, that is, of all human life including reason as well as all impulses. (...) After all, here I, for instance, quite naturally want to live. In order to satisfy all my faculties for life, and not simply my rational faculty, that is, not simply one twentieth of my capacity for life. What does reason know? Reason only knows what it has succeeded in learning (some things it will perhaps never learn; while this is nevertheless no comfort, why not say so frankly?) and human nature acts as a whole, with everything that is in it, consciously or unconsciously, and, even if it goes wrong it lives."³²

It means that *reason* – Romain Nazirov comments on this – has to concede to "will," that is to the integral striving in which the rational element is one of the main parts.³³ And I would add to this that attacking *reason* the Underground Man as well as Dostoyevsky himself in his journalism applies logic here and there. As Nikolay Trubetskoy pointed out "at this time he argued in his articles with rationalism and utilitarianism and, making the rationalist ideology absurd, often expressed ideas very close to the Underground Man's thoughts. He emphasised that the representatives of Russian intelligentsia who want to live according to the principles of rationalism are only dreaming and chatting, but are incapable of acting, that they are embittered and extremely self-concerned."³⁴

He very often appeals to "logic" in his journalism of that time.³⁵ The fact that one can find very close parallels to Dostoyevsky's *Notes from*

³¹ See А.П. Скафтымов, "Записки из подполья" среди публицистики Достоевского, in *idem*, *Собрание сочинений: В 3 т.*, Самара 2008, pp. 131-184.

³² F. Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground and The Grand Inquisitor*, p. 25.

³³ Р.Г. Назиров, *Об этической проблематике повести "Записки из подполья"*, in В.Г. Базанов, Г.М. Фридендер (eds), *Достоевский и его время*, Ленинград 1971, p. 145.

³⁴ Н.С. Трубецкой, *О "Записках из подполья" и "Игроке"*, in *idem*, *История. Культура*, Москва 1996, p. 695.

³⁵ See e.g. Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 30 т.*, vol. 20, pp. 54, 100.

Underground in his journalism and literary criticism written for the journals "Time" and "Epoch"³⁶ supports this idea. Referring to Mark Twain, one can say that rumours about Dostoyevsky's irrationalism are "slightly exaggerated."

N. Otverzhenyi stresses similarity between Dostoyevsky and Stirner, but underestimates Dostoyevsky's transformation of Stirner's philosophy in his images of "individualists." At the same time he slightly exaggerates its similarities to the Underground Man's thinking: "the Ego is close to the Underground Man not only in his individualistic outlook, but in a deep psychological sensation. We know what a sharp hatred the underground Man has towards himself, how his dissatisfaction with himself torments him. This finding himself offensive, this internal drama burning 'the Ego' at the bonfire of his tragical introspection is similar in its psychological essence to the feelings of the Underground Man."³⁷ But does "the Ego" find himself offensive? The Underground Man is not equal to "the Ego," since Dostoyevsky's narrative unmasks the Underground Man's confession.

In his paper *Dostoyevsky and Max Stirner* delivered at the 14th International Dostoyevsky Symposium, Takayoshi Shimizu stresses the difference between "the Ego" and Dostoyevsky's individualists, and adds some quite appropriate parallels with some other Dostoyevsky's characters, that is with Stavrogin: "Raskolnikov, Rogogin, Stavrogin, Kirilov, and Ivan, these ultra egoist heroes have extreme egotism, while they also have the very strong motivation to become *Imitatio di Christi*. In this point, they differ fundamentally from the Stirnerian egoist. They make of the Stirnerian ultra ego not only a God in the Russian way, but they also sacrifice themselves to him, at which point they have fallen and betrayed Stirner's thought. The Stirnerian egoist will always be free from the worship of any authority other than himself. Stirner condemns suicide. Needless to say, if one commits suicide, one shows oneself to kneel before some idea that he is not one's own. But Stavrogin and Kirilov have realised their infinite freedom by ending their lives through suicide."³⁸

But the researcher appears not to realise clearly that the differences between his characters and "the Ego" are intentional. By means of these differences Dostoyevsky formulates his own approach to Stirner's doctrine. In other cases Shimizu slightly exaggerates Dostoyevsky's critical

³⁶ See А.П. Скафтымов, "Записки из подполья" среди публицистики Достоевского, pp. 161-184.

³⁷ Н. Отверженный, *Штирнер и Достоевский*, pp. 36-37.

³⁸ Takayoshi Shimizu, *Dostoyevsky and Max Stirner*, Manuscript.

attitude to Stirner: e.g. *Notes from Underground* is hardly “a parody of Stirner’s philosophy.”³⁹

The parallels between Dostoyevsky and Stirner can be expanded. For example, in the initial chapters of the second part “Ownness” and “The Owner” – this motive is developed in a way which reminds of Raskolnikov’s thinking: “When the ‘loyal’ had exalted an unsubdued power to be their master and had adored it, when they had demanded adoration from all, then there came some such son of nature who would not loyally submit, and drove the adored power from its inaccessible Olympus,” (...) “You long for freedom? You fools! If you took might, freedom would come of itself. See, he who has might ‘stands above the law,’ (...) ‘Man’ is the God of today, and fear of Man has taken the place of the old fear of God. (...) In consideration of the right, the question is always asked, ‘What or who gives me the right to it?’ Answer: God, love, reason, nature, humanity, etc. No, only *your might, your power* gives you the right (your reason, e.g. may give it to you). (...) This means nothing else than ‘What you have the *power* to be, you have the *right* to.’”⁴⁰

Stirner discusses further in *The Ego and Its Own* the issue of “crime:” “The State practices ‘violence,’ the individual must not do so. The State’s behaviour is violence, and it calls its violence ‘law;’ that of the individual, ‘crime.’ Crime, then – so the individual’s violence is called; and only by crime does he overcome the State’s violence when he thinks that the State is not above him, but he is above the State. (...) ‘The criminal is in the utmost degree the State’s own crime!’ says Bettina.⁴¹ One may let this sentiment pass, even if Bettina herself does not understand it exactly so. (...) Every ego is from birth a criminal to begin with against the people, the State.”⁴²

Then, he deals even with “crime and punishment:” “*Punishment* has a meaning only when it is to afford expiation for the injuring of a *sacred* thing. If something is sacred to any one, he certainly deserves punishment when he acts as its enemy. A man who lets a man’s life continue in existence, *because* to him it is sacred and he has a *dread* of touching it is simply a *religious* man. (...) ‘Crime’ or ‘disease’ are not either of them an *egoistic* view of the matter, i.e. a judgment *starting from me*, but starting from *another* – to wit, whether it injures *right*, general right, or the *health* partly

³⁹ Ibidem.

⁴⁰ M. Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*.

⁴¹ Ibidem.

⁴² Ibidem.

of the individual (the sick one), partly of the generality (*society*). 'Crime' is treated inexorably, 'disease' with 'loving gentleness, compassion,' etc. (...) But it is exactly punishment that must make room for satisfaction, which, again, cannot aim at satisfying right or justice, but at procuring *us* a satisfactory outcome."⁴³

Some of these formulas look like excerpts from Raskolnikov's article: "It is said that punishment is the criminal's right. But impunity is just as much his right. If his undertaking succeeds, it serves him right, and, if it does not succeed, it likewise serves him right)."⁴⁴ "But let the individual man lay claim to ever so many rights because Man or the concept man 'entitles' him to them, because his being man does it."⁴⁵

To some extent Dostoyevsky drew on Stirner's polemics with socialists and communists: "Consequently one has a prospect of extirpating religion down to the ground only when one antiquates *society* and everything that flows from this principle. But it is precisely in Communism that this principle seeks to culminate, as in it everything is to become *common* for the establishment of – 'equality.' If this 'equality' is won, 'liberty' too is not lacking. But whose liberty? *Society's!* Society is then all in all."⁴⁶ N. Otverzhennyi found it "significant" that the former member of Petrashevsky's circle, Dostoyevsky, borrowed arguments and a strength of thought from a thinker who considered liberals as well as socialists the enemies of a human personality.⁴⁷

Criticising inconsistency of the socialists' position Stirner expressed ideas in which one can see, as well as in some Dostoyevsky's works, a source of all anti-utopias: "The Socialists, taking away *property* too, do not notice that this secures itself a continued existence in *self-ownership*. Is it only money and goods, then, that are a property. Or is every opinion something of mine, something of my own? So every *opinion* must be abolished or made impersonal. The person is entitled to no opinion, but, as self-will was transferred to the State, property to society, so opinion too must be transferred to something *general*, 'Man,' and thereby become a general human opinion."⁴⁸

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ This parallel in a general way was made by N. Otverzhennyi (see Н. Отверженный, *Штирнер и Достоевский*, p. 44).

⁴⁵ M. Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*.

⁴⁶ Ibidem.

⁴⁷ See ibidem.

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

III

In his characters' arguments Dostoyevsky reproduces Stirner's arguments with some other philosophers. Thus, at the very beginning of the second part of *The Ego and Its Own* we find Kirillov's motif of "God-man." This motif is known to go back first of all to Ludwig Feuerbach and to his *The Essence of Christianity*.⁴⁹ But Stirner opposes to God not just a Man, but "the Ego," and therefore Kirillov's feeling that he is "bound to show **self-will**"⁵⁰ reminds first of all of an intention of "the Ego" to kill not only God, but the Man in him as well: "At the entrance of the modern time stands the 'God-man.' At its exit will only the God in the God-man evaporate? And can the God-man really die if only the God in him dies? They did not think of this question, and thought they were through when in our days they brought to a victorious end the work of the Illumination, the vanquishing of God: they did not notice that Man has killed God in order to become now – 'sole God on high.' The *other world outside us* is indeed brushed away, and the great undertaking of the Illuminators completed; but the *other world in us* has become a new heaven and calls us forth to renewed heaven-storming: God has had to give place, yet not to us, but to – Man. How can you believe that the God-man is dead before the Man in him, besides the God, is dead?"⁵¹

Kirillov's idea to commit suicide in this context looks like the realisation of Stirner's metaphor in the last phrase: "(...) before the Man in him, besides the God, is dead." Certainly, Kirillov differs from Stirner's "the Ego," since he wants to commit suicide not for himself but because he sees in it "the salvation for all."⁵² Kirillov embodies not Stirner's idea itself but Dostoyevsky's transformation of this idea directed to show that it leads to the Man's ruining himself.

In *The Possessed* the idea of "no God" has given birth to Dostoyevsky's well-known formula "If there's no God, how can I be a captain then?": "Ah, here's another anecdote. There's an infantry regiment here in the district. I was drinking last Friday evening with officers. We've three friends among them, *vous comprenez?* They were discussing atheism and I need hardly say they made short work on God. They were squealing with delight. By the way, Shatov declares that if there's to be a rising in Russian

⁴⁹ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 30 т.*, vol. 12, pp. 221-222.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, vol. 11, p. 627.

⁵¹ M. Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*.

⁵² Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 30 т.*, vol. 11, p. 629.

we must begin with atheism. Maybe it's true. One grizzled old stager of a captain sat mum, not saying a word. All at once he stands up in the middle of the room and says aloud, as though speaking to himself: 'If there's no God, how can I be a captain then?' He took up his cap and went out, flinging up his hands."⁵³

Here, we find a sort of irrational reaction to a rational argument, and this reaction represents Dostoyevsky's denial of Stirner's reply to Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity*. Dostoyevsky opposes to it his own reaction to Feuerbach's denial of God. The rational sense of his *captain's* irrational reaction could be formulated as follows: "If there is no God, and God is just a human essence put in the sky, then a man not only doesn't become God but stops being a man." One can also say that the *captain's* apparently irrational reaction to a rational idea of the modern world has in the context of Dostoyevsky's novel an antirational character.

In *The Brothers Karamazov* Ivan Karamazov's analogous formula "if there's no immortality of the soul, then there's no virtue, and everything is lawful" is a logical conclusion which Stirner had drawn from L. Feuerbach's centering a man instead of God. A denial of "God-man" and the idea that "everything is lawful" is the main idea of Stirner's book. Ivan Karamazov's idea is argued by a "divinity student" Rakitin, "a young man bent on a career."⁵⁴ Rakitin's defending atheist morality:

His article is absurd and ridiculous. And did you hear his stupid theory just now: if there's no immortality of the soul, then there's no virtue, and everything is lawful. (And by the way, do you remember how your brother Mitya cried out: "I will remember"!) An attractive theory for scoundrels! – (I'm being abusive, that's stupid.) Nor for scoundrels, but for pedantic poseurs, "haunted by profound, unsolved doubts. He's showing off, and what it all comes to is, on the one hand we cannot but admit" and "on the other it must be confessed!" His whole theory is a fraud! Humanity will find in itself the power to live for virtue even without believing in immortality. It will find it in love for freedom, for equality, for fraternity⁵⁵ – resembles Ludvig Feuerbach's position.⁵⁶

"The Ego" also makes some remarks which are similar to Ivan Karamazov's and the Grand Inquisitor's phrases: "I am the owner of humanity,

⁵³ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Possessed*, transl. by C. Garnett, New York 1963, p. 229.

⁵⁴ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, transl. by C. Garnett, London 1915, pp. 38, 75.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 81.

⁵⁶ See С.А. Кибальник, *О философском подтексте формулы "Если Бога нет..." в творчестве Достоевского*, "Русская литература" 3 (2012), pp. 153-163.

I am humanity, and I do nothing for the good of another humanity. A fool, you who are a unique humanity, that you make a merit of wanting to live for another than you are. (...) The world belongs to 'Man,' and is to be respected by me as his property. Property is what is mine! Property in the civic sense means *sacred* property, such that I must *respect* your property. (...) Whoever knows how to take and to defend the thing, to him it belongs till it is again taken from him, as liberty belongs to him who *takes* it. (...) My intercourse with the world consists in my enjoying it, and so consuming it for my self-enjoyment. The *intercourse* is the *enjoyment of the world*, and belongs to my self-enjoyment. (...) Whether what I think and do is Christian, what do I care? Whether it is human, liberal, humane, whether unhuman, illiberal, inhuman, what do I ask about that? If only it accomplishes what I want, if only I satisfy myself in it, then overlay it with predicates as you will; it is all alike to me."⁵⁷

Generally speaking, in Ivan Karamazov's poem *Grand Inquisitor* Stirner's impact is displayed here and there: "Then we shall give them the quiet humble *happiness of weak creatures such as they are by nature*. (...) Oh, we shall allow them even sin, they are weak and helpless, and they will love us like children because we allow them to sin."⁵⁸ By the way, Dostoyevsky's conviction that an individualistic approach to life is doomed perhaps is partly based on the fact of Stirner's life failure and early death in 1856. Having been freed from hard labour, Dostoyevsky definitely read about this.

Some Russian thinkers were aware of the affinity between Dostoyevsky's main philosophical topic and Stirner's polemics with Feuerbach. For instance, Semyon Frank in his book *Ethics of Nihilism* wrote: "Russian intelligentsia's moralism is just an expression of its *nihilism*. However, speaking strictly logically, one can deduct from nihilism only nihilism that is immoralism, and it was not very difficult for Stirner to explain to Feuerbach and his disciples this logical consequence. If being is deprived of an internal meaning, if subjective human desires are the only reasonable criteria for a practical orientation of a man in the world, then why should I acknowledge any obligations and isn't my egoistic and natural enjoyment of life my legal right?"⁵⁹

Boris Vysheslavtsev in his *The Ethics of the Transfigured Eros* formulated "the idea of man-god" in the following way: "If a man is a live

⁵⁷ M. Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*.

⁵⁸ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, p. 273.

⁵⁹ С.Л. Франк, *Этика нигилизма*, in idem, *Сочинения*, Москва 1990, pp. 84-85.

concrete person, then why not recognise a man the only God we know? This idea occurs necessarily and leads to ‘a religion of mankind,’ to the only possible form of atheist ethics, in other words, of an atheist hierarchy of values. It is conceived in two ways: either the only value and a sacred thing for me is my live and concrete ‘I’ – all the rest is subordinated to him (Max Stirner), or the only value and a sacred thing is ‘mankind,’ the collective ‘proletariat’ (Feuerbach, Marx).” And he concluded that “dealing with this dialectics is shown by Dostoyevsky, and it is still being dealt with by contemporary human mankind...”⁶⁰

Gaito Gazdanov, one of the followers and at the same time opponents of Dostoyevsky in the 20th century Russian prose, in his novel *The Night Roads* makes a homeless French philosopher Plato say: “I am very far from Cartesian ideas (...). I consider that they have caused great harm to our thinking. The possibility of a full and clear answer to a complex question seems attainable only to a limited imagination: this was Descartes’ fundamental flaw. But in certain cases one highly significant and definitive aspect of a question seems to me irrefutable.”⁶¹

It is quite natural that the Russian writer makes a Frenchman criticise the Cartesian tradition. But let us not forget: he still acknowledges some rational reasoning “*in certain cases*.” And the French character is doing this in full accordance with the Russian writer’s creative will. According to “the supplementary principle” of Niels Bohr, rationalism and irrationalism are the two different sides of reality. Although the majority of contemporary intellectuals see in the basis of reality mostly irrational elements they consider them as only a part of their unity with the rational ones.

Russian intellectual history includes phenomenological philosophy (Nikolai Hartmann, Gustav Shpet, Semyon Frank) which has obviously a very rationalist basis.⁶² Even Russian intuitivism developed by Nikolay

⁶⁰ Б.П. Вышеславцев, *Этика преображенного Эроса*, Москва 1994, p. 539.

⁶¹ G. Gazdanov, *Night Roads. A Novel*, transl. by J. Doherty, Dublin 2006, p. 111.

⁶² See for example some research on Gustav Shpet’s rational aspects of his phenomenology: В.Н. Порус, *Спор о рационализме: философия и культура (Э. Гуссерль, Л. Шестов и Г. Шпет)*, in В.А. Лекторский et al (eds), *Густав Шпет и современная философия гуманитарного знания*, Москва 2006, pp. 146-168; Е.А. Юршткович, *Возможности герменевтики как метода рационального мышления в философии Г. Шпета*, in Г.В. Заболотнова (ed), *Творческое наследие Густава Густавовича Шпета в контексте философских проблем формирования историко-культурного сознания (междисциплинарный аспект)*, Томск 2003, pp. 124-132; Л.А. Микешина, *Логика как условие и основание научной строгости исторического знания (Письмо Г.Г.Шпета Д.М. Петрушевскому 16 апреля – 6 мая 1928)*, in М. Денн et al. (eds), *Густав Шпет*

Lossky was formulated by him in quite a rational way. In general, Russian philosophy – even the religious one – is not something absolutely irrational as it is evidenced by Lev Shestov's writings. It is rather antirational, as Semyon Frank put it, and at the same time has a significant rational pattern. And to a great extent this dialectical symbiosis goes back to Dostoyevsky.

Thus, this research on Dostoyevsky's intertextual connections with German philosophy, especially with Feuerbach and Stirner, makes us think that while reacting to Dostoyevsky's works, Nietzsche reflected their sources in the 19th century philosophy which he could easily see. And that is why developing in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* Dostoyevsky's anti-rationalist motifs in *Notes from Underground*,⁶³ Nietzsche at the same time and to some extent drew on Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*.

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⁶³ See S. Clare, *Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky: Hypotheses on Human Nature and Societal Attacks*, <<http://voices.yahoo.com/nietzsche-Dostoyevsky-hypotheses-human-nature-1470335.html>>.

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Ilya Levyash

National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Minsk, Belarus)

Semantics of the European Discourse of Dostoyevsky – Nietzsche

The thesis that “the decline of Europe” is a thing of the past, is not indisputable. Its outlook results from a dilemma: the *extension* or *unity* of Europe? The first model – mainly *civilizational* one – is as the latest edition of westernization of Europe. The alternative is, in its conceptual and practical identity, *cultural and creative* “Europeanness.”¹

The implementation of such a perspective is the probability of a grand coup which is integral to the quest for a *semantic pillar* of Europe. The innovative character and unprecedented scale of these problems require adequate meaning, magnitude of mental space, and – like the Christian “neither Gentile nor Jew” – initially seek for the *genius* of “Slavic imminence and infinity.”² Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche are at the top here. The uniqueness of their discourse belongs to the recognised cultural tradition. According to Berdyaev, “Dostoyevsky (...) knew as much as Nietzsche did, but he also knew that Nietzsche did not know (...) Dostoyevsky’s name should be placed next to the name of Nietzsche.”³

Their metanarrative of the European perspective is an immense space, but its structural aspects are:

1. *Font* of European semantics;
2. Slavic Word as a forerunner of European unity;
3. United Europe and the semantics of Christianity;

¹ See Л. Зидентоп, *Демократия в Европе*, transl. by В.Л. Иноземцев, Москва 2001, p. 23.

² Н. Бердяев, *Судьба России*, Москва 1990, p. 149.

³ Н.А. Бердяев, *Философия творчества, культуры, искусства: В 2 т.*, Москва 1994, vol. 2, p. 41.

4. Meanings of the concepts of “Russian European” / “good European;”

5. “Love-hate” in the “space of friends.”

1. *Font* of European semantics

*Language is the heritage derived from ancestors
and passed to descendants,
which must be treated with fear
and respect as something sacred,
invaluable and unavailable for insulting.*

Nietzsche⁴

The nature and evolution of universal polysemantics of the Word are deeply comprehended in its Greek equivalent of *logos* – originally as a word, speech, language, and later as thought, concept, mind and the world of law and its meaning.⁵

The word/*Logos* is a “world egg” from which anthropology emerged in two forms: philosophy and philology. According to late antique mythology, god Mercury could not get married to *Sophia*-Wisdom. Accompanied by Virtue, he went to Apollo, who advised him to get married to Philology – the daughter of Reflection. Now philology is one of the human sciences, but in its semantic *font* is “just a love of science, love of knowledge, reflection, thinking.”⁶

In this context, philosophy is the wisdom of understanding “of the latter grounds” of the world and their meanings, and philology is an expression of their semantics in the semiotic-verbal forms. “Philology, in its highest sense, is an art, but not a scientific specialty.”⁷ Genuine philology is inseparable from the philosophical and anthropological context.

⁴ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, transl. by Я. Берман et al., Москва 1990, vol. 1, p. 324.

⁵ See И.Я. Левяш, *Логос фронтиров христианской Европы*, in U. Cierniak, J. Grabowski (eds), *Drogi i rozdroża kultury chrześcijańskiej Europy*, Częstochowa 2003, pp. 71-78.

⁶ А.Ф. Лосев, *История античной эстетики. Итоги тысячелетнего развития*, Москва 1992, p. 161.

⁷ Н.А. Бердяев, *Философия творчества, культуры, искусства: В 2 т.*, vol. 2, p. 291.

The word/*Logos*, becoming and improving, especially in writing, became a universal, cultural and creative thread, a mediator of communication between past, present and future generations in the chain of the world civilization. This axiological knowledge, “as semiotics (...) is indispensable: it opens, at least for those who know, essential reality of the inner worlds and cultures that do not have sufficient knowledge in order to ‘understand’ themselves.”⁸ According to M. Benveniste, a “major acquisition of spiritual culture (...) relates to how people create and how they handle a few dozen of basic words, the totality of which is the common heritage of languages of Western Europe.”⁹

The semantic core of such “basic words” is the concept of “Europe.” An ancient myth tells of the family *font* of the concept. Agenor, king of the Phoenician city of Sidon, had a daughter beautiful as an immortal goddess. Her name was *Europe*. Once she had a dream. She saw the two origins fought for her. One of them was Asia, and another one was the mainland, which is separated from Asia by sea. But clever Zeus appeared before the beautiful Europe as a beautiful white bull and abducted her. Since then, all kinds of Zeuses have “kidnapped” Europe for many times, and it has gained its attractive force not as immediately as its mythical forerunner.

As the semantic concept and a generalising principle, Europe has its chronology from the Christian, “nor Gentile nor Jew.” She staked her claim with the help of the sword and the right of the late Roman Empire, to which any Leuna “mere speaker” was its citizen. However, the “barbarians” did not accept the high honour and crushed the “Eternal City” in the end. Since then, Europe was looking for its place in the world for a thousand years; at beginning wasn’t being a subject of a paramount interest for it, but kept maturing and improving in self-identity.

The first project of the united Europe was created by Charles the Great. In 802 AD he was sworn in as the Emperor “of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.” For the first time the oath was taken, according to the language of decrees, not just “a Christian,” and “absolutely all without exception.” This oath means the recognition of the *identity* of all citizens, including slaves. “Moral principles associated with the formula ‘*Christian nation*,’ made a radical change in the mind.”¹⁰ The foundation of the invisible “constitution” of Europe was the principle of *universalism*.

⁸ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, vol. 1, p. 367.

⁹ М. Бенвенист, *Общая лингвистика*, transl. by Ю.Н. Караулов et al., Москва 1974, p. 386.

¹⁰ Л. Зидентоп, *Демократия в Европе*, p. 253.

The idea of aspiring to the united Europe gained momentum, and this trend was expressed by an outstanding thinker of the Renaissance E. Pikolomini (from 1458 Pope Pius II). He wrote the first book with the word “Europe” in the title (Pius II, *In Europam*, printed by Albrecht Kunne in Memmingem, 1491). During the 19th century, the idea of Christian Europe – *Respublica Christiana* – became filled not only with an antipagan but also creative sense of the *organic* dynamics of the European culture and civilization, which grew mainly from its own “soil” and formed authentic value-semantic logos.

With the triumphant march of bourgeois relations, the idea of united Europe found a tough political form of the Napoleonic expansionist project. It called illusions of even such giants as Goethe, Heine, the early Nietzsche. It was a grand and tragic attempt at the unity “on the point of the bayonet,” but, as Talleyrand told the Emperor, “with a bayonet you can do anything. The only disadvantage is that you cannot sit on it.”

After the Nazi apocalypse this kind of European integration was almost impossible. The only alternative was the idea and a strategy of united Europe, but there was an acute shortage of its conceptual foundations, the need for a fundamental reassessment of values, ultimately, in the European *semantic revolution*. In this context, the discourse of Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche is its worthy forerunner.

2. Slavic Word as a forerunner of European unity

*Endowments of Slavs seemed higher than the talent of Germans,
I even thought that Germans entered the number
of gifted nations only through
a strong admixture of Slavic blood.*

Nietzsche¹¹

*We need unconditional rapprochement with Russia (...)
in a new common program (...)
Fusion of German and Slavic race.*

Nietzsche¹²

Of course, the appeal to the ethnic roots of genius is not self-sufficient. But Dostoyevsky viewed them rather implicitly, while Nietzsche programmatically. They both stressed *the Slavic roots* of their work.

¹¹ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, ed. by К.А. Свасьян, Москва 1998, vol. 1, p. 42.

¹² *Ibidem*, pp. 42-43.

The Polish-Belarusian origins of Dostoyevsky are known. As an expert says, for Dostoyevsky Europe was not “abroad.” He felt the flesh and the spirit of its political and religious system coordinates. This is confirmed by Dostoyevsky’s close attention to the “Polish question.”¹³

Characteristically, Nietzsche, an ethnic mestizo (father – a Pole, mother – a German), was not a mental centaur and freely elected his purpose orientation. Nietzsche is not a priori anti-German, but he is “alien in his deepest German instincts (...) to think in German, to feel in German – (...) *this* is beyond my power.”¹⁴ On the contrary, the thinker reveals that his “ancestors were Polish noblemen (Nitski): therefrom comes a lot of racial instincts in my body.” He saw a great advantage in the fact that his father is by education a Polish nobleman, and by life role a German aristocrat. Nietzsche does not need stress, “in order to enter into the world of high and thin things (...) I’m there at home.”¹⁵

Height and finesse of heritage merit attention from the standpoint of prestige of Polish culture in the European context. “No wonder – Nietzsche writes – the Polish are called the French of the Slavs.” As he emphasised, “I am Polish enough to sacrifice all music of the world for Chopin.”¹⁶ Berdyaev observed that “Nietzsche [was] not of a German spirit, there [was] a lot of Slavic in him, and he was brought up in a French culture.”¹⁷ Here comes the cultural horizon of Nietzsche. His identity is *pan-European*, and it “is easy for him to be a ‘good’ European.”¹⁸

Symbolically, that Nietzsche referred to Russia for the search of meaning and reference of the European perspective. The influence of Dostoyevsky was especially important in Germany. Nietzsche, being extremely grudging in recognition of his forerunners, is generous to give the *highest* praise for the impact of the Russian genius. “For the task that lies before us, the evidence of Dostoyevsky is of great importance; he is the one psychologist (...) from whom I learnt a lot.”¹⁹

¹³ See A. Кожедуб, *Родом от Данилы Иртышева*, “Литературная газета,” 27. 10–2.11.2004.

¹⁴ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, pp. 335-336, 353, 363.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 336, 337.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 353, 355, 363.

¹⁷ Н.А. Бердяев, *Философия творчества, культуры, искусства: В 2 т.*, vol. 1, pp. 304-305.

¹⁸ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 335.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. 1, p. 408.

Nietzsche had the honour of deep comprehension of the Russian genius, as “his friend.”²⁰ They both belonged to that rare breed of geniuses, for whom the “grasp of the essence, wisdom and insight into the *driving service*” were equally available,²¹ and above all in the conceptual and artistic validity of their insights into the European apocalyptic destiny.

3. United Europe and the semantics of Christianity

*European culture was created by martyrs
of the first three centuries,
it was also created by martyrs to the east of us.*

John Paul II²²

Passion pro and contra of the demonstration of *Christian* character of Europe in its large dramatic rejection of its constitution indicate an imminent solution to the *dilemma*: is Europe only one of several super-dynamic regions in the world, or a unique successor to its precursors, and above all to the *Christian* civilization and culture?

The content of the concept of *Europe* in the works by Dostoyevsky appears in the dynamics of its development and evolution, decay and renewal of “due time.” *Ab ovo*, lasting value and the meaning foundation of Europe is the wisdom of the *Old Testament*.²³ However, the philosopher said that the European genotype was much indebted to ancient genius. “There had its origin the cradle of European humanity.”²⁴ One of his mediator declares that he “would rather be an ancient pagan, as the great Goethe or ancient Greek.”²⁵ Prince Myshkin evades the question, “Are you a zealous Christian?”²⁶

²⁰ See И.Я. Левяш, *Центральный вопрос Достоевского и ответ Ницше* (Moscow, 14–19.12.2004), <<http://www.Dostoyevsky-fund.ru/>>.

²¹ И. Ильин, *О тьме и просветлении. Бунин. Ремизов. Шмелев*, Москва 1991, p. 20.

²² Quotation from: А. де Лазари (ed), *Польская и русская душа. От Адама Мицкевича и Александра Пушкина до Чеслава Милоша и Александра Солженицына*, Варшава 2003, p. 411.

²³ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений в 30 т.*, Ленинград 1972–1976, vol. 13, pp. 172–173; vol. 14, p. 265.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, vol. 13, p. 375.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, vol. 10, p. 33.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, vol. 8, p. 317.

Dostoyevsky has a clear definition of life-purpose orientation of his characters by the appeal to ancient *Greece*, not to Rome: “we have almost Athenian evenings (...) dreams of universal renovation, the idea of eternal beauty.”²⁷ It is common knowledge why these quests are *pro-Athenian*, not pro-Roman. Dostoyevsky follows Dante: “Christ is captured in his Vice-roy.” The *missionary* sense of Catholicism is focused on the image of the Grand Inquisitor.

Does this mean apology by Dostoyevsky of Orthodoxy and its contrast to Catholicism? Characteristically, the name Ivan Karamazov gives the thinker’s alter ego, the elder Zosim – Pater Seraphimus, i.e. the name of Francis of Assisi. “Dostoyevsky sees in the highest point of Christian spirituality the unity of the East and West of Europe. The principle of personality is a Christian one, and therefore European. Christianity structured Europe spiritually and historically.”²⁸

God by Dostoyevsky (and Goethe) is *immanent* and non-dogmatic, and in this sense fundamentally does not coincide with any denominational God. *Raskolnikov* is a symbol of the *great schism*, who – essentially synchronously – shook Catholicism in the Lutheran revolution and Orthodox Russia in internal split.²⁹

Dostoyevsky draws the conclusion that the deep origin of all European contradictions is in *total crisis* of the kingdom of Inquisitor as *a way of life*. From the point of view of the thinker, the “conditional democratic” device, dominant in Europe, distorts the true meaning of Christian values. The source of anti-Christianity is in the process of secularisation, which has put in the place of the Godman, the Mangod with his principle of “the destruction for the good final objectives (...) you want to build your bridge and at the same time declare that you stand for the principle of universal destruction.”³⁰

“Roman”-imperial and Jesuit ways of European unity, based on flouting spiritual values of its people, is a recipe for disaster – this is the summary of the Russian genius. Exodus is the openness to the world; *will* to be a man-bridge to the common future of peoples. Not a dictatorship, but *culture*, the community of its values and its free choice are able to create a *united* Europe.

²⁷ Ibidem, vol. 10, p. 25.

²⁸ В. Кантор, *Восток и Запад Европы: европейская судьба России* (2003), <www.nationalism.org/library/publicism/kantor/kantor-east-west-europe.htm>.

²⁹ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений в 30 т.*, vol. 12, pp. 71-78, 13, Чап. VIII.

³⁰ Ibidem, vol. 10, p. 78.

The concept of a *man-bridge* as a symbol of cultural communication is one of the key semantic terms by Nietzsche for the understanding of the link between generations and nations. The main taboos broken by Europe are the destruction of the historic “bridge,” or *unconsciousness*. Nietzsche, according to the outrageous self-appointed “Antichrist,” appreciates “the actual invention of the founders of” religions. It “is reduced, first, to ensure a certain way of life and moral usage, acting as *disciplina voluntatis* (...); secondly, to give *an interpretation* of life, because of which it is presented in the light of the highest value and becomes now the fight of some good people, who if necessary give their lives.”³¹

Nietzsche was a “seismograph” of the unformed European integrity. It is doomed to “culture, having no solid, sacred, indigenous customs, but condemned to (...) poorly eating all cultures – that is our present.”³² The philosopher emphasises its inherent *cosmopolitanism*: “people (...) reproduce all the kinds of style (...) all the levels and types of morals, customs, and cultures.” But this is “the selection, the purpose of which can be death of lower forms.”³³

In the context of Nietzsche’s vision of the status and trends of the European decadence there is one idea, not obvious in his times, that has now become intensely relevant. Fukuyama exaggerates emphasising: “Nietzsche was most afraid that the ‘American way of life’ will win,”³⁴ but cultural “selection” was not really in favor of American values. Here “in the foreground (...) is the current belief of Americans that (...) want to become Europeans, too, when the ‘actors’ are the masters.”³⁵ This is a startling epiphany: actors now are truly on the political proscenium. Having not yet made a final choice between the “Americanization” and “Europeanness,” modern Europe can find it useful to listen to the prophet: “The modern mobility continued to progress to the West,” and “higher culture can no longer reap its fruits (...) our civilization is moving into a new barbarism.”³⁶

Nietzsche points out that contrary to the possibility of a military disaster in Europe, there is “the possibility of progress (...) people can consciously decide to develop a new culture (...) a new, conscious culture destroys an

³¹ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1998, vol. 1, pp. 670-671.

³² Ibidem, pp. 150-151.

³³ Ibidem, p. 255.

³⁴ Ф. Фукуяма, *Конец истории и последний человек*, transl. by М.Б. Левин, Москва 2004, p. 485.

³⁵ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1998, vol. 1, p. 676.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 391.

old one, which (...) has an unconscious animal or plant life (...) the progress is possible.”³⁷

Such a clear manifestation of historical optimism of the “nihilist” Nietzsche’s is no longer concretised by the possibility, but by the fate of a European, common, Christian perspective: “We (...) – heirs to Europe (...) heirs to millennia of the European spirit (...) our ancestors were the most ruthlessly honest Christians (...) we – do the same. But for what? (...) Yes, hidden in us more than anywhere, and it may be that you are suffering from your age, and when you have to embark on the seas, the faith will force you to do it!”³⁸

If Europe strives to resurrection as a unique cultural and civilizational complex, the fundamental condition of the process is a reproduction and creative renewal of its Christian character, Christian life and its values are not dogmatically mastered. The problem is that the civilizational components of this complex, becoming a priority, are gradually losing the European “uncommon facial expression.” In this, there is a threat of loss of the cultural identity of Europe.

4. Meanings of the concepts of “Russian European” / “good European”

Dostoyevsky is a patriot of Europe, not only Russia.

Berdyayev³⁹

*We are the good Europeans,
the heirs to the longest and most courageous
self-negotiation of Europe.*

Nietzsche⁴⁰

Conceptual terms crowning this section are in the focus of Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche. Russia in its striving to “become on a par with the era of Enlightenment” mastered the values of European democracy and civil society. However, the process of becoming “a man and a citizen” is significant,

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 256.

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 701.

³⁹ Н.А. Бердяев, *Философия творчества, культуры, искусства: В 2 т.*, vol. 2, p. 23.

⁴⁰ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 145.

but not self-sufficient. The citizen is the subject of formal political freedom and equality, and his formation is a necessary civilizational step forward. But this still does not solve the cultural and creative problem – affirmation of humanism, i.e. humanity in culture. The paradox is that in the kingdom of a European “citizen” the cultural decadence start taking revenge.

Dostoyevsky perceives this spiritual crack as the primary problem. “The European melancholy – he wrote – is much higher than the modern practical activity without any doubt.”⁴¹ The thinker looks into “the setting sun of the last day of European humanity (...) but I, a Russian European, could not admit that.”⁴² Outside the cultural area of Europe there can be such grave texts: “humanity can live without a Russian or an Englishman, but without Shakespeare (...) it could not possibly live.” For the Russian Europe is “as precious as Russia: every stone in it is sweet and valuable. Europe was also our homeland, like Russia,” and it is important for one to “become mostly Russian precisely when he is mostly European.”⁴³ All in all, in the final *A Writer's Diary*, “Europe – but it is a terrible and holy thing, Europe. Oh, do you know, gentlemen, how this Europe is dear to us (...), this country of holy ‘miracles.’ Do you know how these ‘miracles’ are dear to us and how we love and honour, more than with brotherly love, and honour great tribes that live on it, and all the great and beautiful and the great, committed by them (...) you, gentlemen, Europeans and Westerners have never loved Europe, as we, the dreamers-Slavophiles, in your opinion – the ancient enemy of it.”⁴⁴

Thus, from the organic involvement in the European decadence, there appears Europeanness, characteristic of an intelligent Russian, and together with it – a conceptual term of Dostoyevsky – “Russian European.”⁴⁵

Here – the womb of Nietzsche’s concept of “good European,” and its common cradle with Dostoyevsky – “the European culture in its entirety,”⁴⁶ in the throes of decadence the pan-European integrity is arising. “This is Nietzsche (...). Not only outstanding Russian people, but also the most sensitive and delicate western people felt that great and sacred culture of the West was dying (...) that it would be replaced by an alien civilization,

⁴¹ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений в 30 т.*, vol. 13, p. 380.

⁴² Ibidem.

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 377.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, vol. 25, pp. 197-198.

⁴⁵ See specifically В. Кантор, *Восток и Запад Европы: европейская судьба России*.

⁴⁶ Ф. Ницше, *Воля к власти*, transl. by Е. Герцук, Москва 1994, p. 80.

a world city, non-religious and international (...) in this victorious march of civilization the soul of Europe, the soul of European culture was dying.”⁴⁷

Obstacles to the renewal of Europe are “the most hostile culture sickness and madness, which only exist: nationalism, this national neurosis, with which Europe is ill (...) – Does anyone know a way out of this impasse? (...) Is the problem too big to reconnect people?”⁴⁸ The prophet saw the prospect that “he (...) who once grasped it, he should fearlessly impersonate himself as a good European and actively promote the merging of nations.”⁴⁹

Already in the 19th century this process unfolded as overcoming not only the medieval autarchy, but geopolitical “games” of nation-states. In the fragment of the “European people and the destruction of nations – Nietzsche writes – trade and industry, communication through letters and books, communion of the highest culture, fast change of home and region, the current nomadic life (...) – all these conditions will inevitably lead to (...) the destruction of nations, at least the European one.”⁵⁰

This belief of Nietzsche is founded on the growing determination directed towards pan-European cultural synthesis. He admits that “the greatest danger of losing votes, which poses a threat to the soul of Europe, comes down to a simple patriotic attitude,” while there is a “process of becoming the Europeans.” “Europe is seeking to unite. All people having deeper and more extensive minds had the general direction of the true mystery of their souls to prepare the way for a new synthesis and from the form of European experience to predict the future of a European (...) that is Europe, a united Europe (...) in its diversity,” a true bridge from the past to the future. “Good Europeans” are “heirs to the longest and most courageous self-negotiation of Europe.”⁵¹

According to Nietzsche, among several factors of the process of European unifying, almost all of them derive from civilizational rage, and only one of them – the “communion of the highest culture.” It is this element that was transient. Foreseeing the “tragic age,” Nietzsche saw the saving alternative in the primacy of culture over the self-sufficient civilization striving to new barbarism.

⁴⁷ Н.А. Бердяев, *Философия творчества, культуры, искусства: В 2 т.*, vol. 1, p. 387.

⁴⁸ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 404.

⁴⁹ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1998, vol. 1, p. 448.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, pp. 145, 153, 278, 283, 293.

This voice is heard by the cultural elite of modern Europe. L. Zidentop asks: “Are we making Europe only to have a larger supermarket?” And expresses the hope “in Europe as a cultural and ethical project.”⁵² There is the main direction of the necessary reconstruction of European faith. Probably, in the middle of this process there should be, on the one hand, irreducibility of a “good European” to a citizen of Cosmopolis; and on the other hand, the need for such values that do not coincide with Nietzsche’s statement of “the destruction of nations” for a period of “half a century.”⁵³ This forecast is far from confirmation.

Overall, however, the construction of Europe as a “federation of states and nations” (Jacques Delors), confirms the insight of becoming a “good European.” Moreover, in its “Europeanness” it objectively goes beyond boundaries of the continent. The idea of “self-determination” of Europe of Nietzsche was not final, and he demanded of people to “think” in a super-European way and “be prepared to become legislators of the future.”⁵⁴ The role of Europe in the global Cosmopolis mainly depends not on the “euro” part, but on becoming the “good European,” which the history of the cultural and civilizational type has yet to witness.

5. “Love-hate” in the “space of friends”

*Yes! I hate and still love
How would you ask?
I will not explain. But I feel so
mortally languishing.*

Gaius Valerius Catullus

The paradox captured by the motto is one of the basic archetypes of the European culture. Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe – each of these defines it in his own way. Freud encapsulated it in the psychoanalytical formula of “love-hate,” and – as he said – he owed it to the discourse between Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche.

Such a thorny problem calls for a reliable analysis of the semantic bridge between the concepts of a “Russian European” and a “good European.” Kipling’s dilemma whether Russia is the easternmost Europe or westernmost

⁵² Л. Зидентоп, *Демократия в Европе*, p. 279.

⁵³ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 276.

⁵⁴ Ф. Ницше, *Воля к власти*, pp. 102-103.

Asia remains open. The formula of Dostoyevsky: “Russia resolutely lives not for itself, but only for Europe”⁵⁵ forms the sense. This concise and plausible statement needs verification.

As a “character” in Europe, Russia appeared long before the “window” of Peter the Great; it was the first “Iron Curtain” against the Mongol conquerors. Stressing the European orientation of Peter the Great and his successors, Pushkin believed “we have only one European – the government.” Russia “kept” the balance between the old and new Europe. There are heated debates about the sense of the Napoleonic wars. But M. Kutuzov, fending off the reproach that the cup with the blood of soldiers outweighs the cup of Moscow, said: “I weighed Moscow, not with the blood of soldiers, but with the whole of Russia, and with the rescue of St Petersburg, and with the freedom of Europe.”

Russia’s role in bringing the German states into a single state is known, and William I wrote to Alexander II, that “Germany owes its union only to Russia.” The Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Joseph privately wrote another thing: “Our future is in the east – and we will corral the power and influence of Russia within limits, lest it step out (...). Of course, it is wrong to oppose the old friends, but in politics there are no other way and our natural enemy in the east – Russia.”⁵⁶ The key words here, in spite of the geopolitical intrigue – “our future is in the east” are used to mean a space of “friends.” There is this “love-hate” relation in the genotype of geopolitical Europe.

However, it also has a rational explanation. In Europe, there always has been another Russia, and no one, except Dostoyevsky, provided a clearer and more honest evaluation. In Gogol’s famous metaphor of Russia, he shrewdly saw the ambiguous character: “the Triple shows Russia. And it moves, and the peoples step aside in a respectful bewilderment. Whether in horror or in bewilderment do the peoples step aside? (...) If in the triple Chichikov, Sobakevich, Nozdryov are yoked (...). It doesn’t matter if the coachman is very good, you will not manage to get anywhere? Should we fix the Triple? But what do we need to achieve that – to grasp and explore (...) and let’s go into our Triple...”⁵⁷

As we can see, there is no answer to the question of Kipling and in principle there cannot be a single-value answer. It is necessary to deeply

⁵⁵ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений в 30 т.*, vol. 13, p. 377.

⁵⁶ А. Шиндлинг, В. Циглер, *Кайзеры: Священная Римская империя, Австрия, Германия*, transl. by Е.С. Самойлович, Ростов-на-Дону 1997, p. 43.

⁵⁷ И.Я. Левяш, *Центральный вопрос Достоевского и ответ Ницше*, p. 351.

comprehend the principle of the cultural and civilizational asymmetry of Russia. Dostoyevsky perceived that objective contradiction between the Eurasian civilizational “soil” and the European cultural “salt.” And Russia implies a conscious choice not between utopia and reality, but between trends and vector, different in scope and meaning of the content and substance. Including Asia, Russia has involvement in it. It is capable of understanding it and mastering it as Europe. As a cultural subject, Russia – not an Asian, but a European Eurasia is accepted by Europe as “its native different.”⁵⁸ “The European culture was created by the martyrs of the first three centuries – said John Paul II – it was also created by martyrs to the east of us...”⁵⁹ Universally acknowledged luminaries of the Russian culture have always learnt from Europe and taught it, always remaining themselves.

In this context, the meaning of Dostoyevsky’s inversion of formula “Russian European” is understandable: being European means the ability to be Russian. The thinker rejects a nihilistic version of Russia as a “material” for western modernisation.⁶⁰ The vocation of Russia is in the fight “for our freedom and yours;” Dostoyevsky sees its unique spiritual mission in the constellation of European cultures. The thinker interprets the mission of Russia not in an ethno-religious, but in a general Christian manner. The moral must of his characters is first of all to know themselves in uncomplicated Christian faith. This involves overcoming the “barbaric” axiological division of Europe.

Meanwhile, the end of the 19th century in the “space of friends” was coming to a critical point, and the “war of all against all” was maturing. In this “hour of the bull” Nietzsche’s vision of what is real and what is due for Russia was the strongest one. Unlike its version as the embodiment of “Asiatic nature” the thinker sees the reality of “the vast middle kingdom,” where “most strongly and most amazingly will power is manifested, where Europe seems to revert to Asia – in Russia.”⁶¹ Nietzsche sees the historical greatness of Russia in such features as “the will to tradition, to authority, to accountability for a generation, to the solidarity of the past and future generations, from generation to generation (...). If there is such a will, then

⁵⁸ See И.Я. Левяш, *Культурология*, Москва 2004; idem, *Глобальный вызов и ответ Центральной Европы* (2004), <levyash.by.ru>; idem, *Центральный вопрос Достоевского и ответ Ницше*.

⁵⁹ Quotation from: А. де Лазари (ed), *Польская и русская душа*, p. 411.

⁶⁰ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений в 30 т.*, vol. 13, p. 45.

⁶¹ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 244.

there appears something like (...) Russia – the only country that currently has a futurity...”⁶²

Warning Europe against the Imperial Russia, Nietzsche, however, offers the same scale “meta-policy, like the Russian one.” “The Thinker, is responsible for the future of Europe (...) will be considered (...) with the Russians as the most loyal and probable factors in the great fight and the game of powers.”⁶³ It was the first edition of the conceptual vision of Russia as a colossus of Europe, with interests in Asia, but as a great European nation. Given the correspondence of Nietzsche with Bismarck, the chancellor listened to the prophet. Bismarck did not see fit to fight with Russia, and following Nietzsche’s interpretation of the relationship with it, he saw it not only in a “friendly,” but also in a “familial” spirit: “Teutons – the husband, the Slavs – a wife.”

Finally, we can say that Europe and the world in general would be very different if Nietzsche’s imperative had been taken up: “We need an unconditional rapprochement with Russia (...) in the new common program (...). No American Future! Fusion of German and Slavic race.”⁶⁴

From the perspective of the triune Europe⁶⁵ the discourse Dostoyevsky – Nietzsche can perform the function of a polysemantic core of this grand project. In the context of Goethe’s question – “What is it meant to be?” – it is obvious that the knowledge of the pan-European process should be based on the wisdom of its prophets.

Transl. by Olga Grin

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⁶² Ibidem, vol. 1, p. 403.

⁶³ Ibidem, vol. 2, pp. 244, 245, 287.

⁶⁴ Ф. Ницше, *Сочинения в 2 т.*, Москва 1998, vol. 1, pp. 42-43.

⁶⁵ И.Я. Левяш, *Культурология*, Москва 2004; idem, *Глобальный вызов и ответ Центральной Европы*.

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Marina Savel'eva

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Centre of Humanitarian Education
(Kiev, Ukraine)

Dostoyevsky and Thomas Mann on the “Twilight of the German Spirit”

It is not a secret that the “reception of ideas” in foreign cultures is a very ambiguous phenomenon that combines a conscious goal and unknowingly chosen means. If the goal is a desire to preserve and convey the original character of thoughts, the means by which we prove their universal value and necessity, destroy all the intentions. Thinkers’ argumentation that is crafted under other circumstances, completely changes the meaning, while retaining the subject. So to speak, “*si duo facient idem, non est idem.*”

Therefore, I think we should be very cautious when speaking about the true reception of Russian social thinking in Western Europe. Ideas of such ambiguous figures as A. Pushkin, I. Turgenev, F. Dostoyevsky, L. Tolstoy, A. Chekhov, D. Merezhkovsky, M. Bulgakov as well as the poets and writers of the Silver Age have still been objects of mostly distant analyses that do not affect the process of European outlook formation. If in the previous century there were attempts to prove the metaphysical role of these writers’ oeuvre in changing the spiritual situation in Europe, there are likely to be exceptions rather than manifestations of the norm. Moreover, they are not very successful exceptions because researchers finally showed their helpless feelings before “the great Russians.”

Dostoyevsky probably more than any other artist **made extremely discrepant impressions**. One of those who experienced both the attraction to and the threat of his personality was Thomas Mann. In particular, he openly admitted that he had been “crushed,” “paralysed,” “enchanted” by his creativity. The German writer shared Merezhkovsky’s opinion that Dostoyevsky was an “almost oracle” in his vision of the human soul. At the same time, Mann said that he could not overcome his own inconsistency in his own estimate of the writer’s work: a sense of admiration for the

personality and talent of Dostoyevsky got along with the desire to avoid and to elude problems like those which were stated by the Russian writer. According to Mann, the writer would watch everything that happened in the world out of Hell, and that produced an attractive and at the same time terrible impression. That is why Thomas Mann wrote that: "I feel timidity, deep mystical timidity which commands me to keep silent, in front of the religious grandeur of the outcast, in front of the genius as a disease and the disease as a genius, in front of those who are burdened with a curse and an obsession, in whose soul a saint is inseparable from a criminal... Demonic essence should be sung in verse rather than talked about... It must speak from the depths of the work and, if it is possible, be expressed in a humorous way. To put it mildly, I think it is indiscreet to devote some critical essays to it. I say all of this, perhaps or even more than likely, because I wish to justify my own laziness and cowardice. It is much easier and simpler to write about the divine-pagan health than about the holy disease. You can make fun of the blessed children of nature, especially of their simplicity, but you cannot make fun of children of spirit, of the great sinners and martyrs, and the holy fools. It is impossible to tease Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky, as I did it in the novel with a child of fortune and egoist Goethe, and in one of my articles with the grand absurdum of Tolstoy's ideas. It follows from this that my reverence for the 'children of Hell,' great seekers of God and the insane, is basically deeper and therefore more reserved than one for the 'children of Light.'"¹

However, a scrupulous study of the details of Dostoyevsky's life allows noticing a strange feature that seems to have escaped the German writer's attention. For Dostoyevsky, "Hell" was not quite there where it is seen from the outside. The early years of his life, filled with immense feelings of family dramas, poverty, unsuccessful political experience, the threat of execution and penal servitude – all these events are imagined as "Hell." But in reality, it was different: the experience of "Hell" for the writer began later, after he was accepted by critics and the public, favoured by the emperor and was able to see the world, when his literary achievements were formally recognised by St Petersburg Academy of Sciences. We should obviously look for reasons of "Hell" not in the reality of everyday life, especially not in the political and economic situation, because we know that the writer took an extreme conservative position in politics. Apparently, they

¹ Т. Манн, *Достоевский – но в меру*, transl. by П. Глазарова, in idem, *Собрание сочинений: В 10 т.*, vol. 10: *Статьи 1929–1955*, Москва 1961, p. 328.

should be searched for beyond the bounds of his personality, outside of the Russian nation, and perhaps beyond the bounds of the human at all, as Freud did it. At that time, he was the only one who outlined the right way to the centre of writers' souls, which Fyodor Mihailovich himself called "the underground." That's why Dostoyevsky's oeuvre was perceived primarily through the psychoanalytical "veil" since the publication of Freud's work on him in 1928, and it again raises the question of "authenticity of understanding." At the same time, it is difficult to argue with Freud, because he guessed it correctly, and regarded Dostoyevsky as the embodiment of "infinity, thoroughness of sin," in which a person does not know *what he is really capable of* because initially *he is capable of everything*. Freud called to witness the writer himself: "Every man has reminiscences which he would not tell to everyone, but only to his friends. He has other matters in his mind which he would not reveal even to his friends, but only to himself, and that in secret. But there are other things which a man is afraid to tell even to himself, and every decent man has a number of such things stored away in his mind. The more decent he is, the greater the number of such things in his mind. Anyway, I have only lately determined to remember some of my early adventures. Till now I have always avoided them, even with certain uneasiness."²

That is why it is not surprising that Mann was in fact under the "charm" pressure of both Dostoyevsky and Freud. And the inconsistency of his attitude was likely to be due to this binary. When Mann tried to offer his own evaluation of Dostoyevsky's oeuvre and to determine the kind of his influence on his own work, when he tried to separate his conclusions from Freud's ideas, he always suffered from his own helplessness to grasp the depth of this person. But we are not talking about the lack of understanding of the "mysterious Russian soul." On the contrary, Mann saw very well the boundaries of "Russianness" of Dostoyevsky as a writer. He recognised it quite correctly: "I do not think that Dostoyevsky is the embodiment of Russia,"³ because "in Dostoyevsky I have scarcely ever been able to see anything but a totally extraordinary, wild, monstrous, and tremendous phenomenon outside all epic tradition – which, however, has not kept me from recognising in him an incomparably deeper and more experienced moralist

² F. Dostoevsky, *Notes from the Underground*, Chapter 11, transl. by C. Garnett, <http://www.online-literature.com/dostoevsky/notes_underground/>, accessed: 04.01.2013.

³ Quotation from: Т.Л. Мотылёва, *Томас Манн и русская литература (К столетию со дня рождения)*, Москва 1975, p. 35.

than Tolstoy.”⁴ But when Mann explored Dostoyevsky’s personality in the tradition of psychoanalysis, he became more determined. It is demonstrated well in the journalistic essay *Reflections of an Unpolitical Man (Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen, 1918)*, where Mann studied political positions of the Russian writer. It was thanks to Freud that Mann drew attention to the fact that the writer Dostoyevsky could be not only a writer; he could go beyond the artistic reality in the world and be very insightful in the evaluation of current events of his time, just like Prince Myshkin. Materials from *A Writer’s Diary* for 1877 on the “German question” resulted from the direct experiencing of events of the Franco-Prussian War. At that time Dostoyevsky was abroad. He lived in France and Germany, and was able to observe the changes taking place on the map of Europe. *A Writer’s Diary* is a very intimate work with a purpose uncertain for others and a rather inconsistent composition. In this sense, Dostoyevsky’s views expressed in it were the views of *an outsider, an indefinite subject*, neither a writer nor a citizen of a European country.

The rise of the authority and political unification of Germany after the victory in the Franco-Prussian War was likely the same surprise for other European countries as the rise of Russia at the epoch of Peter the Great. In this connection, many pages of German history were re-examined in order to find some hints of its future destiny. The “German spirit” at the end of 19th century, like the “Russian spirit” of the end 18th century, became a European myth, a revealed secret, in which people tried to divine the future of Europe. Therefore, the German politics at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries did not remain without outside attention. The untypical behaviour of the German nation was considered either as instructions, “a guide to action” for other nations or, on the contrary, as the errors that other nations should avoid from that time on. The Russians were particularly interested in the fate of the “German spirit,” because the century before they had been confronted with its presence on their territory and fully experienced its charismatic influence on the national culture development. Therefore, the estimation of the Russians was noted for a high bias, as they considered the “German spirit” in terms of “*own-alien*” relations.

Another reason that gave rise to greater attention of the Europeans and Russians to the Germans was the First World War, because any military conflict serves as motivation to see the opposite side differently. Therefore, wars lead not only to the destruction of civilization but, oddly enough, to

⁴ Thomas Mann to Stefan Zweig, Munich, July, 28, 1920, in *Letters of Thomas Mann, 1889–1955*, transl. by R. and C. Winston, Berkeley – Los-Angeles 1975, p. 98.

intercultural revival. The enemies study each other not only in the battlefield, but also from the “rearward,” which, according to Andrei Bely, is a spiritual heritage of the nation.⁵ Around the same time when Mann wrote *Reflections of an Unpolitical Man*, V. Ern expressed the belief that a “violent uprising of Germanism is predetermined by Kant’s Analytics; (...) Krupp’s guns are full of profound philosophic character; (...) the internal transcription of the German spirit in Kant’s philosophy is naturally and fatally converged with an external transcription of the same German spirit in the Krupp’s guns.”⁶ And thirty years later N. Berdyaev repeated Ern’s opinion substantially expanding his views: “A German is not a dogmatist and skeptic, but a critic. First of all, he rejects the world, he does not accept external objective being which is given to him as non-critical reality. (...) For a German the initial feeling of being is primarily the original sense of his own will, his thought. He is an idealist and voluntarist. (...) Rejecting the world as something dogmatically imposed on him and critically untested, a real profound German always wants to recreate it out of himself, out of his mind, out of his own will and feelings. This direction of the German spirit was defined as far back as in Eckhart’s mysticism, it is present in Luther’s doctrines and in Protestantism, and with great force it is detected and proved in the great German idealism of Kant and Fichte, and in another way in Hegel’s and Hartmann’s ideas. (...) A German by his nature is a metaphysician, and he creates his physical tools with metaphysical pathos, he is never naively realistic. And the very German epistemology is a special kind of metaphysics. A German did manage to turn the mental, ideal tools into a real weapon for struggle.”⁷

Long before that, assessing the role and place of Germany in the history of Europe, Dostoyevsky said of its eternal ideological and cultural *opposition* to the peoples of Western European states (the writer called it “Protestantism” not in religious, but in a general, cultural sense). He was able to understand the differences between the German states and the other European states, because he drew a parallel with Russia as well: the latter represented a large *external* opposition to Europe, while Germany

⁵ See A. Белый, *Современные немцы*, “Биржевые ведомости,” 22.05.1916 г., no. 15573, p. 2.

⁶ В.Ф. Эрн, *От Канта к Круппу*, in idem, *Сочинения*, Москва 1991, pp. 308-309.

⁷ Н.А. Бердяев, *Судьба России*, Москва 1990, p. 168. Mann was unlikely to know Berdyaev’s opinion. And there are serious doubts that he would have agreed with him, because Berdyaev, if compared with Dostoyevsky, did not like ambiguity, and tried to be as straightforward as possible, tried to be “Dostoyevsky but not in moderation,” and therefore he was more vulnerable as a thinker and a stylist.

represented a small *internal* opposition to it. At different stages of history this cultural opposition manifested itself as the opposition of Germanic *barbarians* to politics of the *civilization* of ancient Rome; later as naming the Empire founded by Otto the Great “the Holy Roman Empire” under the domination of Christianity; as a fundamental rejection of the revolutionary ideas seizing Europe of Modern Times.

Dostoyevsky saw the essence of the confrontation between Western and Eastern Europe in the different ways in which they understood the national and public ways of people’s unity. According to him, “the eastern ideal places the spiritual union of humanity in Christ, and only then, on the strength of this spiritual union of all in Christ and as an inevitable product of it will come a just political and social union; in the Roman interpretation, however, it is the reverse: first a solid political union in the form of a worldwide monarchy must be secured, and only then, perhaps, will come a spiritual union under the direction of the pope, as lord of this world.”⁸ The “middle” geographical position of Germany partly determines its reserved attitude to the Western and Eastern policy. At the same time, Dostoyevsky noticed the religious parallels between Germany and Russia: fateful succession between the “Second” and “Third Rome,” religious opposition, which resulted in the Lutheran and Nikon’s dissents, and, finally, the internal political discretion, which in the middle of 19th century made Germany, like Russia, dissimilar from any other European country.

These historical features were usually interpreted as the characteristics of the backwardness, social and political exclusion of Germany from the other countries.⁹ Even the great compatriots of Mann were of that opinion, e.g. Heine mocked the “German spirit,” Nietzsche showed its enormity and weakness. Still, Dostoyevsky believed that the protest indicated an inclination of the “German spirit” towards *independence*, and expressed its *self-sufficiency, maturity and enlightenment*. ‘Selbst’ is a key philosophical term used by Kant, Fichte, and Hegel.¹⁰

⁸ F. Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary*, vol. 2: 1877–1881, transl. by K. Lantz, Evanston – Illinois 1994, p. 1004.

⁹ In 1925 Thomas Mann in an interview with “Neue Rundschau,” in fact, confirmed the classic stereotype of nonpolitical Germany: “The German spirit, in fact, is not interested in social and political issues, and in the depths of the soul (...) this sphere is alien to it” (T. Mann, *Рихард Вагнер и “Кольцо Нибелунга.” Доклад, прочитанный 16 ноября 1937 года в Зале собраний Цюрихского университета*, in *idem, Аристократия духа*, transl. by С. Апт et al., Москва 2009, p. 287).

¹⁰ Goethe spoke of identity as the essence of the German (see J.W. Goethe, *Von Deutscher Baukunst D. M. Ervini a Steinbach (1772)*, in *Goethes Werke*, vol. XII: *Schriften zur*

Apparently, Dostoyevsky perceived Germany as a Russian, a citizen of Russia, for whom “the Roman Whore” was always a source of danger – not only of pagan temptations, but also of the general principle of bringing people together, which **gave no right to an individual choice. The writer believed that universal equality was possible only in front of God, while the Romans wanted this equality in front of Caesar.** That resulted in that “the terrible French Revolution burst forth, a revolution that in essence was no more than the latest metamorphosis and reincarnation of this same ancient Roman formula of worldwide unity.”¹¹

Total political unification seemed to be a diabolical temptation for the Russian writer. For him, the victory of Germany in the Franco-Prussian War meant the end of the great “German spirit” and its enslavement by the idea of universal reuniting for the sake of total secular power establishment. It is no accident that he called the man who managed to reunite the German lands as “Prince Bismarck,” by association with the “Prince of Darkness.”

Dostoyevsky’s reflections were not only fair, but also prophetic for Mann, because he reflected on them at the end of the First World War, in which Germany had met with defeat. For the German writer that outcome of the war meant the final victory of the soulless “Western civilization” over the great “German spirit,” which for centuries had been overwhelmed with endless complex of its own inferiority and had been looking for any ways to compensate for it. Dostoyevsky was especially dear and precious to Mann, above all, in that the German writer saw the very motif of the struggle between “civilized” (material) and “cultural” (spiritual) in a person and the society in his writings: “The imperialist nature of civilization is the last form of the Roman idea of unity, against which Germany is ‘protesting.’ And yet it has not resisted any forms of its manifestation with such passion, it has not entered into such a terrible fight with any of them, as with this one.”¹² Having survived the first of two devastating wars, Mann experienced this idea very personally – both as a writer and as a German. He believed that an excessive focus on the “life of the spirit” could play

Kunst. Schriften zur Literatur. Maximen und Reflexionen (Hamburger Ausgabe; bei C.H. Beck), ed. by von E. Trunz, München 1982, p. 10).

¹¹ F. Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary*, vol. 2, p. 1005.

¹² “Der Imperialismus der Zivilisation ist lebte Form des römischen Bereinigungsgedankens, gegen den Deutschland ‘protestiert;’ und gegen feine feiner Erscheinungsformen hat er das leidenschaftlicher getan, gegen feine einen furchtbareren Kampf auszufechten gehabt, als gegen diese” (Th. Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, Berlin 1920, p. 12).

a bad joke with man, turning in reality into “life of the body” and the pursuit of material comfort, geographical space, power and authority. According to Mann, Dostoyevsky was one of the first ones who paid attention to this danger of the struggle between the substance and the spirit, light and darkness regarding it as the universal one, and in this sense, his arguments were valuable for everyone, regardless of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Unlike him, the others tried to define the current state of Germany as a consequence of the implementation of a certain transparent goal. That is why the German history became utterly mysterious: “The great process of inner awareness of the German idea continued from Eckhart to Kant. The most complex implementation of the conscious idea in terms of the historical existence began with Kant. And this whole process is something that is integral and continuous, leading tightly with logical necessity to Krupps and Zeppelins.”¹³ And Dostoyevsky’s idea attracted among others by that it seemed a spontaneous, intuitive irradiation, accidentally manifested insight, and the absence of the teleological sense made it extremely easy and striking mortally.

Understanding this plainness filled Mann’s soul with ecstatic inspiration: “Great Patient” suddenly appeared to him as “a Great Psychologist,” who had made a diagnosis of Europe long before, but said nothing about its terrible, destructive consequences. He was able to transfer the problem from the sphere of policy to that of anthropology and psychology, and thus to demonstrate its universality, urgency and at the same time naturalness, humaneness and absence of grandeur. To support his own thoughts Mann cited one passage from Nietzsche, which was said, however, without regard for Dostoyevsky’s opinion, but it explained his point of view: “*any independence of thought and rejection of tradition is akin to the outlook of a criminal...*”¹⁴ [italics is mine – M.S].

Of course, Dostoyevsky could not even imagine what a monstrous form of connecting people and of denying the old traditions would be declared by the ideologists of fascism. After World War II Mann was already able to assume that the revelations of Dostoyevsky were naive and even somewhat shy. The Russian writer just talked about the dark corners of the soul, the individual “underground,” and he could not imagine that one day “the underground” would break loose. However, Mann believed that the predictions of Dostoyevsky had not been outdated so far: “At my life time

¹³ В.Ф. Эрн, *От Канта к Крупу*, p. 316.

¹⁴ Т. Манн, *Достоевский – но в меру*, p. 335.

that passed under the sign of *Faustus* the interest in the ill, grotesque, and apocalyptic world of Dostoyevsky definitely prevailed over my stronger affection for Homeric might of Tolstoy.”¹⁵ Even the most innocent and the weakest protest turned out to be a shamefully blurred silhouette of truly genuine criminal intents. Therefore, we should regard the rise to power of fascism as a behavioural pattern of the humiliated “German spirit” and as a materialised curse of the German people.

Thus, Mann was not entirely consistent in evaluation of contemporary events. The genius of Dostoyevsky seems to have paralysed his mind, limited the freedom of arguments. The German writer could not accept the fact that the Germans themselves acted in history mainly as narrow-minded and short-sighted philistines. He was rather ready to admit that the “Doom” pursued his countrymen so that they were able at least to maintain their dignity. In this sense, Mann showed his weakness and limitations not as a writer but as a citizen. Being unable to accept the fact that “the ill can give birth only to itself,”¹⁶ he made erroneous conclusions based on erroneous assumptions. To ignore the sin means to multiply it. Dostoyevsky was not interested in the problem of sin, because it is universal, so he focused on a crime as a particular and absolute manifestation of sin, he focused on the act as an offence surpassing the capacity of an individual and the society, and breaking the established rules and regulations. Thomas Mann was interested in this line of thinking of Dostoyevsky. He thought it was necessary to leave the abstract universality and contemplation which was characteristic of the classical German thought, and to turn to the study of psychological aspects of reality. But as time has shown, leaving a problem in this way meant only circling of the thought. The German writer was made to face this problem: suggesting that fascism was the “Doom” of Germany, he showed the Germans being helpless and deprived them of both the chance to take the responsibility for their destiny and any hope for its change.

¹⁵ Т. Манн, *История “Доктора Фаустуса,”* transl. by С. Апт, in idem, *Собрание сочинений: В 10 т., vol. 9: О себе и собственном творчестве, 1906–1954. Статьи. 1908–1929,* Москва 1960, p. 287.

¹⁶ See Т. Манн, *Достоевский – но в меру,* p. 338.

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Józef Bremer

Jesuit University Ignatianum in Cracow (Cracow, Poland)

Romano Guardini's interpretation of figures in Fyodor M. Dostoyevsky's novels

Romano Guardini was born in Verona in 1885. In 1886 his parents moved to Mainz, Germany, where Romano grew up. He did his studies at the universities of Tübingen, Munich and Berlin before deciding to enter the priesthood. He was ordained in Mainz in 1910. As of 1923 he lectured on the philosophy of religion and theology at Wrocław University. In the same year the Prussian Minister of Culture C. Becker appointed him to the newly-established chair of philosophy of religion and “Catholic world-view” at the Protestant University of Berlin. Being formally a member of the Catholic Theology Department at Wrocław University, he gave lectures in Berlin. He taught at the University of Berlin until forced from his position by the Nazi government in 1939. In the post-World War II period and after a three-year teaching period in Tübingen, from 1945 to 1948, he was to teach the “Christian world-view” (*christliche Weltanschauung*) at Munich University permanently. Thus, Guardini's city of choice was Munich, where, in fact, he died in 1968. Pope Benedict XVI describes Guardini as a “great figure, a Christian interpreter of the world and of his own time,” and he often turns to Guardini in almost all of his writings.¹

In his lifetime Guardini was, as it were, reduced to reconciling various opposites: he came from an Italian family, but lived and worked in Germany; as a Catholic theologian he taught at a Protestant university; being opposed to totalitarian regimes, he was forced to live in a totalitarian state. Undoubtedly, all this laid the foundation for his “philosophy

¹ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Perché siamo ancora nella Chiesa*, transl. by V. Rossi, Milan 2008, p. 186; cf. S. Magister, *Benedict XVI Has a Father, Romano Guardini*, “Chiesa News,” 01.10.2008, <<http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/207016?eng=y>>, accessed: 11.12.2012.

of opposition,” whose premises one can find in his philosophical work *Der Gegensatz*.²

In this article I am going to present the basic concepts of the philosophy of opposition, referring to Guardini’s interpretation of the figures in F. Dostoyevsky’s novels. Hence, in the first part I will discuss his analyses of the main figures in Dostoyevsky’s novels, and in the second part I will present the outline of his philosophy of opposition, illustrating it with examples from his analyses of the figures created by Dostoyevsky.

1. F. Dostoyevsky’s literary output in R. Guardini’s works

As the newly-elected chair in Berlin, Guardini was not sure which area of theology he was supposed to lecture on. He sought advice from the renowned phenomenologist Max Scheler. In one of their conversations, Scheler advised him to take up Dostoyevsky’s novels and to take his own Christian stance on them. As Scheler saw it, the point of the undertaking was the interpretative elucidation of Dostoyevsky’s works, their starting points and the author’s intended aims.³ In the following years (that is, in the 1920s and 30s), Guardini intensely and avidly worked on Dostoyevsky’s novels. His work on Dostoyevsky became all the more intense at the time when, in Germany, the first signs of national socialism began appearing. For instance, he interpreted Dostoyevsky’s novel *The Possessed* as a prophecy of the looming national socialism, with all its socio-political hypocrisy and violence.

In 1925 in the periodical “Die Schildgenossen” Guardini published his first article on Dostoyevsky. It is a brief review of the novel *The Idiot*.⁴ There, he points out that the whole novel is permeated with the presence

² R. Guardini, *Der Gegensatz: Versuche zu einer Philosophie des Lebendig-Konkreten*, Mainz 1985 (hereinafter referred to as: R. Guardini, *Der Gegensatz*). This title can be rendered in English as: *Opposition: Essays for a Philosophy of life in its Particularity*. A list of all publications by Guardini has been compiled by H. Zenz, see <<http://www.helmut-zenz.de/hzguard2.htm>>, accessed: 11.12.2012.

³ Cf. R. Guardini’s statement, cited in: H.B. Gerl, *Romano Guardini 1885–1968. Leben und Werk*, Mainz 1987, p. 105. An introduction into the essential strands of Guardini’s theological and philosophical thought can be found in: H.U. von Balthasar, *Romano Guardini. Reform from the Source*, transl. by A.K. Wimmer and D.C. Schindle, San Francisco 2010. Balthasar’s book also contains a brief discussion of the interpretation of Dostoyevsky’s characters, as provided by Guardini (cf. *ibidem*, pp. 78-82).

⁴ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöser Ausdruck*, “Die Schildgenossen” 5 (1925), pp. 418-421.

and proximity of God, and in fact it is about nothing but Him. Moreover, the name of "God" is hardly ever mentioned, though his presence transpires on each and every page. At the same time, He is not some kind of impersonal, pantheistic God, but a living and holy God; the kind of God you can pray to. He is a God who goes looking for a soul lost in the world; He takes it in his arms and sanctifies it.⁵

In the summer term of 1930, in his lectures on the philosophy of religion Guardini discusses the subject "Die religiöse Existenz bei Dostojewskij." In 1931 "Die Schildgenossen" includes his essay entitled *Religious existence in Dostoyevsky's great novels*.⁶ The following year the essay is published under the title *Der Mensch und der Glaube. Versuche über die religiöse Existenz in Dostojewskijs großen Romanen*.⁷ The second edition of the monograph (1939) bears the well-known title: *Religiöse Gestalten in Dostojewskijs Werk. Studien über den Glauben*.⁸ Quite soon the book is translated into French and Italian, with fragments rendered into English,⁹ Spanish and Japanese.

Since approximately the 1920s Guardini would repeatedly propound the thesis about the end of modern times, at the same time interpreting the works of Søren Kierkegaard, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Friedrich Nietzsche as the crying of the fin-de-siècle prophets. He wrote, "the three great 'romantics' Søren A. Kierkegaard, Fyodor M. Dostoyevsky and Friedrich W. Nietzsche are those [prophets – J.B.]. It is in their works that the ultimate effects of contemporary man's existential situation are voiced – that is, the situation of man since the 15th century. They are standing at the end of modern times, presaging elements of the subsequent period, which has not been named yet."¹⁰

⁵ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 420.

⁶ Cf. R. Guardini, *Die religiöse Existenz in Dostojewskijs großen Romanen*, "Die Schildgenossen" 11 (1931), pp. 98-130, 193-228, 316-351, 420-451.

⁷ R. Guardini, *Der Mensch und der Glaube. Versuche über die religiöse Existenz in Dostojewskijs großen Romanen*, Leipzig 1932.

⁸ R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten in Dostojewskijs Werk. Studien über den Glauben*, Leipzig 1939 (this title can be rendered in English as: *Religious Characters in Dostoyevsky's Works*). Subsequent quotations in this work come from the 7th edition of *Religiöse Gestalten in Dostojewskijs Werk*, München 1989.

⁹ Several chapters of which appeared in English translation in the American journal "Cross Currents" in 1952 and 1956.

¹⁰ R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 12.

2. Three types of figures in Dostoyevsky's novels

In all his works Guardini deals with the religious problem as the fundamental one. However, he does not discuss this problem only from the theological or theoretical perspective or in a narrow sense, but mainly from the perspective of a man's existential situation. He is interested in the religious phenomenon, its emergence and development, as seen from the existential vantage point. In this sense his interpretation of Dostoyevsky's works offers a peculiar phenomenology of religion.

Guardini analyses the figures in Dostoyevsky's novels in respect of the stand they take towards the Absolute and another man. In Guardini's approach, the essence of the religious problem is christology. Most of his works treat of Jesus Christ, even if that is not to be directly inferred from the titles of these. He writes: "My works on Augustine, Dante, Pascal, Hölderlin and Dostoyevsky were in a way preliminary exercises preceding the attempt at outlining the one who is the Son of God and the Son of Man."¹¹

In the present article we will be chiefly dealing with the book *Religious Figures*, which can be divided into two main parts: "Full of faith" (chapters 1 to 4), and "the godless or those who rebel against God" (chapters 5 and 6). In chapter 7 Guardini presents Prince Myshkin from *The Idiot* as "the symbol of Christ." Such a division is already to be noticed in the table of contents,¹² which at the same time points to various attitudes that a man can adopt towards God.

2.1 The godly

In the first part of *Religious Figures* Guardini delves into the depths of folk piety. The "folk" that Dostoyevsky portrays is – according to Guardini – "the true man, despite the misery and sin; and in spite of great depravation, it is robust and healthy, as it is rooted in vital structures of existence, whereas the learned 'western man' is detached, becomes artificial and sick, and loses support."¹³

¹¹ R. Guardini, *Das Christusbild der paulinischen und johanneischen Schriften*, Mainz – Paderborn 1987, p. 14.

¹² The seven chapters of the book under discussion are entitled: "Das Volk und sein Weg ins Heilige," "Die Stille und die Große Annahme," "Die geistlichen Männer," "Der Cherub," "Empörung," "Gottlosigkeit," "Ein Christussymbol."

¹³ R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 17.

Ultimately, folk piety comes to be expressed in the “men of spirit,” among whom may be reckoned pilgrim Makar Dolgoruky in *The Raw Youth*, as well as the Elder Zosima and Alexei Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov*. These people “directly express that which is religious. It comes out of them and takes hold of everything else. Since they substantiate all being, they become interpreters of spiritual meaning that lives in others.”¹⁴ The testimony borne by these “men of spirit” displays the ideal that everyone should strive for. In Guardini’s opinion, Alexei Karamazov stands out against those figures. He is a “cherub” speaking of God, and a figure of angel is Guardini’s favourite theme that he resumes in other works as well.

Guardini takes the view that similar and simple religious as well as profound closeness with God is displayed by “pious women,” whom he characterizes in the second chapter of his book. This type of piety and religiousness is to be seen in Sonya Andreyevna in *The Raw Youth* and in Sonya Semyonovna in *Crime and Punishment*. Because of her family’s financial situation, daughter Sonya becomes a prostitute. The family lives off her earnings and off her disgrace. Guardini considers Sonya the most warm-hearted and friendliest female figure in Dostoyevsky. She is one of those “little ones” to whom the Kingdom of God was revealed – tax collectors and prostitutes. She is a child of God in this special sense that it is in her that we can decipher the way of God’s care for man, which cannot be encapsulated in any notion.¹⁵

2.2 The rebellious and godless

The two middle chapters of *Religious Figures* offer mainly opinions on religious subjects, like the ones we can come across in this day and age. Guardini exemplifies them with the aid of three figures from Dostoyevsky’s works.

Ivan Karamazov is a talented, young newspaper columnist. During one of the conversations with his brother Alyosha all the gentleness of his soul comes through. Guardini sees the figure of Ivan Karamazov as an outline of the phenomenology of outrage. Ivan still believes in God, but in no way can he accept creation and the divine plan inherent in it. God made a mistake, and the salvation furnished by Jesus was a complete failure. “And that

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 70.

¹⁵ Ibidem, pp. 51-52.

I am doing. It's not God that I don't accept, Alyosha, only I most respectfully return Him the ticket. That's rebellion, murmured Alyosha, looking down."¹⁶ Ivan intends to correct God's mistake, and in Guardini's opinion such an attitude was typical of the people of the 19th century, and likewise came to the fore in the 20th century.¹⁷

For a longer time Guardini dwells on the form of godlessness that he finds in Kirillov.¹⁸ He is a good man; he likes children, he empathises with other people's suffering, and helps wherever he can. Yet, Kirillov is the person who has consciously doomed himself to "no" offered to God. Kirillov rejects God in an uncompromising and pertinacious fashion. God should disappear, since man can fulfill himself on his own, without God. For Kirillov, getting rid of God means removing suffering and pain from life. Kirillov is ready to commit suicide in order to free man from God. He declares:

"I can't understand how an atheist could know that there is no God and not kill himself on the spot. To recognise that there is no God and not to recognise at the same instant that one is God oneself is an absurdity, else one would certainly kill oneself. If you recognise it you are sovereign, and then you won't kill yourself but will live in the greatest glory. (...) For three years I've been seeking for the attribute of my godhead and I've found it; the attribute of my godhead is self-will! That's all I can do to prove in the highest point my independence and my new terrible freedom. For it is very terrible. I am killing myself to prove my independence and my new terrible freedom."¹⁹

As one of the first writers and theologians, Guardini discerns the similarity between Kirillov and F. Nietzsche's Zarathustra. It is with Nietzsche's

¹⁶ F.M. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/28054>>, p. 309, accessed: 03.01.2013.

¹⁷ Guardini writes: "Aus alledem entsteht das seltsame Halb-Verhältnis: an Gott zu glauben, aber 'seine Schöpfung nicht anzunehmen,' das heißt die Empörung (...). So offenbaren sich in dieser Gestalt Krisen des religiösen Empfindens und Denkens, die durch die durch das ganze neunzehnte Jahrhundert hindurchgehend, und aus denen erst die Gegenwart die letzten Konsequenzen zu ziehen scheint. Dazu wäre manches zu sagen. So über die Beziehung der Iwan-Gestalt zum romantischen Denken und Empfinden; zum Immoralismus und Ästhetizismus des fin de siècle; zur Affekt- und Gedankenwelt des frühen Kierkegaard und besonders Nietzsche." R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 179.

¹⁸ In Guardini's opinion: "In diesem Manne weint das Kind nach der Mutter. (...) Dieses innere Bohren nun, das sich bei einem Ivan im Titanismus seines Inquisitorentums auswirkt, wird bei Kirilloff zum Verbot, Gott gegenüber Kind zu sein. Es legt ihm den Zwang auf, erwachsen sein, Haltung wahren zu müssen." R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 190.

¹⁹ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Possessed*, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/8117/8117-h/8117-h.htm>>, accessed: 10.01.2013.

works that Guardini most often enters into a philosophical dialogue, but at the same time he finds Kirillov intriguing. In Guardini's opinion the similarity between Kirillov and Zarathustra is so profound and complete that Kirillov can be read as a formal commentary, an interpretation, and a fine-tuning of the philosophy or the address of salvation delivered by Zarathustra. The underlying idea of this address is not the proposition that God does not exist, but that one should make Him disappear so that man can live properly. It is about man delivering himself from fear and memories by directing his will towards that which is finite and accidental.²⁰

Nikolai Vsyevolodovitch Stavrogin is an elegant, taciturn, slightly smiling man. Though his face at times resembles a mask, it also radiates unquestionable beauty. He is surrounded with women who are in love with him: Darya Pavlovna Shatov, Lizaveta Tushin, Marya Shatov, Marya Lebyadkin. Guardini deems Stavrogin to be the most dreadful and miserable figure created by Dostoyevsky.²¹ In his conduct one can feel poignant coldness towards everybody he meets. Stavrogin does not care for the evil he has done. This figure – besides the peculiar beauty and strength – is marked by cold disinterestedness. Dostoyevsky writes: "I must remind the reader again that Nikolay Vsyevolodovitch's was one of those natures that know nothing of fear. At a duel he could face the pistol of his opponent with indifference, and could take aim and kill with brutal coolness. If anyone had slapped him in the face, I should have expected him not to challenge his assailant to a duel, but to murder him on the spot. He was just one of those characters, and would have killed the man, knowing very well what he was doing, and without losing his self-control."²²

The heartless Stavrogin cannot come close to any man, nor can any man come close to him. This is because it is the heart that generates closeness. It is in the heart that I am in another person, and s/he is in me. It is only the heart that can create home, or a mother country. Intimacy is a heart matter. Stavrogin is someone strange, characterized by insurmountable distance. Everyone hovers around him, suspecting that he is keeping something secret. Stavrogin is poor and ice-cold.²³ But the very same Stavrogin determines to make a confession to monk Tichon.

²⁰ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 210.

²¹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 183.

²² F. Dostoyevsky, *The Possessed*, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/8117/8117-h/8117-h.htm>>, accessed: 18.12.2012.

²³ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 236 ff.

“‘Enough’! interrupted Stavrogin. ‘Do you know, I love you very much.’ ‘And I you’ replied Tichon, half aloud. Stavrogin was silent, and suddenly fell into a deep reverie again.”²⁴ Stavrogin’s conversation is, as it were, a double test: Tichon is trying to ascertain the authenticity of the motives that Stavrogin employs to explain his decision to make a public confession, and Stavrogin analyses Tichon’s competence as a confessor. In Stavrogin’s opinion, Tichon should prove that he has the power of absolving in that he can discern the truth behind the untruths framed by Stavrogin. Tichon is not convinced of Stavrogin’s contrition; he regards Stavrogin’s confession as proud.

Whereas in the figures of Ivan and Kirillov Guardini sees a state of religiousness peculiar to the end of the modern times, Stavrogin is for him a herald of a new era. The protagonist of *The Possessed* displays traits of postmodern religiousness, in which not only is the need for God not felt, but He Himself is seen as the most improbable and strange hypothesis. When Kirillov says that he is forever being plagued by God, Stavrogin does not recognize that as a problem, but as one of many other ideas used to gain control over others. Nowadays we are experiencing the same confusion; there is no certainty of our fate. Everything keeps hanging up in the air, and everything can be continually argued, which is the conclusion Stavrogin makes at one point.

Guardini is of the opinion that relativism and nihilism pose a challenge to the Christian faith. Can a man living in the times of postmodernism be a conscious Christian? The question is all the more valid if we notice that Guardini discerned its relevance as early as in the 1920s. In his opinion, Dostoyevsky himself did not notice the problem. He did not seem to notice the emerging contemporary difficulties concerned with being a believer without the support of the Christian tradition, in the society where all the norms and values dissipate. It is in this sense that – as I mentioned before – Dostoyevsky remains a “romantic.”²⁵

2.3 Symbol of Christ

The book about the figures in Dostoyevsky’s novels ends with a chapter on Prince Lef Myshkin, whom Guardini interprets as a “symbol of Christ.”²⁶

²⁴ F. Dostoyevsky, *Stavrogin’s Confession*, <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LivingAge-1922jun10-00627>>, p. 632, accessed: 17.01.2013.

²⁵ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 183.

²⁶ “Guardini has produced one of the most positive interpretations of the prince, com-

Guardini often refers to the first part of the novel *The Idiot*, in which Myshkin appears as someone glowing with beauty. Against the strangeness of Petersburg's social circles, Myshkin comes across as someone coming over from another paradisaical world. People completely fail to understand him, which allows one to discern the flashes of similarity between him and the figure of Christ in the Gospel of John. Guardini writes: "For a long time the Gospel of John remained inaccessible to me, for I could not understand its line of reasoning. I would read the passages in which Christ was asked some question, and I could not grasp to what degree his answer was relevant to the question. There was the 'because,' but I could not see if that was really the justification. Then I laid my hands on a copy of *The Idiot*, and on the figure of Myshkin. I came to see that his attitude somehow resembled Christ's from the Gospel of John."²⁷

Thanks to his reading of *The Idiot* Guardini came closer to understanding the Gospel of John. The Jews could not comprehend Christ because of the divergent planes of conversation between Him and His dialogue interlocutors. Christ is beyond comprehension, for he comes from a different reality dimension. That is why the Master of Nazareth speaks about realities which are non-human, and his replies cannot be understood by the Jews. Guardini notices a similar state of affairs in the novel about Prince Myshkin. One scene in *The Idiot* drew his attention especially. Gania and her sister are quarrelling, and Prince Myshkin gets in between them.²⁸

"Gania lost his head. Forgetful of everything he aimed a blow at Varia, which would inevitably have laid her low, but suddenly another hand caught his. Between him and Varia stood the prince.

'Enough – enough!' said the latter, with insistence, but all of a tremble with excitement.

'Are you going to cross my path for ever, damn you!' cried Gania; and, loosening his hold on Varia, he slapped the prince's face with all his force.

Exclamations of horror arose on all sides. The prince grew pale as death; he gazed into Gania's eyes with a strange, wild, reproachful look;

paring him to the Redeemer, with Anastassya Filippovna as a Mary Magdalene figure." S. Young, *Dostoyevsky's The Idiot as the Ethical Foundations of Narrative*, London 2004, p. 2. An interpretation of Myshkin as Don Quixote (including a reference to Guardini's interpretation) is furnished by E.J. Ziolkowski, *The Sanctification of Don Quixote: from Hidalgo to Priest*, University Park 1991, pp. 140, 146.

²⁷ R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 287.

²⁸ Cf. K. Mejrup, *Dostoyevsky's New Testament. The Significance of Random Reading*, "The Bible and Critical Theory," vol. 8, 1 (2012), p. 62.

his lips trembled and vainly endeavoured to form some words; then his mouth twisted into an incongruous smile.”²⁹

Guardini deems Myshkin’s incongruous and mysterious smile to be an experience of disproportionality, an incomparability between an eternal and local situation, an experience of disproportion between what God wants and what is accidental; between what is rational and what is stupid. One might of course elaborate on the problem of human existence, relying on the question of what that incongruous smile might mean. In that smile Guardini sees the otherness experience of the man who, reaching out from some eternal place, has an effect on that little “here” of the room in which the above-mentioned quarrel takes place; the man who – from the height of God’s will – refers to the randomness and confusion of the accidental circle of people; the man who – from his position of pure sense – is looking down on those small people unwisely taking each other seriously. At the same time this man cannot comprehend himself, yet the only thing he knows is that it is the way he needs to act.³⁰ Guardini considers that Dostoyevsky created Myshkin as an idiot to highlight the scandalous character of incarnation, absurdity and grotesqueness of the action of God who becomes human.³¹

Guardini reads the story of Prince Myshkin as the story of the sublime figure of Christ, and treats the novel *The Idiot* as the most profound religious work of Dostoyevsky. In it one can follow the all-pervasive presence of God, despite the fact that so little is said about Him in this work. He is there. It is clear that it is Him who rules. It is also clear that God’s presence becomes apparent in the figure of Prince Myshkin.³²

Still, Guardini also allows for another possible scenario, namely the one in which Myshkin’s epilepsy is an attempted escape from the mature existence of growth, an attempted escape from historical responsibility, a way back to something pre-personal. Guardini also sees Myshkin as somebody giving in to temptation, as the one “falling” into abyss because of his attractiveness. It is evidenced by the scene in which Myshkin is looking for Rogojin’s knife, when he is coming back to Anastassya Filippovna, though he had promised he would not to.³³

²⁹ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*, <<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/d/dostoyevsky/d72i/complete.html>>, accessed: 20.01.2013.

³⁰ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 264.

³¹ Cf. Ch. Biber Lake, *The Incarnational Art of Flannery O’Connor*, Macon 2005, pp. 167-168.

³² Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, pp. 299-300.

³³ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 297. Cf. F. Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*, <<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/d/dostoyevsky/d72i/complete.html>>, accessed: 02.02.2013.

Yet, Guardini insists on seeing Myshkin as a child of heaven, a child that the world cannot understand. Like Christ, Myshkin attracts people, but they become scandalized by him and hate his innocence, which seems to pass judgment on them. Such an internal struggle is particularly noticeable in Rogojin, in his love and hatred for Myshkin. According to Guardini, it was Dostoyevsky's religiousness that stopped him from creating a character who would too closely resemble Christ, the only sinless human. In the end Guardini lets Myshkin allow for a discouraging diversity of meanings, and does not afford the confused reader any certitude, but only something along the lines of the Kierkegaardian demands made on the religious existence. Guardini implies that we would have the very same difficulties understanding Jesus, grasping this figure and his teachings, in the days leading up to His elevation on the Cross and His resurrection.³⁴

3. Philosophy of polar opposition

Guardini contained the basic outline of the philosophy of polar opposition in the above-mentioned work *Der Gegensatz*. The methodological starting point in Guardini's philosophy of polar opposition is a living and concretely living human, and polarising opposites. Someone concretely living shows the truth of being in his unity of opposites. "This special kind of relation, in which two moments are each time mutually exclusive, and yet are still connected, and what's more (...) they overlap, it is this relation that appears in every quantitative, qualitative and formal definiteness that I term an opposition."³⁵

In his first remark on *Der Gegensatz* Guardini notes that as early as 1905, along with his friend K. Neundörfer, he began thinking of opposites as the basic structure of his philosophical thinking. Opposites become the essence of his philosophical methodology, and so we encounter them in all of his works. Guardini writes: "My efforts at the philosophy and theology of St Bonaventure (...), the works *The Spirit of Liturgy*, *On the Meaning of the Church*, *Liturgical Education*, as well as a number of lesser writings, some of which are included in *On the Path. Attempts*, all address the concept of opposition as the direction and measure."³⁶

³⁴ Cf. R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 309.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 29.

³⁶ R. Guardini, *Der Gegensatz*, p. 11, cf. J. Cardinal Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance*, transl. by H. Taylor, San Francisco 2004, p. 48.

Everything apart from man, as the right concrete, is only analogously living and concrete. The fundamental feature of the living concrete is polarity.³⁷ That is, each phenomenon in a living concrete is linked with another opposing phenomenon. Life brings opposites, which come true in life. Life itself is lived (experienced) as something stable, but at the same time something changeable. It is only such a combination of opposites that enables life, which is a unity composed of opposites. On the grounds of opposites, life is revived, and the concrete and living man has a structure of opposites.

Guardini points out that life is thereby neither a synthesis of opposites nor a confusion of these, nor an identity of these. Life is a peculiar unity, which connects a duality of elements. Two opposites are a unity (a peculiar connection). They are not, however, a mechanical unity, but a living structure. That which is living contains both external and internal processes, which constitute one unity. Such an emergent, holistic connection does not feature in a technical device, where all the elements are spatially next to each other. Opposition is something most fundamental, where one pole by necessity involves another one, and without the other one, it can neither exist nor even be contemplated. However, opposites are not contradictions.³⁸ Contradictions are sheer exclusions; opposites can lead to synthesis, where the one cannot be translated into the other. Contradictions are: fullness and emptiness, good and evil, light and darkness. The synthesis (combination) of contradictions, which is postulated in monism, would make it impossible to think of any concept completely, or discern any essence of anything. Even though opposites exclude each other as well, they affect each other, and the one cannot exist without the other. Opposites cannot be derived from each another, nor can they be reduced to each other.

³⁷ Cf. R.A. Krieg, *North American Catholics' Reception of Romano Guardini's Writings*, in R.A. Krieg (ed), *Romano Guardini. Proclaiming the Sacred in a Modern World*, Chicago 1995, pp. 50-51.

³⁸ Cf. W. Dettloff, *Romano Guardini (1885–1968)*, in H. Fries, G. Kretschmar (eds), *Klassiker der Theologie*, vol. 2, München 1983, p. 325. The impact of Anselm of Canterbury on Guardini's philosophy of opposition is analyzed by E. de Gaal. Cf. E. de Gaal, *St. Anselm of Canterbury and Romano Guardini*, "The Saint Anselm Journal," vol. 2, 1 (2004), pp. 39-41.

4. Religious figures in Dostoyevsky's novels and Guardini's philosophy of opposition

Bearing in mind Guardini's theory of opposition, one can understand where his interest in Dostoyevsky's figures comes from. The premise outlined in the philosophy of opposition was not only theoretical, but also practical, and – one might even say – geographical-political. Guardini writes: “If one Europe were to be created, then it cannot only be along the north-south axis, but also along the west-east one; ultimately that would not only mean the elimination of the tension between France and Germany, but also between Russia and ‘the West.’”³⁹

He makes an even more explicit statement in the closing lines of the book *Religious Figures*, saying that his aim was “to present what comes to the surface in a meeting like that, in this kind of conversations about things that we all care about; to contribute to the creation of the human and spiritual Europe, thereby generally contributing to the cognition of human spirit and heart.”⁴⁰ It must be pointed out that when the book *Religious Figures* came out, the philosophy of opposition had already been framed. Nevertheless, Dostoyevsky's novels afforded Guardini another opportunity to fathom and better present his philosophical methodology. In *Religious Figures* the philosophy of opposition has its distinctive and concrete application, even though its fundamental premise was formulated as early as 1914.⁴¹ This premise comes to be expressed in the title of the afore-mentioned work *System of Typology*.

“Typology” and a theory of character are the prime source from which Guardini developed his method. He writes: “The typology of occurrences taking place in the soul was the real starting point for my consideration of the theory of opposition.”⁴² In typology we are not so much interested in psychology as in the hermeneutic fruitfulness of the method itself, where each opposition corresponds to some fundamental character type.

Dostoyevsky's novels furnish Guardini with a vast array of human types, and the realism of these novels makes it possible for them to be the

³⁹ R. Guardini, *Untergehende christliche Werte. Zu der Aufsatzreihe über religiöse Gestalten in den Werken Dostojewskijs*, “Die Schildgenossen,” vol. 2, 11 (1931), p. 98.

⁴⁰ R. Guardini, *Religiöse Gestalten*, p. 316.

⁴¹ Cf. R. Guardini, *Gegensatz und Gegensätze. Entwurf eines Systems der Typenlehre*, Freiburg in Breisgau 1914 (expansion thereof: *Der Gegensatz. Versuche zu einer Philosophie des Lebendig-Konkreten*, 1925).

⁴² R. Guardini, *Gegensatz und Gegensätze. Entwurf eines Systems der Typenlehre*, p. 19.

testing ground for the opposition theory. Three aspects come to the fore while applying the opposition theory in the analysis of the figures in Dostoyevsky's novels: a) comprehensive psychology of the figures, b) dialogues and the actions in the novels.

a) The figures portrayed by Dostoyevsky display numerous oppositions which can be preserved, and which constitute a unity in the person of a given figure. In *The Karamazov Brothers* Dostoyevsky describes Ivan's state of the soul: "Nothing was clear in Ivan's soul, but he looked eagerly around him at the fields, at the hills, at the trees, at a flock of geese flying high overhead in the bright sky."⁴³ The oppositions present in the human soul constitute a fundamental aspect in Dostoyevsky's descriptions. The figures in his great novels are often internally split. On the one hand they express some state of affairs in words; on the other hand an opposite of what they really wish is formed. Something like that happens in Ivan's and Katerina Ivanovna's souls; she loves him, but at the same time, she does everything she can to marry Dmitri.

The opposition theory, as I mentioned before, works on the assumption of a radical difference between opposition and contradiction. Pairs of opposites have no negative elements that would disagree with positive ones. Both elements have their own positive values. In contrast, a contradiction presents a value and its antithesis (good and evil, love and hate, etc.). This distinction serves to justify the moral tension in many a figure in Dostoyevsky's novels. For instance, pilgrim Makar, the Elder Zosima, the young Alexei Karamazov. The enumerated figures frequently live among this kind of contradictions.

b) The second part of *The Idiot* features an ambiguous dialogue between Prince Myshkin and Parfen Rogojin. Both the interlocutors manifest turning to each other, which immediately becomes, as it were, called off.

"'Stay a little,' said Parfen, not leaving his chair and resting his head on his right hand. 'I haven't seen you for a long time.' The prince sat down again. Both were silent for a few moments.

'When you are not with me I hate you, Lef Nicolaievitch. I have loathed you every day of these three months since I last saw you. By heaven I have!' said Rogojin. 'I could have poisoned you at any minute. Now, you have been with me but a quarter of an hour, and all my malice seems to have melted away, and you are as dear to me as ever. Stay here a little longer.'

⁴³ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/28054>>, p. 308, accessed: 03.02.2013.

‘When I am with you trust me; but as soon as my back is turned you suspect me,’ said the prince, smiling, and trying to hide his emotion.

‘I trust your voice, when I hear you speak. I quite understand that you and I cannot be put on a level, of course.’

‘Why did you add that? – There! Now you are cross again,’ said the prince, wondering.’⁴⁴

The two above-outlined aspects a) and b) constitute the framework of Dostoyevsky’s literary works. A person’s complex psychology show its opposites in dialogues and activities. The dialogues and descriptions of activities show a given figure in its entirety.

5. Conclusion

One of the features of Dostoyevsky’s writing genius consists in putting forward problems which, as Guardini would express it, can come to the fore only in living figures and relations between them. The problems put forward by Dostoyevsky usually do not meet with unambiguous resolutions. Hence, no voice involved in the conversation is the winning one. The figures of Lef Myshkin and Parfen Rogojin are not just like that opposed to each other. If we look at these two figures from the perspective of the philosophy of opposition, then we will notice that they condition each other. Prince Myshkin and Rogojin, Stavrogin and monk Tichon eventually become four suffering human beings. They reach the simplest words and gestures. Parfen and Myshkin are already only humans; they are above love, hatred, despair, and even forgiveness. Somewhere beyond the words of the particular dialogues, an ultimate synthesis follows. There is no contradiction-like division: a murderer versus a saint, a good one versus an evil one, a monk versus a sinner. There is one idea of a concrete man and polarising opposites, and it is generally compatible with the Christian worldview. In this way Dostoyevsky shows the opposites of human nature, with its capacity for the most despicable deed as well as the purest forgiveness.

Guardini the philosopher largely gives up the theoretical description of opposition, and focuses on the existential situation of man. For him Dostoyevsky’s figures are a veritable mine of “experimental material,” which he uses to verify the philosophico-theoretical premises of his philosophy

⁴⁴ F. Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot* <<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/d/dostoyevsky/d72i/complete.html>>, accessed: 03.02.2013.

of opposition. Guardini analyses the figures in Dostoyevsky's novels on the grounds of the stand they take towards another man, as well as towards the Absolute. Guardini the theologian discerns the essence of the religious problem as defined by christology, hence his studies on Jesus Christ, whom he makes more familiar to the reader, analysing Dostoyevsky's figures. Considering Guardini's works from a metaperspective, we can notice that as he speaks about the oppositions, he also tries to carry out a synthesis of the theological and philosophical look at a specific man. For him the figures in Dostoyevsky's novels serve as models of such a synthesis.

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Andrzej Gielarowski

Jesuit University Ignatianum in Cracow (Cracow, Poland)

A lie as a way of having control over a human being. Tischner's interpretation of the character of Raskolnikov in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*

Introduction

Józef Tischner's philosophical thinking is inspired by many sources, among which works and writings by philosophers are obviously crucial. At the same time his thinking finds inspiration in literature, such as the Bible or other works of world literature, especially the European one. Works of Fyodor Dostoyevsky and his novels: *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov* belong to great European literary classics. Tischner restricts himself to these works of the Russian writer, while searching for inspiration for the analysis of some important topics of his "philosophy of drama." The attitude of a human being towards the truth and lie, as well as the constriction of the human being by evil are the issues considered by the philosopher while referring to the mentioned literary works. They are analysed in the third chapter of one of Tischner's main works: *Filozofia dramatu (The Philosophy of Drama)* – titled "Wandering around." It is an analysis of the factor which prevents us from good experience and – in consequence – does not allow us to meet another human being. In fact, it is an analysis of the negative aspect of the drama of human existence, and so an analysis of evil.¹

An encounter with another man is a crucial element of the drama of human existence in the world. Tischner emphasises this as he writes: "We are talking here about the experience of an encounter with another man, and we understand this experience as maturation to testimony: to experience

¹ See J. Tischner, *Filozofia dramatu [The Philosophy of Drama]*, Paris 1990, p. 91.

another means to give testimony about it. To give testimony about another it is necessary to become a participant in the drama. All drama is yet the drama of good and evil. Good does not appear in the human drama in any other way than through the testimony which he creates. A man needs a testimony of others to reach the maturity of the human being. Accepting testimony, man gives testimony at the same time. This exchange of testimonies is possible only if there is a reciprocal relation, and reciprocation must be one from the perspective of the good. A lack of reciprocation, and particularly a refusal of it, becomes fulfilled in the perspective of evil.”² The latter of the perspectives – the horizon of evil – is analysed by Tischner as a three-dimensional ground of wandering: wandering in the realm of beauty, wandering in the realm of truth, and wandering in the realm of good.³ The first allusions to Dostoyevsky appear in the chapter devoted to wandering in the realm of truth, and then in the paragraph devoted to the possibility of constriction of the human being by evil. In both cases the dominant perspective is the horizon of drama, as in the whole philosophical thinking of Tischner.

The drama lies in the fact that – recalling the main idea of this philosophy – a man, standing in front of good or evil, has to make a choice that leads to his undoing or salvation. A similar drama, according to Tischner, characterises the situation of the philosopher and his effort. This is philosophy from the inside of the human existence drama, which brings a risk taken by the philosopher thinking in that way. As the Cracow phenomenologist emphasises: “Pondering the human drama of undoing and salvation, philosophy stands in front of these two possibilities – it may lose itself or it may confirm itself.”⁴ In this way, we stand “at the antipodes” of rationalism, which found an extreme expression – even more than in Descartes’ works, in the all-embracing philosophical system of Spinoza, who recommended: *Non ridere, non lugere, neque detestari, sed intelligere*.⁵ The drama of the human being is present in Tischner’s method of cultivating philosophy, but not only in the topics taken up by him. Thinking in terms of drama justifies the references to Dostoyevsky’s novels, where the philosopher finds crucial figures of evil: Raskolnikov in *Crime and*

² Ibidem.

³ See ibidem.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 14.

⁵ Quoted by C. Wodzinski (idem, *Lew Szestow*, in L. Szestow, *Dostojewski i Nietzsche. Filozofia tragedii* [L. Shestov, *The Philosophy of Tragedy, Dostoevsky and Nietzsche*], transl. by C. Wodzinski, Warszawa 2000, p. 12).

Punishment and the great inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*. In my text I will restrict myself only to the first character: the character of Raskolnikov, who was ultimately treated by Tischner as a person who wants to have power over a man, using a lie.

Dialectics of a lie and truth

The issues of truth and lie are widely discussed by Tischner, who considers them in the chapter of the same title – “Wandering in the realm of truth.”⁶ Taking Socrates from Plato’s *The Apology* as an example on the one hand, and Raskolnikov from *Crime and Punishment* on the other, Tischner points to two possible attitudes of a man towards the truth. Before providing a philosophical analysis of the description of a man’s attitude towards the truth, which he finds in the works in question, he refers to a passage from Nietzsche’s text of *Beyond Good and Evil*. The Cracow philosopher emphasises that Nietzsche claims “that the false which serves life is more valuable than the truth which objects to life.”⁷ The question should be asked: what is life? According to Nietzsche, life is connected with a “will to power” (as interpreted by Tischner), which comes to be expressed in the necessity of or lust for power. “Lust for power – writes Tischner – emerges from the will to power, which is oriented towards three aspects: the aspect of self-control, the aspect of being in control of others, and the aspect of being in control of the world of nature. Thinking – free of the order to serve the truth – serves these three types of control.”⁸

In Tischner’s opinion, the way of thinking presented by Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, is included in the aspects listed above. The relation to ethics makes this way of thinking special, as the philosopher emphasises. As Tischner writes: “The condition for living in contemporary society is ethical life – ethics either excuses or refuses to excuse the human being’s existence. It is impossible to excuse a man by ethics. It is possible only to take care of the appearances of excuse and the appearances of ethical behavior. The creation of such appearances is a special role of lie and thinking in the realm of lie.”⁹ This was diagnosed on the basis of the literary figure of Raskolnikov in Dostoyevsky’s novel. We are, at the same time,

⁶ See J. Tischner, *Filozofia dramatu*, pp. 109-138.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 107.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 109-110.

in the centre of Tischner's philosophy of drama, which – as I mentioned previously – raises the issue of human existence within the horizon of good and evil. One question is crucial here: how can others be convinced of the legitimacy of thinking based on this particular paradigm: “thinking in the realm of lie?” It is not a matter of truth, but a matter of acceptance: “another should accept me, my promises and my language.”¹⁰

If a mystery of thinking is usually clarified – as thinking in the realm of truth – by referring to Socrates, a defender of truth, it is because we judge – in common with other people – that salvation comes through the truth. Searching for truth seems to be a natural attitude of a human being who desires salvation.¹¹ But Tischner refers to the figure of “thinking in the realm of lie,” to ask a question of Nietzsche: Does salvation of a human being not lie in falsehood? Isn't it like that – contrary to the popular opinion – that the way to show the power of truth and weakness of falsehood, lies in the analysis of the basic situation of man, which is living within the lie? Tischner writes: “Maybe the basic situation of a human being is the situation of Raskolnikov, who has to lie to save life? Maybe a proper ideal for the human being is a malicious demon which has to delude to have power and which has to have power to live? Does a man not need more mental effort to build a house of lie rather than a house of truth?”¹²

A lie consists in providing untruth instead of truth. Raskolnikov is a liar, because he knows the truth of the facts which he hides carefully: he murdered the moneylender and her sister. As he is asked about it, he hides the facts, and all his further statements are related to falsehood.¹³ “Telling untruth as truth – Tischner writes – a liar aims at strengthening the untruth, a system of illusions thus created. It is not an illusion that stands at the source of the untruth of language, but the untruth of language, a lie, that stands at the source of illusion.”¹⁴ A lie is not the same as an illusion or a mistake. A lie is possible only there where the truth is well-known, where there is no illusion in relation with the truth. As the philosopher emphasises, “in the case of illusion, the situation is different – the speaker does not know what the truth is; it seems to him that the reality is as he sees or hears; so he is convinced that he is telling the truth.”¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 110.

¹¹ See ibidem.

¹² Ibidem, p. 111.

¹³ See ibidem.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

A liar has a special relation with the speaker. Tischner is convinced that this is a dialogical relation between “I” and “Thou”. This relation consists in giving truth as untruth in the situation where the liar knows the truth, but the cheated person does not have any knowledge about it or at least does not have certain knowledge what the truth is. While lying, a man recognises the value of truth and truthfulness, so he knows that a lie means evil. But he is convinced that he must lie. This conviction is an axiological assumption, in which the truth as value is not totally rejected. “A liar – the Cracow philosopher emphasises – does not deny the fact that truth and truthfulness are positive values. A liar even confirms the right of this idea. What does he do? He gives untruth as truth so he feigns the truth. By feigned truth, a liar pays homage to the value which he departs from.”¹⁶ In every lie we can perceive homage paid to the value of truth. The “liar’s paradox” shows that the absolutisation of the lie is not possible if we recognise that untruth stands higher than truth; then we propagate new truth which becomes a basis of claim to extol the lie. In this way, the act of the lie is a recognition that another person expects truthfulness, so s/he expects the content given to be true. The author of a lie must, on his part, respect the rules of the coherent conception of truth, while building a system of apparent illusions.¹⁷

The truth is an inalienable horizon of dialogue determined by the community of languages of both the liar and the cheated person. The understanding of truth is common here, because the difference in expressing the truth would make it impossible to perceive a lie as a dialogical act.¹⁸ The dialogue is always, according to Tischner, connected with the responsibility deep-rooted in the experience of good. The philosopher writes: “Thanks to the question I know: another is present, asking is the master, I – who am answering – know what it means to be good here and now, in this world; the dialogical relationship is a relationship of responsibility.”¹⁹ Participation in a dialogue is also connected with the experience of reciprocation which causes: “that we are, how we are through each other. This ‘through’ means: we can blame ourselves or we can be grateful to ourselves.”²⁰ This moment of experience of the dialogue with another, which is reciprocation,

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 112.

¹⁷ See ibidem, pp. 112-113. Tribute to the truth has different aspects, which cannot be totally reduced.

¹⁸ See ibidem, p. 113.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 82.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 83.

seems to be crucial. Thanks to the reciprocation our relations between each other are participation in the good carried by others. On the other hand, the reciprocation (or its denial) enables the fact that a lie, which is a kind of evil, is also a dialogical sphere. The evil of lie firstly manifests itself as an introduction of “misunderstanding into understanding.”²¹

For Tischner the lie has two important aspects, which can be clearly seen behind the two “types” of reasons, related to two concepts of truth. The first one is a “common mind” directed at common truth, which is a harmony between reality and thought, and demands objectivity of that which exists. The second kind of mind is a “political mind,” which creates “political truth,” being the opposite of the “common truth.” While the “common mind” aims to discover what things exist and how they exist, the “political mind” has as its “subject of treatment” society, and its main purpose is to gain power. The ambiguity of usage of the two notions of the truth, common and political, is very clearly shown in the dialogue between Raskolnikov and Porfiry, an investigating officer, looking into the murder of the moneylender and her sister.

The first depiction shows the truth in the sense of the classical definition: as a harmony between cognition and reality to which it refers. Truthfulness is a harmony between words and the speaker’s inner belief. If the most important question of the dialogue sounds: who has killed?, then Raskolnikov, who claims: “I have not killed,” is a liar, because he knows that the reality/the truth is different. But there is another side of this dialogue, which Tischner pictures thus: “For Raskolnikov, killing the moneylender – a parasite in society – is not the same act as killing an innocent person. By killing the moneylender, Raskolnikov frees the society from an unbearable burden. Besides, he subscribes to the theory that outstanding individuals have a right to unusual acts, if these acts are blessings for future humanity. Therefore, there arises a question: what is the reality to which judgments of the mind should be applied? This reality does not exist. It is necessary to create it. Instead of claiming that the mind gets on well with reality through cognition, it should be said that cognition creates reality and through creating reality, it creates the truth.”²² The murder committed by Raskolnikov becomes something different from ordinary crime. It is – as Tischner remarks – “a necessary procedure of the artist preparing material for future construction.”²³ The purpose of this depiction of truth is power, and a place

²¹ Ibidem, p. 113.

²² Ibidem, pp. 113-114.

²³ Ibidem, p. 114.

where the power will be realised is society. That is why Tischner uses the term: political truth. Raskolnikov's drama becomes apparent here, as he faces both depictions of the truth. A lie appears at the level of a double game, which is run by the protagonist of *Crime and Punishment*. On the one hand, it is a game between Raskolnikov and other people. On the other hand, it is a dramatic inner game. The first one manifests itself at the level of the common truth (and the common lie), the second one manifests itself at the level of the political truth (and the political lie).

A common lie

According to the common mind Raskolnikov faces the necessity of hiding the facts about the crime committed by him. It is around this murder, which is very real for Raskolnikov, and even – as Tischner writes – “by its reality surpassing all other threads,”²⁴ Raskolnikov's whole life is organised. “The murder clearly divides – as the philosopher writes – the course of the killer's life into two parts: the part before the crime and the part after the crime. The killer's living space of is organised by the murder, like around an axle. The presence of murder is very strong, stronger than claps of thunder, noise of the city, roar of the biggest waterfalls... But this murder demands to be hidden. As it would never happen. The more visible it is, the more hidden it should be. The more carefully it is hidden, the more visibly it appears from under the curtains.”²⁵ It is no doubt that the lie always has an intentional layer, so it is always directed at something specific. The lie always touches that which Tischner calls a scene of man's drama. The scene – the philosopher emphasises – has a twofold meaning then: one for the liar and another one for people who are deceived. “For Raskolnikov it is – I have killed; for others it is something opposite – I have not killed.”²⁶

The liar's main purpose is to show the course of events in a way that hides the relation between the murder and its true perpetrator. Firstly, he has to perform inside work to create an alternative world, which will then be passed on to others. The philosopher writes: “Driving back the recurring memory of murder back into subconsciousness, the liar aims at stating around himself and then passing on a different world to others. Work on

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 115.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ Ibidem.

this world demands special effort. A liar has to recognise the circumstances as less or more crucial – those whose meaning may be changed, and those whose meaning may not be changed, and should be hidden. The change of the meanings cannot run in whichever direction, but it has to be in harmony with the rules of meaning coherence. Every denial of event must be something more than a mere denial of the fact – the best situation is when it is also a denial of conditions of its probability. It is not enough to claim: I have not killed. One should say: *I could not kill.*²⁷ The procedure of creation of the world for others may be successful only when the trace of crime has been covered. But these traces multiply unexpectedly as the effort to eliminate them increases.

The lie has both a distinct intentional character as it refers to something specific and a distinct dialogical character as it is always directed at somebody. It is necessary to ask the question that Tischner asks: “Who is this deceived someone?”²⁸ The philosopher writes: “First of all he is not an object without body and blood; to lie does not mean the same as to *objectify*. It does not mean to accept an equal ‘Thou’ in another person either. The equality cannot exist without reciprocation, and it is exactly the reciprocation that is broken in lie; while lying to a fellow man, I give him untruth as truth, demanding the truth in reply, not untruth. There is only one possibility: another means ‘He.’”²⁹ In the dialogue of lie there is a necessity of converting from the relation of reciprocation expressed by the couple of words: I-Thou into a relation I-He, in which the reference to the other is devoid of reciprocation. This is the consequence of feigned “truthfulness contained in lie.” The movement between these two grounds causes the change, and the result is Someone as an “addressee of the lie lasting in time, who depends on circumstances and sometimes becomes an equal Thou, at other times becomes unequal “He” (*mister*).”³⁰ The liar must move simultaneously on two stages: one for Thou and one for Him. This is the cause of the liar’s permanent concern, which has to be hidden as a “trace of a trace.” The anxiety appears on the basis of suspicion that the deceived person is observing the liar. Raskolnikov experiences anxiety while talking to Porfiry Petrovitch. “The deceived person – Tischner writes – is looking and listening. Who knows what he is thinking. He is observing me with attentive suspiciousness. Who am I to him? I am the same person

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 116.

²⁹ See ibidem.

³⁰ Ibidem.

to him, as he is to me, so I am ‘Thou’ and ‘not-Thou,’ I am ‘Him’ and ‘not-Him,’ I am the ‘One.’ The ‘One’ – who is in himself and in myself – is not a participant in the dialogue. He is not speaking. He is only looking and listening.”³¹

The “One” – existing beyond the talk and observing the liar with suspiciousness – should be annihilated or absorbed by “Thou” of the dialogue. The lie is a fight with the existence of The “One,” who threatens to discover the truth, which the liar wants to hide very carefully. The fear the truth might be discovered the reason for the duality which appears in the liar’s personality. As Tischner writes, it becomes “the split of the egotistical awareness into I-for-myself and I-for-others. The first one is a subject of the dialogue of truthfulness, the second one is a subject of the dialogue of lie.”³² The force which causes this painful division in the subject’s egotistical sphere is The “One,” so the investigating officer, who is observing, is suspicious and he may always become a prosecutor. We can read in *Filozofia dramatu (The Philosophy of Drama)*: “The ‘One’ is an investigating judge. Every lie has got its own investigating judge, who cuts – by his suspiciousness – the awareness of the liar into two separate parts.”³³ The lie is a skilful transformation from the one scene (the scene *for me*) into another (the scene *for others*), or from the relation I-Thou to the relation I-He, without a multiplication of crime traces. Only in this way is it possible to cover up that which is real: the committed crime.

How does crime exist? Is it the same existence as the existence of things or people? Does crime still exist now or does it belong to the past? Is it a subject of perception or perhaps a subject of recollection or imagination? “Saying that crime exists – Tischner emphasises – we point to a particular way of experiencing reality: the thing that exists has a *criminal sense*. The crime colours everything, even the world lying far from it. The power of its presence does not have equal one.”³⁴ Let us pose the question: what really exists in the case of crime? What kind of existence should be ascribed to crime? The Cracow philosopher, referring to the novels of Dostoyevsky, notes that “that which exists is neither perceived nor experienced, it is merely lived through. What is this thing that exists? It is criminal existence. Criminal existence is given to us to be “lived through.” This “living

³¹ Ibidem, p. 117.

³² Ibidem.

³³ Ibidem, p. 118.

³⁴ Ibidem.

through” means moving away from existence.”³⁵ Crime is not accessible in the intentional act, which allows us, to Tischner’s understanding, to refer to objects existing in the world. Crime is present in the depth of human awareness, where intention is born. It is neither clear nor distinct awareness in the sense of cognition akin to Descartes’ *cogito*. It is not a result of an existential judgment, which – according to Thomists – relates to real beings. “And – Tischner emphasises – the power of its presence surpasses all others. The awareness of crime goes deeper than the awareness of your own body, orders feelings and the mind, frightens the heart. Eventually, it makes an obedient servant of the one who wanted to be a ruler of man.”³⁶

The specificity of the mode of crime’s existence, as in the case of each evil, is the fact that it spreads wider and wider. The place where crime is born is the human heart, which starts acting with criminal hands. The crime exceeds the subject embracing a murder weapon (an axe) and then looks for a victim, without whom the crime would not exist. The traces of crime order us to think about its witnesses and the investigating officer who investigates the case. Eventually, the crime returns to the one who committed it. “After the crime has been committed – the Cracow philosopher writes – traces are left. And then the problem of witnesses appears. There is also the investigating officer. How to convince the investigator that I have not killed? It is necessary to build a double scene and to develop a double dialogue. Generally, it is necessary to play a double game. Somebody comes suddenly and says: *you are the murderer*. The circle of criminal existence closes. I am its axis.”³⁷ The climax of the experience, in which the criminal becomes acutely aware of who he is, occurs when he hears from the outside that he is the murderer. The illusions of his mind – in which what happened may not have happened in reality – are then dispelled. His world finally breaks up. “But what actually happened?” – Tischner asks. “Raskolnikov knows very well what he did. Does he think that a man becomes a murderer not when he kills but when others get to know about it? Or maybe – until now – he was only a killer? The difference is quite vital: Murder may be excused in some way, homicide – may not. Raskolnikov excuses his behaviour for himself, believing that providing himself with an excuse is the same as providing the whole world with one. Suddenly, it turns out that it is not like this.”³⁸

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 119.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 120.

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 121.

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 120.

Dostoyevsky, as Tischner points out, describes a state of criminal's spirit as breaking up. The philosopher writes: "Raskolnikov knows now who he is, but he does not know in what world he exists. Not knowing in what world he exists, Raskolnikov does not fully know who he is."³⁹ A reference to Hegel order to mention the subject of "mediated self-consciousness" seems to be obvious here. To be yourself, to gain self-consciousness, according to this conception, the acceptance is needed from the side of another consciousness. The classical pattern of acceptance is – as described by Hegel – the relationship between a lord and a slave. But can this conception be applied to murder? The crucial moment is while pleading guilty in front of yourself. Tischner writes: "No outside acceptance of self-awareness by self-awareness can form its root – if they are not perceived as justified by its own, inner authority. It is impossible to impose awareness of the murderer on anybody without their acceptance. And this acceptance is impossible without inner checking."⁴⁰ This checking manifests itself only while meeting the truth. The reason why Raskolnikov perceives himself as a murderer is not because somebody told it to him. The cause of this acceptance is the fact that he received the truth which was well-known to him. In this way the liar is defeated by the truth that is in himself. But somebody from outside had to say it. This only gave him a chance for its final acceptance.

To continue deliberations on the truth and lie in terms of the political mind, which refers to all that is outside, that is the objective world, Tischner says that the idea of the common world plays here a crucial role. For Raskolnikov, who knows about conditions for the possible authentication of a lie, the outside reality must be the area of common assertions related to outside facts and revealed as compelling.⁴¹ "This devotion of what is necessary to the deceived person – Tischner writes – is an effect of two assumptions: the assumption of the common world, wherein there is no need to lie, and the assumption of *reciprocation in lie*, that is the possibility of *replacing* the lying 'I' with 'Thou' asking about the truth."⁴² This kind of reciprocation, which we are talking about here, could be called 'exchanging,' and then it would match what Tischner accepted earlier as the reciprocation. Its characteristics are the fact that it does not manifest itself in evil as it does, among others, in lie. This 'exchanging' is possible solely on the

³⁹ Ibidem.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 121.

⁴¹ See ibidem.

⁴² Ibidem.

basis of common experience of outside facts which are beyond doubt. The common world consists of objectively existing things and events which are separated from their subjective perception.⁴³

This presupposes that two truthful subjects participate in a dialogue. This perspective changes fundamentally when the dialogue aims at “solidifying” the world of the reign of *demon of lie*. “The condition of reign – Tischner comments – is undoubtedly some ‘common world’ of the ruler and the lieges. The ruler has to give the illusion of truth to the lieges, must ‘accept outside and compelling facts’ and thus specify some borders of his lies. It has to be admitted that – even in this truth – in the common area of the one who lies and the one who is lied to, an initial shadow of the initial lie will appear. The truth which has to serve lie ‘carries’ the burden of this service. The ‘common world’ is not free from this burden.”⁴⁴ On the one hand, Raskolnikov cannot make himself free from his initial lie even while accepting the truth of some detailed facts, but on the other hand he cannot free himself fully from the horizon of truth. Lie is possible only when the truth precedes it, because it is a departure from truth. He who lies has to accept the truth, and this is exactly the cause of Raskolnikov’s pains. It also causes him to try (being afraid of the discovery of truth) swapping places with the deceived person. As Tischner writes, “the condition of lie is a replacement of places – substitution. I still ask the question: what would I do in your position and what would you do in mine? In this way, the lying ‘I’ still creates a truthful ‘I.’ The more the lying ‘I’ wants to cheat the truthful ‘I,’ the more the truthful ‘I’ must be accepted. But who is this truthful opponent? Is it not a truthful God who I am fighting with? Lying, I carry Him inside me as an inalienable idea.”⁴⁵

The common world of the deceived person and the liar is not a spatial world, in which material items are important, but rather a semantic layer which is a perspective “open through the ideal of absolute truthfulness, in which the absolute truth may become revealed – the one which may be seen only in God’s eyes.”⁴⁶ We can hopefully reach for this ideal when we are deceived, but each liar, too, has to refer to it in fear and despair, because he must assume it to lie. At the same time, the liar, as the one who fears

⁴³ See *ibidem*, pp. 121-122. It is possible to reach the common world, the world of unchanging essence, thanks to, among others, the method of change being a component of phenomenology of Husserl.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 122.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 123.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

the truth, feels humiliated by this fear. So he defends himself in a dialogue such as the dialogue with the investigating officer as his truthfulness is checked. In the axiological situation in which the liar is placed (humiliation because of fear of the truth) he cannot grant his opponent a higher position on the value axis around which the dialogue of examination is taking place. This axis is of crucial and *a priori* character for the examination, while the liar cannot accept his inferiority, because it would be the same as confessing to the lie.⁴⁷ “Liars – Tischner writes – demand respect from the deceived so obtrusively that the very fact is enough to arouse suspicion.”⁴⁸ The question around which the game is centred is not the question “who has killed?,” but rather “who respects whom more?”

In the examination situation we deal with a dialogue of suspiciousness. It is based on the assumption that Raskolnikov lies. This assumption cannot appear if the investigating officer must find the truth. But the fact of hidden suspicions withdraws the investigating officer from the situation of sincerity and that is why we can say that the reply to Raskolnikov’s lie is a lie too. Tischner writes: “A lie gives birth to a lie, suspiciousness gives birth to suspiciousness.”⁴⁹ In connection with this situation, the position of interlocutors on the axiological axis – organising the dialogue of interrogation – changes: “somebody who was down goes up and somebody who was up goes down. Things might come to such a point that the axis may be broken and then both will be situated down, not as equal criminals but as similar liars.”⁵⁰ Interrogation involves continuous movement up and down fragile, breakable and changeable axes. But this movement is not a sign of the lost interlocutors. It is rather a game which aims at drawing the liar into a trap: “Expressing respect or rejecting respect – writes Tischner – interlocutors change one scene for another one. Will they not slip while changing the scenes? Will either of them not slip and fall down the live axis?”⁵¹

The trap which the Cracow philosopher calls accidental consists in setting an obstacle. It is just an attempt at catching somebody telling a careless word or expression. “We assume – Tischner writes – that a lie of the liar is a way to achieve some lofty goal. A liar has a soul and his soul is full of fears and hopes. There is a fear of death in it. There is also hope of putting on airs. Both can serve as bait in the trap: confess and you will save

⁴⁷ See *ibidem*, p. 124.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

your life; tell the truth and you will achieve honour.”⁵² But there is a subtler kind of trap which consists in changing “somebody without a face” into a real man. “Somebody” is not a partner in the dialogue. A conversation with him, a man without a face, is not – as Tischner emphasises in relation to Raskolnikov’s attitude – a real talk. It is neither a lie. That is why Porfiry – the investigating officer – is aware of the fact that “until a liar discovers a human face in himself, he won’t be obliged to talk, much less tell the truth.”⁵³ Porfiry decides to change it and to introduce himself in concrete reality. Porfiry exposes himself, tells about his own life, only to make the dialogue with the liar (Raskolnikov) possible. The effect of this investigation is the change of the ground of the dialogue. “From behind the horizon, where somebody without a face emerged, appears somebody unhappy, worthy of consolation and a grain of sacrifice, which is a confession of the truth.”⁵⁴ Raskolnikov will not let himself be trapped like this. The cause of this is that he cannot find in himself sympathy “for somebody who creates the key for others to prison, the key made of his own pain.”⁵⁵ Raskolnikov feels only disgust. He averts his gaze and does not want to deal with Porfiry anymore. This is the main reason why the dialogue stops and there is no possibility of resuming it.⁵⁶ Eventually, Raskolnikov pleads guilty, but not in front of the judge or not even in front of the one who says to him: “You are the murderer.” He pleads guilty only to Sonya who has not prepared any trap for him.⁵⁷

A political lie

From the perspective of the common truth, a lie is feigned truth. That is why it was necessary to carry on a double dialogue: one dialogue outside and another one towards myself. “A lie of the common mind – Tischner writes – assumed truthfulness as its own condition of existence. The logic of lie limits the power of the common mind over the truth.”⁵⁸ The question asked by the Cracow phenomenologist, who analyses the phenomenon of

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 126.

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 127.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁶ See *ibidem*.

⁵⁷ See *ibidem*, p. 128.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

lie, is as follows: can we free ourselves from the conditions restricting our power over the truth? “No matter – Tischner writes – what Nietzsche wanted: he recognised that false judgments are necessary to live; can we not make one more move and accept that the judgments necessary to live are not at all false? Is it not possible to claim that that which has been the truth until today is a lie, and that which has been a lie is a truth?”⁵⁹ This is a problem of the analysis of the political mind, which may change the current criterion of truth into another one. The value of a particular thesis becomes this criterion. While using this kind of mind, the truth and the lie depend on social acceptance: “the thesis more valuable for a particular society is perceived as worth implementing, and so is true; the thesis less valuable or harmful becomes a wrong thesis.”⁶⁰

Raskolnikov has got a new chance, which lies in the fact that what was a lie for the common mind may be truthfulness in terms of the political mind. What was true for the common mind, may be recognised as a lie by the political mind. The preference of the political mind to the common mind is a basis here, and hence the preference of the political truth to the common truth.⁶¹ “Until now – the philosopher writes – the truth has had power over the process of thinking, but it did not make people happy. From now on the process of thinking will have absolute power over the truth.”⁶² Tischner calls this axiological radicalism, which is followed by two consequences. First of all, it throws new light on the problem of power which – from now onwards – will be strictly connected to axiology. The value of the truth is determined by the power of the human being, the power to change society, to build a better future. The truth is all that is successful for power, and the untruth is all that ends up with power failure. “Having proper power – Tischner sums up – which can manipulate the will of nations in a proper direction and bring down the barriers on the way, a man may feel like the master of truth and falsehood. Like God, or maybe like anti-God... But with all certainty, like Raskolnikov.”⁶³

The second effect of axiological radicalism, which the Cracow philosopher writes about, is making effort to convince other people – using proper motivation – to accept some values as worth implementing. “How – Tischner writes – can I convince another to realise the chosen value? Referring

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 129.

⁶¹ See *ibidem*.

⁶² Ibidem, pp. 129-130.

⁶³ Ibidem, p. 130.

to ‘objective reality’ would be at variance with axiological radicalism. That is why Nietzsche has to talk about an ‘act of seduction.’ To seduce means to give a promise, to enliven hope, to kindle a desire of promotion. The act of seduction does not exclude more negative behaviours such as threatening somebody, intimidating, terrorising, forcing to act by violence.”⁶⁴ There is nothing here that could break any human rights. Everything is material, also a man who has to become a creator of values. A man has to be formed by power so that he can participate in its acts in a rational and obedient way. The axiological radicalism is a result of the political mind’s activity and the concrete example is here – for Tischner – a character of Raskolnikov.⁶⁵

While the common mind wants to mirror the truth of reality; the political mind aims at transforming reality or even at creating it anew. The political mind cannot act only by itself. It needs other people who are involved in the project. Raskolnikov, as a reflection of the political mind, claims that the murder of the moneylender was not a murder, as it is possible only when a brotherly bond exists. The woman killed by Raskolnikov put herself in the position beyond the brotherly community by her mean behaviour. Therefore, we cannot speak here about murder, but only about the murder which – in the case of war – is something normal and excusable by absolute necessity. Destroying an obstacle, on the way to a better future of humankind, is not at all mean but it is necessity or even something more: a useful act. If indeed that is the case, Raskolnikov does not lie, but he tells the truth in a more serious, political sense. This way of thinking may be confirmed when we take into consideration that – during the investigative dialogue – the winner was Raskolnikov. Not because he did not let himself be trapped, but particularly because he could convince himself that he had not committed any crime, but contributed to progress of humankind in happiness. The way to this victory was the change of the term “truth.” “The truth is not a harmony between cognition and reality – Tischner writes – but the harmony between the reality created by man and the ideal project of its transformation.”⁶⁶

During the investigative dialogue Raskolnikov cannot reveal this transformation of understanding of the truth to the judge, because the judge is an element of the old world, not included in the project of the new world, and that is why it has to disappear altogether with the old world. The judge

⁶⁴ Ibidem.

⁶⁵ See *ibidem*, p. 131.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 134.

cannot comprehend a new sense of the truth. The stake of Raskolnikov's fight is not only saving life, but first of all litigation about power. "To be in power – Tischner emphasises – you have to present yourself as a fair person among unfair people. The victory consists in having self-justification. To justify yourself means to show that you are not a liar."⁶⁷ Raskolnikov does it, including the political mind in the discourse, and he proves that he did not murder the moneylender and her sister. So he is not a liar and his act of heroism authorises him to have power. This power – contrary to appearances – may be wielded only if the powerful man is aware of the meaning of the truth. The truth is one of the instruments of power, but used in accordance with a new need. The philosopher writes: "That which will be, which will be brought into existence, is subject to the truth of the political mind; here the precedence of axiology is in force: the more valuable the project of tomorrow, the more truthful it is. That which was already created is subject to assessment and description according in terms of the common truth."⁶⁸ The superiority of the political truth which does not exclude – if it is necessary – a reference to the common truth, cannot be brought into question. Ultimately, the foundation of Raskolnikov's power is the truth, not the common truth but the political truth. The victory of the protagonist of *Crime and Punishment* consists in it.

Decay of the realm of lie

The interpretation of Raskolnikov's character presented by Tischner does not completely follow Dostoyevsky's novel. Tischner characterises the dissonance with the narration of the novel as follows: "Raskolnikov won. From Dostoyevsky's s book we know that it happened differently (...). Dostoyevsky presents a character of loser. But we do not believe him, Raskolnikov won and he wields power. What will happen next? Is his fear stopped? Are his worries over?"⁶⁹ The philosopher's further analysis, whereby he mentions the character in *Crime and Punishment*, is a creation by the author of *The Philosophy of Drama*. Tischner's story is an interpretation in which Raskolnikov is the one who wants to have power over other people, using a lie and even power over the truth. The deep meaning of lie, which is formed as superior truth – called political truth by Tischner – is

⁶⁷ Ibidem.

⁶⁸ Ibidem, p. 135.

⁶⁹ Ibidem.

control over man, power over society as well as power over reality and over the truth of common sense.

To discover the effects of the behavior of the one who wants power over other people, while using a lie, we have to – once again – consider the course of investigation, which is a certain dialogue and exchange of opinions between Raskolnikov and Porfiry. This investigation is a dialogue – Tischner emphasises – which “started with defense and ended with having power over the truth and over man.”⁷⁰ This type of dialogue introduces a new kind of relationship between people – an opposition. “The investigator is an opponent of the person being investigated – writes the philosopher – and the person being investigated is an opponent of the investigator. Where there is investigation, there is also a dialectics of opposites.⁷¹ In the perspective of such confrontation, where the logic of opposites is dominant, there has to be – according to Hegel’s thesis – a positioning which establishes ones as rulers and others as slaves. In this dialogue, or rather in this dialectics, the stake is reign or slavery. Seen from this perspective, the change of the term of truth seems to be justified. The political truth sometimes refers to common truth if it helps to keep power.⁷²

But the power over others gained by Raskolnikov is not permanent and requires vigilance in the face of protest. “The investigative dialogue – Tischner writes – is not finished at the moment of gaining power, because power is always at risk. You cannot be sure of anything. Lieges should be investigated permanently. Raskolnikov is a perfect investigator, because he himself was investigated. But while investigating, he imposes on himself and the lieges the relation of opponents, which is followed by this dialogue. What does it mean to be an opponent? What shape does this abstraction have? To be against something means: ‘waiting to take revenge’. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. He who investigates is also investigated. He fights with the same truth which is used to fight against him.”⁷³ If he wants to keep power, Raskolnikov has to be subject to the logic of revenge, but at the same time he imposes this logic on all with whom he participates in the investivative dialogue. This dialogue is also present in the case of power which is absolute. But the main feature of this dialogue is specific reciprocation which causes that the investigation is interchangeable: at

⁷⁰ Ibidem.

⁷¹ Ibidem, p. 136.

⁷² See ibidem.

⁷³ Ibidem.

one time the ruler investigates the society, at another time the society investigates the ruler.⁷⁴

The game of investigation turns against the one who initiated it through crime. Raskolnikov, striving to hide the evil perpetrated, becomes a victim of his own plots. All the efforts he made to have power over others and over the truth, can be repeated by his lieges to overthrow his power. All traps set by him may also be – in retaliation for his behavior – set against him. The biggest change is the change of the term: truth which is followed by the change of nature of thinking.⁷⁵ “If all reality – writes Tischner – is only material used to make something sensible, Raskolnikov and his power are materials too. Can we change reality? It is worth trying, maybe destruction will take place. As the practice of authorities towards society is the final criterion of truth, so the criterion of truth is the practice of society against authorities.”⁷⁶ Putting the political truth on a pedestal, treating it as superior truth, Raskolnikov changes the hierarchy of values and at the same time puts political thinking over other ways of thinking. The essence of this thinking, on the part of society, is a question: “are authorities with me or against me?”⁷⁷

The answer, in terms of political truth, is simple and expresses itself in the same way of thinking as in the case of Raskolnikov – the ruler, on the part of society. “The one who investigates me – Tischner writes on behalf of the society – is always against me. So I cannot behave in any other way. If the authorities and their mind permanently suspect me of being a sham subject, I have a right to suspect the authorities of being sham as well. If the political mind threatens me, so I threaten the political mind too.”⁷⁸ Promises not fulfilled by the authorities, accusations and condemnation of the society all give the right to take revenge in the form of unfulfilled promises, accusations or condemnation directed at the authorities by society members. Contemplating revenge, which develops foresight, shrewdness, courage and caution, where joy of minor victories is dominant as well as division into: We and They – typical for axiology of the dialogue of investigation, can all bring satisfaction. Tischner writes: “We are still moving on the broken axiological axis, sometimes at a higher level, sometimes at a lower one, disdaining and being disdained. Between them and us there

⁷⁴ See *ibidem*.

⁷⁵ See *ibidem*, pp. 136-137.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 137.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.

is a whole system of traps – accidental traps or traps with various baits. Who will outsmart whom? Who will be caught red-handed?”⁷⁹ In these circumstances, a specific language appears – a “language of pressure” in which “promises are changed into accusations, encouragement is mixed with threats and exposures with delations.”⁸⁰ The language of this type expresses a structure of political thinking in which the crucial question is: Who is with me and who is against me? As its result “a subtle construction of lies – the lies caused by the will to take revenge – is growing.”⁸¹

“The Tower of Babel” raised here, has been made of lies in which only authorities believe, lies in which only lieges believe and the lies in which neither the first ones nor the second ones believe. The crucial question is if any true reality exists in this tangle of lies. Tischner emphasises that for this kind of thinking – “thinking in the realm of political truth” – only that which is its product really exists. “The ‘true’ reality is – the philosopher writes – a sphere of existence limited by awareness of crime. At the beginning there was some crime. Who committed this crime? When? We do not know; the investigation is still going on. We are still following the traces. We don’t even know exactly what this crime was like.”⁸² That which is unknown is more real than that which is well-known. Paradoxically, reality is that which is not subject to obviousness or clear knowledge. Moreover, this unknown crime which has to be “felt” in some way as the foundation of the world’s structure, has more power to act than the ideals of the political mind, requiring sacrifice. As Tischner writes, “the crucial achievement of the investigative dialogue is one: this dialogue reveals the ‘sphere of criminal existence,’ from which we cannot escape.”⁸³ There is nothing more real than this “sphere of criminal existence.”

In Józef Tischner’s opinion, summarising the paragraph “Wandering around in the realm of truth,” indestructibility of the reality of crime or criminal existence – as he writes – proves the necessity of destruction of the realm created by Raskolnikov – the ruler (as described by Tischner), the realm which would be ruled – according to the philosopher’s narration – by the main character of *Crime and Punishment*. In *The Philosophy of Drama* we read: “This is how Raskolnikov’s realm disappears by slow degradation. His political mind, while aiming at changing everything into material,

⁷⁹ Ibidem.

⁸⁰ Ibidem, pp. 137-138.

⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 138.

⁸² Ibidem.

⁸³ Ibidem.

suddenly faces the situation in which this ‘something’ of what ‘everything’ should be made is still only ‘nothing.’ But in this case he is also nothing with all his desire to become ‘somebody’ through having power over all.”⁸⁴ The defeat sustained while striving for power is not only a problem that afflicts Raskolnikov from the outside. It is also his private defeat whereby he is trying to be himself, to become “somebody” through the lie, which would make it possible to rule others. This control is not possible because the realm based on the lie falls into decline, not under truthful God’s influence, but under the influence of the “demon of lie,” which was evoked by the attempt at controlling people through the lie.⁸⁵

Conclusions

It seems that Raskolnikov’s defeat is a victory of the demon which is not a demon of lie, but rather a demon of power. In fact, a total lie – the reign of demon of absolute lie – is not possible. The conflict with the demon of power is more difficult, because it is related to our desire for a better world. Besides, the political dialogue is always connected with initial suspicion and its after-effects: accusations, delations, potential murder. All these have their origins in the language of pressure, which canvasses oscillating between threat and promise.⁸⁶ That is why the crucial issue is the question: to whom and to what shall we listen to? “Good and evil – as Tischner writes – signal their presence through voice. (...) Good cannot be seen, but can be heard. Similarly, evil cannot be seen, but can be heard. Good and evil often come to us through orders, in which the objective content is less important than their tone.”⁸⁷

In his philosophy of drama, Tischner begins his research into good and evil with the analysis of what is phenomenologically more fundamental, what is first as our experience, and likewise in the case of evil. But this research, which cannot be presented here, leads to the discovery of good. Also, the figure of liar embodied by the character of Raskolnikov in Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*, is analysed with a view to discovering if it is possible to rule a human being, employing evil in the form of a lie. “The final purpose of evil – Tischner writes – is to drive a man to such

⁸⁴ Ibidem.

⁸⁵ See ibidem.

⁸⁶ See ibidem, pp. 131-134.

⁸⁷ Ibidem, p. 250.

a condition that the words “he is bad” become true. He who is bad should be condemned. There is nothing that could justify his existence.”⁸⁸ If a lie is one of the forms of existential evil afflicting man, it is because good and evil, which are experienced in relationships between people, become our good and evil, the good which builds us, and the evil which destroys us.⁸⁹ One of the types of condemnation which leads to the perception of a man as bad is a political condemnation. “Absolute power – Tischner writes – accuses and condemns using the words ‘you are a rebel’ in which its justification is included. (...) Authorities, to control a man, have to use fear and ruse. The fear and the ruse become joined in one formula of accusation and condemnation: ‘you are a rebel.’”⁹⁰

Accepting this judgment, I should be in exile and I will still be the rebel. Political condemnation leads to a situation whereby my existence still lasts, but becomes the existence exiled, condemned, and it means that I condemn the existence by myself. “Being condemned condemns – writes Tischner – Condemning becomes condemned. This is the way how the closed circle of evil looms, and how the voice of the Eternal Heart does not reach it.”⁹¹ The “Eternal Heart” – God – is the one who can condemn, but only because of the demon’s will. As the Absolute of Truth, God never makes a mistake about his judgments. But my way does not have to be the way of condemnation, if only I can deny the accusation of the demon of power. “My denial runs: I am not. I am not a rebel, because I am obedient to somebody else and something else. This obedience is expressed by my faithfulness. I am faithful – this is the answer and salvation.”⁹² In order to dismiss the accusation, to deny it, I must open up to somebody to whom I will be faithful. It can be God, a fellowman or conscience. One way or another, “a wide field of ethics, law, morality, customs, religion”⁹³ stretches between the authorities and the lieges. It does not mean frolic, anarchy or terror of unbridled individuality, but at the same time it is the end of absolute power and the end of absolute obedience to power.⁹⁴

The field of faithfulness – opened in this way – is at the same time the opening for the possibility of salvation which is situated in opposition

⁸⁸ Ibidem, p. 251.

⁸⁹ See ibidem, pp. 251-252.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, pp. 253-254.

⁹¹ Ibidem, p. 256.

⁹² Ibidem, pp. 254-255.

⁹³ Ibidem, p. 255.

⁹⁴ Ibidem: “Power and subjection come to be dependent on the relationships between people.”

to condemnation. “A way of salvation – Tischner writes – is the way of permanently renewed faith in Good, which calls. This Good – being the embodiment of myself – is put to the test, thanks to my own choice. A human being is weak so each test ends with a bigger or smaller defeat. Even victories become defeats. After the defeat a new call is heard and – in that way – a new choice appears. Step by step, with ups and downs, faithfulness is born – the absolute faithfulness regardless of circumstances. Faithfulness opens a way to salvation.”⁹⁵ The life of the human being always proceeds between potential salvation and condemnation. The only chance of deliverance from evil is listening to Good (Truth), whose language has nothing in common with the accusatory language typical of the “demon of lie and power.”

Transl. by Ilona Szczepanik

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⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 256-257.

Svetlana Klimova, Irina Bardykova
Belgorod State University (Belgorod, Russia)

Modern Slavistics outside Russia in Quest of “the Real Dostoyevsky”¹

Contemporary slavistics does not merely study Russian literature; exposure to Russian literature shapes an image of Russia and ideas of Russian identity as well as represents the basic concepts and meanings of Russian culture. Reaction to modern western and American slavistics is important in the context of intercultural dialogue and communication among intellectuals from different countries. This article will examine some ideas of our foreign colleagues and in the process carry out a deconstruction of slavistics itself as a means of “appropriating” Russian culture separated from its roots by an alien mentality.

A common concern of all humanists is the loss of fundamental methodological principles, including those in the field of literary analysis. This was compensated for by the “attempt to overcome nationally-oriented isolation of humanities studies and what is essentially a post-Structuralist reorientation of ‘culture as text’ towards ‘culture as the process of translation and negotiations.’”² However, there is a division among western and Russian scholars into those who adhere to the requirement of having a solid methodological foundation³ and those who come out for “epistemo-

¹ This article was written as a part of item 1.5 of the Federal Targeted Program “Scientific and Scientific-Pedagogical Cadre in Innovation-Driven Russia” for 2009–2013, State Contract No. 14.A18.21.0268.

² Н. Поселянин, *Антропологический поворот в российских гуманитарных науках*, “НЛО” 113 (2012), pp. 27-28.

³ A. Marino, *Comparatisme et théorie de la littérature*, Paris 1989; А.А. Зализняк, *Речь на церемонии вручения премии им. А.И. Солженицына*, <<http://elementy.ru/lib/430463>>.

logical democracy”⁴ and insist on pluralism that allows of various ways of exploiting “alienations” of texts⁵.

No one objects to “meanings” in philology, which Sergey Averintsev, aptly called “the service of understanding,” and which helps to “perform one of the main human tasks, i.e. to understand another person (culture, epoch) without turning it either into a “quantifiable” thing or into a reflection of one’s own emotions.”⁶ Therefore, any methodology must outline a common space of meanings that arise, above all, from common lexical units or definitions. Today, it has turned out to be a daunting task. On the one hand, every humanities scholar, whether or not he is embedded in tradition, has to constantly recreate concepts, and to work with them as instruments. On the other hand, rigorous terminology is of little use in the sphere of humanities as it “enfeebles” meanings leading to a loss of “polysemy and play on meanings.”⁷ Jean-Francois Lyotard writes about it in *The Post-modern Condition* (1979). Russians inherently feel comfortable with such a multiplicity of meanings because Russian philosophical thought as the basis of humanitarian knowledge, is inherently non-classical, as reflected in its abiding dislike of systems, categories and rigorous definitions.⁸ However, Russians, perhaps more fanatically than other peoples, are prepared to uphold the mainstays of their world-view, “the key concepts” (A. Wierzbicka), key names, dates and events which like “a magic crystal” give an insight into Russian uniqueness and self-consciousness.

There is no doubt that traditional literary studies and philosophy are not objective and academic in the pure sense, but are part of a complicated mechanism of interaction of texts and practices. Slavic scholarship outside Russia is an important part of literary scholarship and is of course entitled to its own interpretation of iconic Russian names, texts, and concepts, but it is unlikely that anyone could afford to ignore the historical-cultural context in which they arose and exist and change without risking to distort the perception of national identity, certainly by the subjects of that identity.

⁴ Н. Поселянин, *Антропологический поворот в российских гуманитарных науках*, p. 36.

⁵ Ф. Лавока, *Компаративистика как герменевтика остранения*, “Реферативный журнал. Серия: Литературоведение” 4 (2012), p. 7.

⁶ С.С. Аверинцев, *Филология*, in *Большая советская энциклопедия*, ed. by М. Прохоров, vol. 27, <http://philologos.narod.ru/texts/aver_philol.htm>.

⁷ М.М. Бахтин, *Собрание сочинений в 7-ми томах*, vol. 5: *Работы 1940-х – 1960-х гг.*, Москва 1997, pp. 110, 79.

⁸ See А.Ф. Лосев, *Русская философия*, in А.И. Введенский, А.Ф. Лосев, Э.Л. Радлов, Г.Г. Шпет, *Очерки истории русской философии*, Свердловск 1991, pp. 67-95.

One thinks of Carlo Ginzburg, who in his brilliant book *The Cheese and the Worms: the Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller* (1976), using the approach of “micro-history,” demonstrated that humanities studies are not about texts as such, but about how these texts are used to construct and transform social meanings.

Traditionally, the examination of any work is connected with hermeneutics that is based on receptive aesthetics. This approach makes it possible to include former interpretations and perception in the context of a new reading/interpretation. At the same time receptive aesthetics also involves the reader as a fully-fledged participant in the hermeneutic discourse. West German receptive aesthetics in its time supplanted French Structuralism, and American Deconstructivism of the 1980s, put into question all the key concepts of text analysis: integrity, cohesion, presence, the word, centre, etc.; it totally eliminated ontology by making it redundant with respect to the text as a self-contained basis. It was the US humanists who gave a “vote of no confidence” to classical and non-classical 20th century theories.

In the late 1990s high-brow European (mainly French) theoretical models of discourse analysis were displaced by the American “practical criticism” theories. American Deconstructivists borrowed from the entire French doctrine only the method of textual analysis, casting aside philosophical problems (N. Ilyin). It was the “practical criticism” theories that were most readily assimilated in Europe and in modern Russia. Every reader started to arbitrarily apply to a literary work a cognitive network of subjective interpretation making classics the “heroes” of their own novels. **This also applied to their own studies. Interestingly, American studies generated a backlash, an attempt to protect European scholarship from depersonalized globalism and primitivism and to preserve the foundations of national literary traditions. Many modern humanities scholars were tacitly reverting to the methodology of formalism or early structuralism, the schools that embrace the concept of a separate, isolated, stable and self-contained text.** “The text was both the constant as well as the beginning and end of the study. The concept of the text was essentially a priori”⁹. On the other hand, for many it was important to preserve integrity in interpreting the interaction between the subject and object of cognition. Ludwig Wittgenstein described it as the principle of “door hinges:” “the questions that we raise and our doubts depend on the fact that some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were like hinges on which those turn. That is

⁹ Ю.М. Лотман, *Семьосфера*, Санкт-Петербург 2001, p. 72.

to say, it belongs to the logic of our scientific investigations that certain things are indeed not doubted. (...) If I want the door to turn, the hinges must stay put.”¹⁰ In spite of these efforts the tendency of American “practical criticism” or research primitivism has gained wide currency in modern research practices.

When it comes to literature and the process of literary studies in an “updated” mode, the legitimacy of any pluralistic approaches and principles of any “detached analysis” raise no objections. Many contemporary works deliberately provoke such an eclectic approach (as highlighted by the work of Victor Pelevin). Current discussions are based on the idea of *rhizome* and pluralism (democratism) of opinions and evaluations that seek to overcome the “dominant discourse” (Michel Foucault), granting this right to every “reader.”

Things are more complicated when it comes to similar attempts to interpret Russian literary classics of the stature of Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky and such broad ideas as that of “Russianness” or “identity.” Of course a genius is bound to provoke pluralism of assessments and interpretations. It is not by chance that the great Russian literature has generated its “twin,” the great literary criticism tradition that formed the basis for Russian philosophy. Paul Ricoeur noted that interpretation occurs wherever there is a complicated meaning that is discovered precisely through interpretation.¹¹ And yet, however independent we may be in this act, it is impossible, in the framework of institutionalised science, to ignore the humanitarian methodology, fully reject the communicative-semiotic approach or “the endeavor to establish a special epistemological status of humanities or the sciences of culture.”¹²

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, who – according to Nikolai Berdyaev – distilled all Russian philosophy, is still one of the most vivid symbols of “the image of Russia.” Slavic scholars in Europe and America have been writing about him for more than a century; there exists a distinct branch of “American Dostoyevsky studies.” The perception of his name therefore merits a differentiated approach that moves from initial stereotypes and myths about the writer as a “Christian philosopher, the preacher of suffering and the Russian soul” (1910s) to the image of Dostoyevsky as an eschatological prophet in

¹⁰ L. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, 341-343, transl. by D. Paul and G.E.M., <<http://evans-experientialism.freewebspace.com/wittgenstein03.htm>>.

¹¹ See P. Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, transl. by D. Ihde, Evanston 1974.

¹² Т.И. Касавин, *Текст. Дискурс. Контекст*, Москва 2008, p. 95.

the 1940s and 1960s and subsequent psychoanalytical, masochistic, exhibitionist and other reinterpretations in the era of post-modernism or “neo-modernism” in the 21st century. Many American Slavic scholars, identifying text and context, believe that Dostoyevsky unerringly predicted current events that determine the development of intellectual and social culture, including Russian culture, created on the basis of pluralism and equality of marginal figures of every stripe. Marginalisation of Russia has become one of the most common methods of its identification in Western and American Slavistics. Truly, “if there is no God, everything is allowed.”

There are interpretations of Dostoyevsky in terms of the problems of gender studies,¹³ the protection of the rights of minorities (Susanne Fusso) on homosexuality in *The Raw Youth*;¹⁴ Michael Katz on elements of “homosexuality” in *The Idiot* (an idea he expressed in an oral debate at the international conference “Leo Tolstoy and World Literature” at Yasnaya Polyana in 2010), feminism,¹⁵ psychoanalysis,¹⁶ the psychology of affects,¹⁷ etc.

If “any theory is born as an attempt to solve concrete culture-specific problems,”¹⁸ what agenda is Daniel Rancour-Laferriere pursuing when he claims that Russians are inherently... masochistic, narcissistic and paranoid, and Russians are not really a nation in the rigorous (sic!) ethnic sense of the world. He claims to have “cracked the mystery of the Russian soul,” and it consists in “moral masochism.” Oddly enough, the latest principles of analysis and license in the interpretation and understanding of Russia and the Russian character (as represented by Dostoyevsky’s work) often reek of the stereotype of the “Russian reservation” regurgitating the idea of continuous return to Russian myths, including conversations about the Russian identity. Russia has long changed, but the clichés have remained the same. Slavic scholars write about Dostoyevsky as if Russian identity

¹³ See R. Marsh, *Introduction. New perspectives on women and gender in Russian literature*, in R. Marsh (ed), *Gender and Russian Literature: New Perspectives*, Cambridge 1996, pp. 1-37.

¹⁴ See S. Fusso, *Discovering Sexuality in Dostoyevsky*, Evanston 2007.

¹⁵ See N.P. Straus, *Dostoyevsky and the Woman Question: Rereadings at the End of a Century*, New York 1994 (the Chinese edition 2003).

¹⁶ See D. Rancour-Laferriere (ed), *Russian Literature and Psychoanalysis*, Amsterdam 1989, pp. 41-100; J.L. Rice, *Who was Dostoyevsky: Essays new and reserved* (Berkeley Slavic Specialities, Oakland, California 2011).

¹⁷ A. Frank, *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader*, Durham – London 1995, pp. 251-263.

¹⁸ С. Ушаков, *Верните мяч в игру*, “НЛЮ” 113 (2012), p. 56.

were a universally understood and immutable idea, something that can be simply explained or narrated in unidimensional categories with reference to a classic writer of the stature of Dostoyevsky. Behind it, in our opinion, is a primitive reduction of a whole phenomenon or in-depth meanings of culture to a single mode, affect, poetic myth or *idee-fixé* of the scholar who identifies himself with the writer (becomes that writer), and the writer with the nation; “playing” with his texts to the best of his understanding. As the English Slavonic scholar Thomas, aptly noted, many works of western (and of course American – S.K., I.B.) writers reveal undisguised mythologisation of Russia which is in stark contradiction with reality. There is still a gaping gap of stereotypes and misunderstanding between the West and Russia. To them the Russian people (and Russia itself) are merely shadows of literary characters; western scholars perceive Russians merely as descendants of Gogol’s and Dostoyevsky’s characters.”¹⁹ One may explain such an analysis as the result of permanent psychoanalysis when “the text is the analyst” (and not the patient) while the philologist is the patient who tries to identify his own trauma in the context of the text. In that sense the transfer of course originates (...) from the philologist at the moment when he feels his impotence when confronted with the text, when analysis stalls... Be that as it may, invariably instead of treating the original text the philologist simply creates a different text (the text of his study) that ‘cures’ the original text only in the mythological sense. In reality the philologist hides his own psychological trauma in this secondary text.”²⁰

A study of the perception of Dostoyevsky’s work reveals that this perception depends on the interpretative preferences of the reader when certain layers of meaning are turned into absolutes: the method of doubles, moral/immoral problems, Christology or atheism, psychoanalysis or phenomenology. The choice of the “main” books of Dostoyevsky is also determined by subjective inclinations and research preferences. Humanities studies are gradually becoming the field of methodological case studies, including the work of writers of the magnitude of Dostoyevsky or “objects” of the magnitude of Russia.

Let us take a closer look at one instance of such scientific pluralism, the monograph called *Surprised by Shame* (published in Russian translation

¹⁹ Э. Томас, *Нерусские русские: Кавказ – Санкт-Петербург – Россия*, transl. by О. Овчаренко, in А.Ю. Большакова (ed), *Россия и Запад в начале нового тысячелетия*, Москва 2007, pp. 106-122.

²⁰ В.П. Руднев, *Прочь от реальности: Исследования по философии текста II*, Москва 2000, p. 264.

by Russian State Humanities University, Moscow, 2011), by Deborah Martinsen, an American Slavic scholar and president of the International Dostoyevsky Society.²¹ Perhaps it wouldn't merit so much attention if it did not deal with the Russian identity and reveal how “they” see “us.” The book evokes mixed feelings. It consists, as it were, of two opposing parts: the conceptual part that is highly tendentious and one-sided, and the analytical part that demonstrates the author's profound and original understanding of the texts, characters and images of heroes and the historical contexts seen from an unusual angle.

First of all, it has to be noted that the attempt to reveal the methodological foundation of the study is hampered by the lack of justification and priorities of research names and the chosen strategy. Deborah Martinsen identifies a circle of scholars (mainly American) in the fields of anthropology, psychoanalysis, sociology and affect theory. They are all mentioned in passing, usually without references, which is particularly true of Russian references notwithstanding the fact that the author refers to such humanities scholars as Vladimir Solovyov, Mikhail Bakhtin, Yuri Lotman, Boris Uspensky, Yuri Tynyanov, Valentina Vetlovskaya, and Ludmila Saraskina whose work has long been recognised as models in the world community. It is unlikely that an average post-graduate in Russia studying the theme of shame (which is central to the monograph) would have permitted himself to devote just ten lines of generalities to the author of *The Justification of the Good*. “Vladimir Solovyov who sees the positive functions of shame as protection of privacy and indication of moral awareness”²². It is impossible in this description to recognise the first Russian philosopher, the founder of ethics who has created a *system* of moral categories in which shame is but the first stage in the development of a person's moral consciousness (reflection). Martinsen's claim that modern American scholars describe in the psychological terms Solovyov's ideas characterised in ethical terms²³ requires at least a minimum of proof, for such a reduction has far-reaching consequences causing shifts in worldview and concept that should have been explained in the study. Against the background of endless terminological fiddling such as “voyeuristic instincts,” an “essay in exhibitionist lying,” etc., some of the author's syllogisms clearly err on the side of

²¹ D.A. Martinsen, *Surprised by shame: Dostoyevsky's liars and narrative exposure*, Columbus 2003 (the Russian edition: Д. Мартинсен, *Настигнутые стыдом*, transl. by Т. Бузина, Москва 2011).

²² *Ibidem*, p. xv.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

cheerful simplification: “For him [Solovyov] shame is an innate quality that differentiates humans from beasts. A sign of our ethical identity, shame manifests itself in conscience, which, in turn, leads to ethical action. As a writer, Dostoyevsky provokes readers’ shame, thereby piquing our consciences and moving us to act ethically, which, in turn, improves the world in which we live.”²⁴ The author omits an important nuance in Solovyov’s reflections on Dostoyevsky, namely, the effect that shame as the lowest feeling of “separation and connection” (Martinsen’s description of shame) of humans from beasts, is followed by *a feeling of pity* as a sense of connection/difference of oneself from the other person and *religious worship* as the connection/ difference from the supreme element, God. In the absence of a complete vision of the ethical problem (with shame as its lowest element) everything collapses: the ethics of Solovyov and Dostoyevsky, all talk about identity as the desire to embed us through Dostoyevsky into the Russian world of total “exhibitionist shame and lying.” If “all Russians are liars” (whether they are ashamed of it or not), as the scholar would have us believe, then clearly only a non-Russian scholar who is not an exhibitionist and not a liar can help overcome that ancient (though not Greek) paradox.

The scholar imputes some startling goals not only to Solovyov but to the hero of the study, Dostoyevsky, and that without referring to any serious methodological foundations or scientific premises. “Dostoyevsky surprises them [the readers] with shame, engages readers with paradox, and delights us with metaliterary play. (...) For shame makes us self-conscious of how we differ from others at the same time that it makes us feel our common post-lapsarian heritage. Dostoyevsky’s power as a writer, in part, from his playing on the boundary between self and other – the edge of shame’s paradox.”²⁵ We would permit ourselves another telltale quotation: “From his earliest to his most mature oeuvre Dostoyevsky provides countless case studies of shame – shame turned inward, as in the case of the underground man, or shame directed outward, as in the case of Peter Verkhovensky. He portrays the shame of poverty, of social class, of terminal illness, of deformity, of mediocrity; the shame of fallen women, superfluous men, political intrigues, liars, criminals, gamblers, eccentrics, and misfits; and the hidden shame of respectable people. (...) In short, Dostoyevsky documents shame’s part in the universal search for personal, social and metaphysical identity.”²⁶ One gets the impression that Dostoyevsky was writing his

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. xvi.

²⁶ Ibidem, pp. xv-xvi.

novels solely to ensure that Americans could get grants to study people *ad marginem*, while Russia allegedly is marginal from head to toe.

The monograph seeks to show a group of heroes who are liars, “who are at the centre of Dostoyevsky’s shame dynamics;”²⁷ the author’s overarching task is to reveal the national identity crisis that produces a special type of Dostoyevskian “shame-ridden” liars: Lebedev, Lebyadkin, Ivolgin and others, as well as real people. “The humiliated rage experienced by a wide range of Russians often turned inwards, as seen in the soaring suicide rate, but when it turned outward, as seen in political terrorism, it rocked the entire country.”²⁸ From our point of view suicides and terrorism do not attest to shame as the basic emotion *of a certain type of individual*, but of resentment, which was long ago brilliantly described by M. Sheller,²⁹ who examined the phenomenon of “ill-wishing,” also among the Russian intelligentsia. This complicated and dual state of the individual has vouchsafed a definition only in terms of psychological “shame-lying” reduction; most importantly, the resentimental type of individual is identified with the Russian type as such, just like the writer’s literary outcasts.

One further remark. All this ceases to look like innocuous studies if one remembers the persistent cliché of Dostoyevsky as the “spiritual guide” to Russia. “His work is seen as being little short of the quintessence of the main features of the Russian national character. Dostoyevsky was one of the first who, owing to his broad popularity and well-earned authority initiated a kind of dialogue between the Russian and American civilizations. This dialogue provided an artistic expression of the key parameters of the Russian idea and the American dream.”³⁰

As one of her key arguments Martinsen uses Dostoyevsky’s polemical remarks in *Diary of a Writer* dated 1873 called “Something about Lying.” These remarks provided a basis for the entire analysis of “liars,” shame, Russian exhibitionism and identity.

Let us briefly recap what Dostoyevsky wrote in that entry. Unlike Martinsen, we cannot afford to ignore the social connotations of the author who engaged in opinion journalism for very understandable ideological reasons. The target of his criticism was not the “lying Russia,” as Martinsen

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. xvi.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. xv.

²⁹ See M. Scheler, *Ressentiment*, transl. by L.A. Coser and W.W. Holdheim, Milwaukee, WI, 1994.

³⁰ Т.И. Морозова, *Достоевский и писатели Америки*, “Литературоведческий журнал” 16 (2002), p. 160.

assumes, and not all Russians are liars. In his frame of reference – and he was the founder and proponent of the “native soil” concept, only a certain “class of intellectual” Russians were liars. Dostoyevsky does attribute the penchant of the intelligentsia to lie to their being ashamed of themselves. From his point of view the shame is engendered by the entire two-hundred-year-old situation in which the Russian noble class emerged as narrow-minded, uneducated, as “ne’er-do-wells” in contrast to working people and the cultured western intellectual type. Those who are ashamed of their Russianness (“the face God gave to the Russian man”) are western-style “villains” who are ready to be anyone as long as they do not have to preserve and develop their own uniqueness or their own identity. What else could one expect from the “rootless Russian intelligentsia?” It is indeed an identity problem that goes back to the arguments that began in the late 18th century. There is nothing original about Dostoyevsky’s position on that issue (unlike in his novels). On the one hand, the ideology of the “native soil” divides Russia into “the soil, i.e. the people” and the “rootless intelligentsia” which is an omnibus term to refer to the many characters who are shame-ridden and shameless, cynical and reflective liars, referred to by Martinsen. Fyodor Karamazov is one of the many fathers of “Russia,” though along with the man-servant Kutuzov, the *starets* Zosima and St. Isaac Sirin.³¹ Therefore, we cannot agree with the American scholar’s central thesis that liars are emblems of the national identity crisis or with her claim that Dostoyevsky wavers in his choice between these two systems of values.³² His priorities are absolutely transparent and clearly expressed, even in the above mentioned note: in it Dostoyevsky “hints at the ability to learn to live with anything, but at the same time at the breadth of our Russian nature that makes even that which is boundless pale and faded. The two hundred years when there was not the slightest trace of independence of character and two hundred years of spitting into our Russian face have extended the Russian conscience to a boundless and fateful degree from which (...) what do you think one can expect?”³³

Thus, the wish to draw broad cultural parallels and make sweeping generalizations, the wish to shoehorn Dostoyevsky into the world cultural

³¹ See S. Klimova, *Conceptualizing Religious Discourse in The Work of Feodor Dostoyevskij*, “Studies in East European Thought,” vol. 59, 1-2 (2007), pp. 55-64.

³² See D.A. Martinsen. *Surprised by shame: Dostoyevsky’s liars and narrative exposure*, p. xvi.

³³ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Нечто о вранье*, in idem, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 30 т.*, Ленинград 1973–1990, vol. 21, pp. 117-125.

context often verges on methodological arbitrariness and undisguised eclectics, manipulation with names and quotations. We believe that case studies should fit specific ideas into some kind of research paradigm, a paradigm that is accepted by the community as such or is at least justified through the concept of rhizome and that takes into account the continuity and integration of the experiences of the object and subject of cognition. Otherwise, methodology becomes a set of “scientific protocols” in the spirit of Karl Popper, except that the procedure of falsification is not applied to them. Without being afraid to seem backward and lagging behind western (American) humanities studies, we would not like to see our country billed as “subaltern studies” in American scholarship.

Transl. by Yevgeny Filippov

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Irina Salmanova

Belgorod State Institute of Arts and Culture (Belgorod, Russia)

Leo Tolstoy's Integrity in Western Philologists' Perception¹

The theme of Tolstoy's heritage perception in the West-European and American studies on Russian philology is enormous. Tolstoy's life-and-work phenomenon becomes the focus of attention not only for the field specialists, but also for a broad Western humanities audience specialised in philosophy, theology, literature. We'll try to bring out a general qualitative shift in the foreign studies of Tolstoy studying at the turn of the 20th and 21st century.

Tolstoy's well-known "antinomian contradictions" became revealed in such a bright and fascinating manner in his late works, after his spiritual transformation, both at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. At present they are starting points in understanding the writer's oeuvre both in Russia and in the West. In the mid-20th century Isaiah Berlin made Tolstoy's duality a basis of an impressive metaphor: Tolstoy – the Fox, who knows the worth of details, who sees "the manifold objects and situations on earth in their full multiplicity; he grasped their individual essences, and what divided them from what they were not, with a clarity to which there is no parallel" and at the same time the Hedgehog, who longs for systematization, philosophical generalizations and believes in "the ideal of the seamless whole."²

In his time Tolstoy's public "challenges" against all the unjust, "an unfriendly" way of the Russian life (we mean his own painful way of looking

¹ This article was written as a part of item 1.5 of the Federal Targeted Program "Scientific and Scientific-Pedagogical Cadre in Innovation-Driven Russia" for 2009–2013, State Contract No. 14.A18.21.0268.

² I. Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy's View of History*, in idem, *Russian Thinkers*, London 1994, p. 463 (the Russian edition: И. Берлин, *Еж и Лисица: Об исторических взглядах Л.Н. Толстого*, Нью-Йорк 1970, p. 39).

for faith and God; his confirmed backsliding from the Russian Orthodox Church, uncompromisingly declared in his religious writings; his rejection of some literary works of his own; his “simplification” and propagation of his own theory; his direct addresses to K. Pobedonostsev and Russian tsars; his “walking around” and informal coming close to people and sympathising with them; at last his attempts to answer the most “painful” questions of that time) turned the writer into a person who broke the foundations of the Russian life and as a result divided the national consciousness into two. Some people (e.g. K. N. Leontiev) found Tolstoy a blasphemer, a heretic, “an old madman who keeps on affirming with impunity and without obstruction that there is no God, that each government is evil...”³ and prayed for his death, like John of Kronstadt: “Take him from the earth – this stinking corpse disgraced the whole earth with his pride. Amen” (a pray from John of Kronstadt’s private diary of 1908, written after Tolstoy’s 80th anniversary).⁴ Others considered Tolstoy a seer, a herald, almost a saint and yearned to get to Yasnaya Polyana as to Mecca. A kind of point in this opposition was put forward after the Holy Synod’s decision to excommunicate Tolstoy from the Church. As V. A. Ternavtsev testified, at one meeting of the Association of Religion and Philosophy declared: “The Church made an act of a great moral significance: a godly Russia was separated from a thinking Russia.”⁵ As a contemporary scholar L. Saraskina notes: “An enormous unbridgeable chasm between a religious, monastic Russia and a secular, academic, cultural Russia was fixed at last and declared as an accomplished fact.”⁶ The situation worsened by the fact that everything happened against the background of a total disappointment in the government and a pervasive atheism not only among lost nihilists, revolutionaries, but also among peasants ceasing to be Christians. The lack of the necessary tolerance for the opinions of people holding different opinions, a sharp, sometimes insulting tone of Russian intellectuals’ polemics did not lead

³ К.Н. Леонтьев, *Избранное* [K.N. Leontiev, *Selection*], Москва 1993, p. 282.

⁴ More on that: П. Басинский, *Горький* [P. Basinsky, *Gorky*], Москва 2005, p. 107; *Ответ о. Иоанна Кронштадтского на обращение гр. Л.Н. Толстого к духовенству* [Fr John of Kronstadt’s Response to Sir L.N. Tolstoy’s Address to the Clergy], in А.Н. Стрижев (ed), *Духовная трагедия Льва Толстого*, Москва 1995, p. 99.

⁵ *Записки религиозно-философских собраний в Санкт-Петербурге* [Notes of the Religious-philosophical Meetings in St Petersburg], Санкт-Петербург 1902, p. 83.

⁶ Л.И. Сараскина, *Неверие и недоверие как этапы духовного поиска русских писателей XIX века* [L.I. Saraskina, *Unbelief and distrust as stages of a spiritual search of the Russian writers of the 19th century*], in В.И. Толстой (ed), *Яснополянский сборник 2008: Статьи, материалы, публикации*, Тула 2008, p. 348.

to the search of a uniting consensus either. The West reacted to everything happening to and around Tolstoy in no less contrasting manner. By the time of his accusation, the Russian writer-rebel had both doters and followers as well as furious opponents abroad: the former considered him “a great miracle,” the latter – “a monster” from another world. Against this rapid, diverse background there appeared not only rumour and set myths about Tolstoy, but also research conceptions, as well as analysis schemes of his oeuvre. It is necessary to stress that still during his lifetime the European intellectual elite noticed his unusual artistic talent, his ability to write “over the barriers,” to destroy typical literary stereotypes. M. Arnold, a classic of English liberal humanism, a philosopher and a poet wrote in his essay *Count Leo Tolstoi* that the novel *Anna Karenina* was so uncommon for him that it seemed not “a piece of art” but “a piece of life.” “Life,” as a burden of Tolstoy’s oeuvre, formulated for the first time by M. Arnold, is conjugated by British writers and critics of different generations with constant astonishment.”⁷ But Tolstoy never became one of the Englishmen, though unlike the French literature of the 20th century, which declared the Russian genius a precursor of existentialism.

But in the culture of the 20th century the analytical model which disunites, “disjoins” Tolstoy into a genius artist and a weak thinker, a subtle dialectologist-psychologist and a straight-line moralist, etc. In his lifetime Tolstoy’s schematic approach could hardly be supported. First of all, we mean the article *Rumours of Tolstoy* by N. N. Strakhov, who insists on the necessity of penetrating into the integral nature of Tolstoy’s work consciousness: “it is necessary not to catch his obvious contradictions, but to study him in his activity on the whole.”⁸ Nevertheless, the tradition of contrasting Tolstoy to himself was also supported by Western literary scholars. Furthermore, both in the Soviet science and in the West, Tolstoy’s heritage was analysed in the context of a literary trend called critical realism. Everything that didn’t refer to this realism – first of all, Tolstoy’s religious views – was either kept back or considered unconvincing, too declarative. At the same time we would like to note that the Western reader first got

⁷ More on L.N. Tolstoy’s perception in England: Т.Н. Красавченко, *Траектория восприятия Л.Н. Толстого в Англии* [T.N. Krasavchenko, *The Path of L.N. Tolstoy’s Perception in England*], in В.И. Толстой (ed), *Лев Толстой и мировая литература: Материалы VII Международной научной конференции, проходившей в Ясной Поляне 10–15 августа 2010 г.*, Тула 2012, p. 298.

⁸ Н.Н. Страхов, *Толки о Л.Н. Толстом* [N.N. Strakhov, *Rumours of Tolstoy*], Тула 2002, p. 71.

acquainted with Tolstoy's works on religion and philosophy, and only later with his literary works.

At present, despite the fact that critical anatomisation still takes place, the approach to understanding Tolstoy has qualitatively changed. The thrust towards the integral perception and development of a new research approach was made by contemporary formalists who became absorbed in the poetics of Tolstoy's texts. A great contribution was made by B. M. Eikhenbaum, who used Tolstoy's diaries, letters, notebooks as the originals of not only fiction, but also of the writer's religious and philosophical quest. Bakhtin's writings led to a new reading of not only Dostoevsky, but also Tolstoy. The fundamental researches by E. N. Kupreyanova, L. D. Opuls-kaya, G. N. Galagan examined Tolstoy's heritage in the context of the West European philosophical thought, the world literary space. But in spite of all the great experience of studying the integrity of Tolstoy's oeuvre, the all-sided analysis of the interconnection and interdependence in the writer's life (biography) and works, both the categories – "life" and "works" – were inevitably separated in the process of analysis. And the main thing is that neither Russian nor foreign critics were free from ideological thoughts and estimate (the phenomenon of Tolstoyism). Meanwhile, Tolstoy himself noted pondering on the destination of critics in one of his *Notebooks*: "If we see estimate in the critics there will be nonsense, if we see feasible explanation there will be great significance."⁹

Nowadays, it has become clear that a religious thought or a literary idea taken from a single image of writer's life and works does not exhaust his religious essence; that "Tolstoyism" does not include the whole scale of Tolstoy's personality and genius. Meanwhile, "Tolstoyism" as writer's brainchild shows all his prophetic power and urgency. Giovanna Parravicini notes in the article *The Perception of Christian Tolstoy in Italy* that today Tolstoy "is taken as the greatest Christian writer, as the humanist who created a grandiose portrait of the Russian society and its world outlook."¹⁰ Moreover, she writes about Tolstoy's influence on some social trends and ideological schools which are widespread in Europe. In Italy, particularly, current pacifist trends are linked to the name of Tolstoy, who was an irreconcilable fighter against any violence and dictate. The Italian researcher

⁹ Л.Н. Толстой, *Полное собрание сочинений: В 90 т.* [L.N. Tolstoy, *Omnibus Edition: In 90 v.*], Москва 1928–1958, vol. 25, p. 119.

¹⁰ Дж. Парравичини, *Восприятие Толстого-христианина в Италии* [G. Parravicini, *The Perception of Christian Tolstoy in Italy*], in В.И. Толстой (ed), *Яснополянский сборник* 2008, p. 446.

cites the Bolognese archbishop Giacomo Biffi, a prominent churchman, an authority in the Russian religious philosophy of the 19th–20th cc., who confirms that “the main source of pacifism in our century is Tolstoy’s ideas,” and also characterises the Russian genius as “a great writer who laid down the aim of renewing Christianity, of clearing it of all the elements unsuitable or at least useless for the modern person.”¹¹ Tolstoy’s pacifist position, and his ethics are taken as Christian in the West, though theological groups remember the reference made by Solovyov, who wrote about the “writer’s pseudo-gospel pacifism.” Tolstoy’s ideas taken on the individual and moral level produce radicalism and an intolerant ideology, a desire to be free from the yoke of doctrines and a compulsive truth no matter where they came from. Tolstoy “stirred the dead water” of not only theological but also social thought again. Moreover, Parravicini says that “nowadays in Europe and its culture an ideological battle between Solovyov and Tolstoy is, figuratively saying, a kind of symbol of destinies and perspectives on Christianity and the European civilisation itself.”¹²

At the turn of the 20th and 21st century the basic thing in Tolstoy’s interpretation is not his “antinomian contradictions,” but the integrity principle, the integral approach in understanding his unique personality. This principle neither denies contradictions, nor levels oppositions in Tolstoy’s creative thinking, nor artificially conciliates his paradoxes, but forms a completely different methodology in understanding a personality and a person. This is a kind of a new Renaissance approach in Western anthropology and study of art, mostly effected by the Russian literary-philosophical thought which persistently worked out its irrational, non-classical approach in understanding the person and the world. Stefan Zweig was one of the first to doubt the conception of “two Tolstoys.” In his book *Adepts in Self-Portraiture: Casanova. Stendhal. Tolstoy* pondering on Tolstoy’s self-portraiture he wrote: “With Tolstoy, this spiritual self-contemplation attains the highest level, inasmuch as it has now become an ethico-religious self-portraiture (...) transcending the frankly inquisitive phase of self-study, has become a moral self-questioning, a self-assize. When limning himself, the artist is no longer content to depict the kind and the form of his earthly manifestations; he wants also to ascertain their meaning and to appraise their worth.”¹³ “What impresses in Tolstoy is not contradictions in his life and

¹¹ Ibidem, pp. 446-447.

¹² Ibidem, p. 449.

¹³ С. Цвейг, *Три певца своей жизни: Казанова. Стендаль. Толстой* [S. Zweig, *Adepts in Self-Portraiture: Casanova. Stendhal. Tolstoy*], transl. by П.С. Бернштейн, В.А. Зоргенфрей, Москва 1992, p. 9.

theory which many people easily found, but an internal succession of his crises and those questions which they put in front of him. Tolstoy's life is defined by his search of faith, his necessity to understand what he is and what he ought to do"¹⁴ – Richard Gustafson writes in his book *Leo Tolstoy: Resident and Stranger. A Study in Fiction and Theology*. Gustafson is one of the few people who try to reconstruct Tolstoy's "theology," an integral system of his religious views, including both ontology and ethics, and esthetics, and political theory. The scholar, who thoroughly studies diaries, letters, fiction, is profoundly convinced that Tolstoy's integrity is based on his own religious experience, which in spite of the general belief did not suffer from revolutionary transformations after the crisis in the 1880s. Tolstoy's poetics, thoroughly analysed in the book, is closely connected to Tolstoy's search for God. All Tolstoy's texts treat of "Divine appeal to love and the person's response to this appeal."¹⁵ An integral approach is necessary "to understand the text of his life and the work of his life"¹⁶ – Gustafson is convinced. An absolute value of this research position is that the author studies some connection between Tolstoy's psychological life, his wordy images and his world outlook, thus creating an integral view of the writer's personality.

At present, the centre of research dialogues about Tolstoy is Yasnaya Polyana. Its publications: *Tolstoy's collection* and the conference materials collected in *Leo Tolstoy and the World Literature* included a considerable number of writings by national, Western and American thinkers. Among them is a famous Canadian Tolstoy's researcher – Donna Orwin. Her book *Tolstoy's Art and Thought. 1847–1880* (1993) was translated into Russian in 2006. It reconstructs the philosophical ideas which – surfacing in Tolstoy's fiction – reflect the process of moving to integrity. "I find Tolstoy an analytic longing for synthesis, a realist in search of ideals"¹⁷ – Orwin writes. Those metaphysical "foundations" built from "suffered beliefs," of Tolstoy's own experience are important for her. She considers Tolstoy's pitiless self-analysis, his exceptional individualism, his aptitude to

¹⁴ R.F. Gustafson, *Leo Tolstoy: Resident and Stranger. A Study in Fiction and Theology*, Princeton 1986 (the Russian edition: Р.Ф. Густафсон, *Обитатель и Чужак. Теология и художественное творчество Льва Толстого*, transl. by Т. Бузина, Санкт-Петербург 2003, p. 19).

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

¹⁷ D.T. Orwin, *Tolstoy's Art and Thought 1847–1880*, Princeton 1993 (the Russian edition: Д.Т. Орвин, *Искусство и мысль Толстого. 1847–1880*, transl. by А.Г. Гродецкая, Санкт-Петербург 2006, p. 19).

frankness and at the same time the thirst for the universal justice and love to be a uniting starting point. According to Orwin, these values returned Tolstoy's thought to the necessity of some synthesizing metaphysics. But again and again the self-analysis destroys synthesis. The synthesis which has not been proved by life experience, certain acts and actions turns out doubtful. Orwin notes that "a moral or perhaps a metaphysical truth is realized in the human individual or becomes possible through the individual." "Nineteenth-century idealists turned traditional metaphysics on its head. Whereas before, the human individual was understood as part of a metaphysical whole, now the individual encapsulated that whole in himself."¹⁸ The researcher comes to the idea of the necessity of being absorbed in the nature of an internal integrity, that basis of consciousness which is the only possible and true way of metaphysical cognition. It is important that Donna Orwin does not contrast Russian researchers of Tolstoy with Western ones. They turn out to move in the same direction; the Russian genius is interesting for them, first of all, as an integral personality, and the "mystery" of this integrity attracts them. The examples may be some pieces of research such as *The Truth in Motion: about a Person in Tolstoy's World*¹⁹ by Olga Slivitskaya, and *Leo Tolstoy on the Peaks of Life*²⁰ by I. B. Mardov. The discovery of the integrity nature is a kind of "sourdough" for a new turn in the development of the world philosophical anthropology. Thus, at present, integrity becomes a key notion not only in understanding the unity of Tolstoy's oeuvre, but also in human cognition.

We would like to point out one more unique quality of Tolstoy – his sociability which does not destroy, but makes Tolstoy's integrity internally open. "Tolstoy's sociability in terms of communication is endless."²¹ His real dialogues in the form of conversations, his grandiose letter-writing, extended marginal notes on the pages of books read, including a great number of foreign literature (fiction, philosophical, religious), at last his diaries were written with an unconscious thought of Another reading them. "Some special feeling and understanding of his reader, listener, public, people" were inherent in Tolstoy (M. M. Bakhtin). He was open, "worldly

¹⁸ Д.Т. Орвин, *Искусство и мысль Толстого. 1847–1880*, p. 13.

¹⁹ О. Сливичкая, "Истина в движении." *О человеке в мире Л. Толстого* [O. Slivitskaya, *The Truth in Motion: about a Person in Tolstoy's World*], Санкт-Петербург 2009.

²⁰ И.Б. Мардов, *Лев Толстой на вершинах жизни* [I.B. Mardov, *Leo Tolstoy on the Peaks of Life*], Москва 2003.

²¹ Г.В. Алексеева, *Американские диалоги Льва Толстого* [G.V. Alekseeva, *Leo Tolstoy's American Dialogues*], Тула 2010, p. 5.

responsive” to foreign cultures, open to an interlocutory meeting with each of them. From this point of view, Tolstoy is unique as “an open creative integrity.”

The most important thing for each artist and thinker is the matter of understanding through which scientific and intercultural communication, deleting the bounds of the national closeness of culture, may be realised. Let us conclude with Tolstoy’s words: “My American friends are responsive to my philosophical articles. The awareness of my being understood in America gives a special tinge to my writings. I have worked just for the Russian hitherto, but now I am working for the whole mankind.”²²

Transl. by Svetlana Koltunova

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²² А.В. Жиркевич, *Встречи с Толстым: Дневники. Письма* [A.V. Zhirkevich, *Meetings with Tolstoy: Diaries. Letters*], Тула 2009, p. 95.

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Russian Religious Philosophers' Output in Europe

Victor Chernyshov

Poltava Yuri Kondratuk National Technical University (Poltava, Ukraine)

Quest for the Catholic Church. Between Constantinople, Russia and Rome: William Palmer's Response to Alexis Khomyakov's Letters

The second and third quarters of the nineteenth century are undoubtedly recognised as the Golden Age of the Russian culture. At the very core of it, by this time, along with success in the realms of poetry and literature, there is an intense struggle of two opposing streams of the Russian thought – between the Slavophiles and Westernizers. The latter, as immediately evident from their name, looked forward to changing the Russian lifestyle in the western manner, whereas the former, in their turn, endeavoured to cleave to the traditional principles, reviving and preserving the traditional Russian lifestyle. Therefore, the natural base of the Slavophile Movement was the Russian Christianity in its most traditional form of the Eastern Orthodoxy.

However, it would be rather untrue to regard the situation of the opposition, represented in Russia by Slavophiles and Westernizers, typically Russian. The situation was a concrete reflection of the general state of many European countries at that time. German romanticism as a cultural reaction against rationalism, and the foreign nature of the *Siècle des lumières*, an intensive struggle between liberal Wigs and the conservative Tories in the Victorian England, and suchlike. But as the Russian Slavophiles acted to preserve and revive the Russian traditions based upon Eastern Christianity, at the other end of Europe, in England, another significant phenomenon of religious and cultural life came into existence and power; it came to be known as the Oxford or Tractarian Movement (1833–1845). Though the Oxford Movement is in itself interesting, it gave rise to another phenomenon in the life of the Anglican Church, which is known as the Anglican

Spiritual Revival.¹ Still, the focus of the present paper is not on this issue. Both the Russian Slavophiles and the representatives of the Oxford Movement took a keen interest in ecclesiology. Or to put it even more plainly, the idea of the Catholic Church, though understood rather differently, lay at the very core of the ideology of both the Slavophiles and the Tractarians.

Interestingly enough, the paths of both the outlooks crossed, as we can see in a unique document of the epoch: the correspondence between the leader of the Russian Slavophile Movement, a philosopher, lay theologian Alexis Khomyakov (1804–1860), and an Anglican deacon William Palmer (1811–1879), a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and a representative of the Oxford Movement. And it is even more interesting to learn what effect the Slavophile arguments can have on an individual who has similar interests, but comes from outside Russia. Though the correspondence has many a time been examined by scholars, their focus was chiefly on the analysis of Khomyakov’s “belief system” with a view to examining “how it led to his two-layered concept of the Church.”² The only exception we have been able to find is the book by Robin Wheeler,³ whose focus is chiefly on William Palmer;⁴ the book is beautifully written, but the examination of the correspondence is rather historical in its purpose.

So the aim of the present paper is to examine the peculiar features of the dialogue regarding the teaching on the Catholic Church, focusing on the response given by William Palmer. At the very core of the correspondence is the quest for possible ways to achieve the Christian unity, as well as for the Catholic Church as a real and visible manifestation of the Christian unity, so the main task of the paper is to examine this topic, finding its connections to other related subjects which are also to be examined.

The letters of Alexis Khomyakov to William Palmer are one of the finest examples of the Russian religious thought of the mid-nineteenth century. The correspondence is in itself an example of dialogue between Christians, representing different – eastern and western – parts of Christendom. In its

¹ For instance, see C.H. Spurgeon, *Spiritual revival, the want of the Church*, “Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,” vol. 44, <<http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/2598.htm>>.

² See, e.g. M.J. Soroka, *Sacred East, Dying West: A Study in the Slavophile Ideology of Aleksei Khomiakhov*, The Ohio State University, A Senior Honors Thesis, 2006, p. 61.

³ R. Wheeler, *Palmer’s pilgrimage: the life of William Palmer of Magdalen*, Oxford 2006 (and Pieterlen 2007).

⁴ His PhD thesis is also dedicated to the subject, but it does not deal with the correspondence, as focused of the Palmer’s “Anglican career.” See R.S. Wheeler, *Between East and West: the Anglican career of William Palmer of Magdalen, 1811–1849*, Durham University PhD thesis, 2003, <<http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/3139/>>.

present state the correspondence includes eighteen letters (as many as were preserved, perhaps, there were some more): twelve by Alexis Khomyakov, and six by William Palmer.⁵ The main subject of the correspondence, which lasted a decade (1844–1854), as it has already been stated above, is a quest for the ample grounds and ways to achieve a Christian unity.

The initiator of the correspondence was Alexis Khomyakov. The history of the correspondence begins in 1844, when professor of the Moscow University Peter Redkin, who was obviously an early acquaintance of Palmer, showed to Khomyakov a letter and an English translation of a poem written by Khomyakov himself in 1839, on the death of his two eldest children.⁶ The translation and letter were by William Palmer, and the letter talked of ways to achieve a Christian Unity.

Khomyakov's first letter to William Palmer, dated 10 December 1844, is at first sight merely a letter to express gratitude for the translation and the best sentiments it raised: "(...) It is indeed a great joy for me to have met with your sympathy, and the more so as I have met with it in the highest of all regions, in the communion of religious sentiments and convictions."⁷ On the one hand, it is obvious that he is sincerely moved with the fact that his poetry has been recognised and appreciated. On the other hand, no less natural is Khomyakov's amazement at how a protestant could translate a poem which plainly tells of the sign of the Cross and the communion of prayer between the living and the dead; i.e. the poem which bears the doctrines that are not only generally disapproved, but rather rejected by most protestant churches. Khomyakov cannot hide his amusement: "In one respect it is even more than I could have anticipated, [inasmuch] as the sign of the Cross and the belief in a communion of prayers between living and dead are generally rejected by the over-cautious spirit of the Reformation. You are, methinks, very right in approving of them. (...) The Episcopal Church of England seems in the last times to have adopted that principle."⁸ These "last times" are very demonstrative.

In his letter to Professor Redkin, William Palmer touched on a very sensitive problem, which was also of keen interest to Khomyakov: the

⁵ See W.J. Birkbeck (ed), *Russian and the English Church during the last fifty years*, vol. 1, London 1895; it can also be found in translation into Russian in A.C. Хомяков, *Полное собрание сочинений*, vol. 2: *Сочинения богословские*, Москва 1907.

⁶ See W.J. Birkbeck (ed), *Russian and the English Church during the last fifty years*, pp. 2-3.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

problem of the Christian Unity. Khomyakov charges the West the responsibility for the lack of unity among Christians, so the correspondence could not but to be continued.

Palmer's reply to the first letter, addressed to him by Khomyakov, took the form of a small volume, privately printed and entitled *Short Poems and Hymns, the latter mostly Translations*, printed by T. Shrimpton at Oxford, 1845.⁹ The book commenced with the *Letter Dedicatory* to Mr A. S. Khomyakov, which in fact is Palmer's reply to Khomyakov's first letter.

In his first letter to Alexis Khomyakov, William Palmer admits that he agrees "both with your belief, your feeling,"¹⁰ i.e. the salutary use of the sign of the Cross and belief in communion of prayers between the living and the dead, but at the same time he observes that not every member of the Anglican Church will agree upon the same. Palmer splits the Anglican Church in two: "the Anglican Church *in herself*" and "*in the prejudices of her members*."¹¹ So, the members do not always and necessarily follow that which the Church requires of them. The position is almost identical, though expressed in other words, with that of Khomyakov: "We can only request and expect that the Faith which we hold may not be judged by our actions."¹²

It seems Palmer is rather indulgent not only to the "prejudices" of his Church fellow-members, but also to Christians of other denominations. The only instruments "for the union of all," as Palmer sees it, are fervent prayer, and hard everyday work over oneself and no less fervent and hard missionary zeal for the salvation of others: "Still, setting politics aside, I must confess that I think both we in England and you in Russia will do well to say as little as possible about the faults of the Roman Catholics, at least till such time as we ourselves shall set them a better example, either by a general spirit of prayer and intercession for their improvement and reconciliation, or else, if we really think them external to the true Church, by an active zeal for their conversion."¹³

Though Palmer reproaches the Eastern Catholic, or Orthodox, or Greek Church for the lack of missionary zeal, "as it has pretended to be since the Schism, *the whole of the true Church*, that it alone and exclusively is

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 14.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 29.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 16.

the depository of the True Faith, the Ark of Salvation, this of itself ought always and under all conceivable disadvantages to be a sufficient motive for the most unwearied energy, both in prayer and action, and for the most confident and unbounded hope of success in the work of evangelising the unbelieving world, and bringing back all heretics or schismatics, whether Romanists, Anglicans, Lutherans, or Calvinists, into the true Fold.”¹⁴ So, if the Eastern Church believes indeed to be “One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church,” in this case, it must necessary proselytise, reveal its ardent missionary zeal for the salvation of souls of those who perish. But if the members of the Eastern Church “do not feel quite sure” that their Church is the whole of the true Church (Palmer regards this position as merely theoretical), they should either leave the things as they are, simply awaiting the Lord’s Second Coming, which is obviously at hand as the signs of the last days are evident, or must eventually submit to Rome, or – as the third alternative of the three possible – must come “to think of a fair reconciliation on whatever terms it may be effected.”¹⁵

Thus, there are – Palmer supposes – three alternatives, depending on how the Church does feel in itself. First, if it really and indeed believes to be the whole universal Church, it must really and indeed be militant, strive for salvation of those who can be possibly saved, to convert the world. The other two should be pursued if it rather feels to be a part of a whole. The second alternative, though Palmer does not say it directly, if in the deep of its conscience the Eastern Church realises that its present state is nothing else but a schism, and it is consequently a schismatic part of the Universal Church. In a case like this, it must confess its sins, return and submit to Rome.¹⁶ The third one – if the Eastern Church feels itself to be a part of the whole tragically divided with the other part (forming the whole) through misunderstanding, or whatever else the reason might be.

Therefore, there are only two ways to achieve the unity, which come from these three alternatives: it is either conversion or reconciliation. It is for the Eastern Church to decide, where it stands. The conversion is for atheists, heathen, infidels, schismatics, and heretics. Within the Christendom, depending on what the real state of things is, it may be one of any either: the Roman Catholic to Orthodoxy, if it is really blinded with heresy,

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 18.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 19.

¹⁶ Later this position will be discussed at length in the book written in French by Fr Ivan Gagarin SJ, a Russian convert to the Roman Catholic Church. See P.J. Gagarin, *La Russie sera-t-elle catholique?*, Paris 1856.

or the Eastern Church to the Roman Catholic, if the former is a schismatic church. The reconciliation is possible only for brethren who once contended and were at odds with each other, but since then have acknowledged their faults and sought reunion.

Palmer rejects as unjust Khomyakov's thesis that the Roman Church is a state,¹⁷ which the true Church ought not to be, and as a state, on political grounds, it admits a conditional *union*, instead of insisting on the necessity to achieve a vital *unity*, grounded on the unity of the Orthodox Faith. The existence of both Ultramontanism and Gallicanism is tolerated by the Roman Church rather than approved dogmatically and canonically, as well as the ancient form (i.e. without the *Filioque*) of the Nicene Creed in the Uniat Church of the Polish provinces (i.e. the Greek-Catholic Church in communion with Rome), with which Rome deals as a superior with inferior ones.¹⁸ The Roman Church acts not as a state, but as the Catholic Church, since "the Pope tolerated the prejudice or weakness, as he would deem it, in the merely external point of form. And as for Gallicanism, that again is viewed as an evil tendency in an inferior and particular Church, by no means recognised as of right, but distinctively condemned by the superior authority, and not only tolerated *de facto* within certain limits, so long as not fully developed to its consequences."¹⁹ And the same in England, as the Oxford Movement was not born of desire of a hollow, political, or conditional *union*, but prompted by the keen and vital crave for the Unity of the Christendom.²⁰

The nearest perspective for the Anglican Church is to achieve unity with the Eastern Church, but the ultimate end is the unity of the Christendom, which is unthinkable without the ultimate union with Rome: "I am persuaded," Palmer writes, "that the declaration of *unity*, not the negotiations of any political or conditional *union*, with the Eastern Church is much more possible and much more desirable at present than with the Roman: though God forbid that I should ever think or speak of any such thing otherwise than as a step both for us and for the Eastern towards ultimate union with Rome."²¹

This nearest union for the Anglican Church with the Christian East is not an easy task either. It will demand of both the Anglican Church and the

¹⁷ See W.J. Birkbeck (ed), *Russian and the English Church during the last fifty years*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁸ See *ibidem*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

²⁰ See *ibidem*, p. 22.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

Eastern Church to strive freely, but hard for the unity. However, it is not the way of compromise, but the revelation of the truth about the self and the neighbour. “I do not suppose – Palmer writes – that the Eastern Church ought either now or at any future time to alter one jot of her doctrine in favour of any prejudices or reasonings of Anglican bishops, nor that she should admit the Anglican Church in her present state, or any of her members to her communion (...). Still less I suppose that the Anglican Church or her members could ever gain any good thing by becoming professors of Greco-Russicism or Orientalism.”²²

Though to make herself ready, the Anglican Church is to purge herself of those elements and tendencies that seem to be (or indeed are) heretical: “I am perfectly sure – Palmer states – of the existence in the Anglican Church of an element of faith and doctrine not only *like*, but *identical* with, the faith and doctrine of the Eastern Church: so that though union with the present Anglican Church, which is made up of conflicting and undeveloped tendencies, partly orthodox and partly heretical, is out of the question, union with the orthodox element of the Anglican Church, whenever it shall have asserted its own exclusive ascendancy, and expelled its heretical antagonist, will be perfectly natural and easy, and scarcely need any negotiation or conference, except for merely subordinate matters of discipline and ritual.”²³

Khomyakov was wrong, opposing, quite unjustly, the *union* and the *unity* as contraries. Palmer’s belief is that the true union is possible only as the direct consequence of the undoubted unity. Yet, it ought to be noticed that an obstacle to unity may arise not only of the difference of faith, but of the difference of its expression. To illustrate what is meant, Palmer invokes an example of the Armenian Church: “The Armenian Church, which seems, in like manner with the Anglican, to have had a double existence from a very remote period. Now, though union with the Armenians without explanation or change on their part would be union with heresy, still, if that Church were to do again what she has already done more than once, that is to say, explain her heretical language in an orthodox sense, and formally reject and disuse the language as well as the spirit of heresy for the future, Unity being thus declared and received, Union would be no longer objectionable.”²⁴

In his first letter to Palmer, Khomyakov states that “the great and invincible obstacle to Unity”²⁵ is the question of the addition of the words

²² Ibidem, pp. 23-24.

²³ Ibidem, p. 24.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ Ibidem, pp. 8-9.

Filioque to the Creed, even supposing that since the time it was added “the Western communities have nurtured a deep enmity and an incurable disdain for the unchanging East.”²⁶ So, in Khomyakov’s opinion, the question of *Filioque* is an initial point of separation between the unchanging East and the West that changed.

Realising that the question of *Filioque* is one of the most complicated theological questions that have ever arisen between the East and the West, and which can hardly be solved at once, Palmer prefers to avoid giving a direct response that might be rather unjust. He realises that in order to answer this tough question, much hard theological work has yet to be done, as in many other theological and moral issues. His suggestion to Khomyakov in this case is that “for the present it will be enough if you on your side seek daily to realise more and more within yourselves that faith, which is indisputably the tradition of your Church.”²⁷ So, to solve this question we have to more and more immerse ourselves not in “an ignorant and bigoted tradition, which neither seeks to understand its own faith aright, nor to estimate rightly the error of the heretics, nor sighs with charity for their return to the truth, nor seeks diligently to remove all unnecessary obstacles, whether on the one side or the other,”²⁸ but in the true Tradition of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, based upon the real and true religious experience of the Catholic Church.

Though a direct response to the question of *Filioque* could hardly be given, the question itself induced Palmer to formulate his (as we may call it) “Golden rule” of an ecumenical dialogue: “We should be constantly trying to make progress in the knowledge and appreciation of our own faith on this point, constantly trying to discover what stumbling-block there may be in the way of our separated brethren, which prevents them from agreeing with us; while, on the other hand, we should be jealously fair and charitable in ascertaining that we do not misrepresent or calumniate their belief, and so wilfully make a difference where there need be none, or, where there is one, make the difference greater than it really is.”²⁹

Next, Khomyakov wrote to Palmer on August 18, 1845, from Smolensk, as we may suppose, almost right after receiving Palmer’s book with the *Latter Dedicatory*. Palmer’s reply was prepared and sent with delay, partly because by this time he had been suffering from an eye disease, but also

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 8.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 26.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 25.

²⁹ Ibidem, pp. 25-26.

because the letter was of considerable length and it took time to prepare the answer. So, Palmer's second letter to Khomyakov was sent from Oxford, July 1, 1846. Then, the four following letters were sent, correspondingly: the third – Sunday of St Thomas, 1849 from Magdalen College, Oxford; the fourth – September 22 (October 4), 1851 from Constantinople; the fifth – July 5, 1852 from Magdalen College, Oxford, the sixth – April 5 (N.S.), 1853 from Finmere, near Buckingham.

The exchange of the first letters served to acquaint the correspondents with each other, their arguments and the way of argumentation; the following letters immediately show the positions and persuasions of both correspondents. Being unsatisfied with the present state, William Palmer, in his longing for the true Catholic Church, makes an inquiry. The key question of the correspondence, as we suppose, is the question about the status of the Eastern Church: whether the Eastern Church represents the fullness of the Catholic and Universal Church. Alexis Khomyakov argues that it does indeed. Palmer does his best, endeavouring to make the situation clear.

Though it seems that they have agreed not to contend about doctrinal matters, and avoid entering upon any particular doctrinal discussions so as to concentrate on the matters of morals, the doctrinal issues still occur throughout the correspondence from time to time. As we can notice, these occur in topics which lie at the intersection of dogmatics and morals, representing themselves vital principles of the Church life. Mostly, and it is of great relevance today, Palmer's arguments and his entire approach to the matter are rather moral and practical, giving a brilliant example of ecumenical dialogue, whereby he discusses "all that relates to Christian morality, mutual edification, and to those first principles which common sense and common feeling tell us lie at the very foundation of Catholic or Orthodox Christianity and about which all ecclesiastical authorities are agreed all such topics as these may very well and very profitably be treated of even between private individuals."³⁰

Khomyakov explained the lack of missionary zeal in the Eastern Church for the conversion of Westerns – which was noticed by Palmer – for historical reasons (e.g. the Mohammedan yoke). Palmer interprets it differently, explaining that the real reason is "that the Eastern Church herself knows in her own conscience that yours is only a particular Church, not exclusively the Catholic Church; and that the West, though it may have erred, yet has not vitally and essentially apostatised from the Faith. On this being

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 43.

allowed, it is very natural and very reasonable that the Eastern Church should have little zeal or charity to convert the Latins nay, that she even, as a particular Church, should be deficient in energy towards the heathens.”³¹ Thus, the Eastern Church is rather a particular Church, but not the entire Catholic Church.

If the Eastern Church is not the whole Catholic Church, it is not the Universal Church either. The *Filioque*, which was raised previously, should not to be added to the Nicene Creed: “I allow and confess most freely that the West did act in a lawless and immoral manner in making the interpolation; and that this is so far, no doubt, a prejudice against the doctrine itself which was interpolated,”³² Palmer agrees upon it. But the fact of addition does not mean yet that the Latin Doctrine on the Procession of the Holy Spirit – taken in its proper way – is a heresy. Yet, it is not the crux of the matter, as it is not to be considered in itself, apart from the whole life of the Church: “Whether the Latin doctrine be in fact a heresy or not, (...) if you think common people, laymen, or even priests, nay, if you think that even learned Bishops and Divines will for ever be content to rest their convictions upon such a point as the Controversy of the Procession upon their own private judgment concerning the intrinsic merits of the question alone you are, I think, very much mistaken.”³³ In other words, the “by true faith alone” is not a saving principle, but false.

Therefore, the so-called “problem of *Filioque*” is rather an inessential one, and it is better that it is not touched upon: “I say that, under the circumstances of the case, a reasonable man, so far from allowing himself to test the controversy by theological arguments alone, would be only showing his good sense, and his piety, if he utterly refused even to enter upon the question: and this, even if he were competent and learned; and much more should all common and simple people perceive the voice of God Himself in the relative circumstances of the two contending parties.”³⁴

To consider the question of *Filioque* as a real obstacle “even to the idea of unity,” as Khomyakov does, is nothing but a mere exaggeration. The very similar case is with the statement of the Eastern Church being alone true and Catholic: “In exactly the same way,” Palmer writes, “I say that the man who (not being bred in the Eastern Communion) could for one moment suppose it possible that the Eastern Church alone was the true,

³¹ Ibidem, pp. 43-44.

³² Ibidem, p. 44.

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Ibidem, pp. 44-45.

and had alone preserved the true faith, and that the Latin Church had erred fatally and essentially, I say that such a man would seem to me at least to be wanting in common-sense to be not far short of a madman.”³⁵

Thus, Palmer completely disapproves the “exclusive pretensions” of the Eastern Church, at least refusing “to acknowledge her as the sole true Church, on account of any conviction of my private judgment (if I could arrive at such a conviction), that she was right in taxing the Latin Church with essential heresy on the point of the Procession.”³⁶ It is true, that “certain habits of mind (as well as certain circumstances) when they are very general or universal, impress a character on the Body, and are no longer mere individual defects,”³⁷ but it is true also that the true Catholicity is necessarily manifested in zeal and action for salvation of souls. Thus, the excuses and explanations drawn from the local and other particular circumstances of history indicate that it is a heretical or schismatical body, or even a particular Church which is not heretical or schismatical, “but being only parts [it is] not bound to exhibit all the necessary marks and notes of the whole: but such excuses, joined with exclusive pretensions to be the whole, only make the error more apparent, and the madness, because unconscious, the more pitiable.”³⁸

“But – Palmer continues – when there is, side by side with that Body, which pretends to be alone the true Church, and yet is wanting in some essential characteristic, another greater Body in full possession of that which the first wants, it is no longer merely the defect of the one which proves that it is not what it pretends, but also the comparative contrast presented by the other.”³⁹

Comparing the *modus vivendi* of the Eastern Church and the Latin Church, Palmer comes to the conclusion that the latter is rather to be recognised as the True and Catholic Church, at least judging from the general disposition and actions of its members, bearing the distinctive proof of its superiority: “the Latin Church presents not one only, but many and notable points of such superiority, when contrasted with the Eastern. Her own children, in common with all other Christians, disbelieve her exclusive claims; even when they most try to do otherwise, they still in some way or other

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 45.

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ Ibidem, pp. 46-47.

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 47.

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 48.

show this.”⁴⁰ Seeing the things in this light, he writes to Khomyakov on account of the Eastern Church: “You are either a nullity, or at best only a particular Church.”⁴¹

The truth is not “to be distilled out of the corrupt mass by private reason following the rule *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*. This is certainly a very common notion and a very false one indeed heretical: that is, if the errors spoken of be supposed to be essential, whether in doctrine or practice.”⁴² The true Church is holy and infallible, but it does not mean there are no “secondary errors or abuses which do not subvert the faith, or amount to heresy,”⁴³ with these “particular Churches, or even the whole Church, may at times be more or less infected with such abuses and errors. (...) Thus, in the Roman Communion the sale of Indulgences and thus, in your own Russian Church the uncanonical rebaptizing of Christians already baptized, was for many years prevalent, and even sanctioned by local Canons.”⁴⁴

In addition to this Palmer points to the inconsistency of the Eastern Church, being in communion with the supposedly heretical Latin Church a lot of times throughout the history of the Schism.⁴⁵ Thus, there are two ways for the Eastern Church to correct herself to make it consistent in herself: either to acknowledge it was wrong to communicate with the heretical West, or to have done wrong “in pretending so long to be the whole, when we have not the necessary attributes of the whole, and know very well that we are only a part: we have done wrong in calling the Latins heretics, and their doctrine Heresy, when we knew all the time that they were not, strictly speaking, heretics, and that if they corrected themselves in a point of form, we might communicate with them freely: for the future we will do so no longer: we confess that the Latin Church is a living part of the same Universal Church with ourselves; that it has preserved the same faith essentially with our own.”⁴⁶ Here again, as some time before, arises the dilemma consisting in the problem of choice between the *reconversion* and *reconciliation*, and the two lines of conduct, dependent on either of the cases.

⁴⁰ Ibidem.

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 49.

⁴² Ibidem, p. 53.

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ See ibidem, p. 50.

⁴⁶ See ibidem.

Palmer suggests action anyway, whatever line of conduct be chosen, as this will bear on the recognition of the Church as active and alive: "I care not which you think right and which you think wrong, provided you only are serious and zealous enough to do either the one or the other. The only thing which I do really dread for you is the continuance of the present apparent insensibility and inaction. If you seem dead, you may be sure that you will exercise no influence upon us: we shall look more and more to Rome, which is evidently active and alive. If, on the contrary, you show signs of life, signs, I mean, of a returning sense of duties (of some kind or other) due to the whole Church, to the whole world, then we shall at any rate begin to feel an interest in you we shall respect you, even though your energies seem to be directed against us."⁴⁷

Palmer gradually drifted towards the Roman Church. The Eastern Church was more and more disappointing and discouraging to him as he made an ever closer acquaintance of it; now and again new stumbling blocks cropped up on his way to the communion with the Eastern Church.

The greatest obstacle in Palmer's way to joining the Eastern Church was a different practice of reception into the (full) communion: through baptism, as suggested by the Greek Church, or by chrism only, as it was done in the Russian Church. He tried to solve the question to remove the obstacle, he was even ready to be baptised conditionally, but all was without success: the contradiction seemed to be obvious and invincible: "I have been addressing in modern Greek a question to the Patriarch of Constantinople. (...) – he writes to Khomyakov – It is on the subject of Rebaptism, the Russian Church now admitting as valid, though irregularly administered, Western Baptisms, and the Greek Church rejecting them as nullities and rebaptizing all proselytes who have been so baptized. (...) I am to receive an answer to this question to-morrow, and, from conversations I have already heard, know pretty well that it will leave the difficulty unremoved. My question was this: whether the Greeks, considering the contrary doctrine and practice of the Russian Church, could not rebaptize me conditionally instead of absolutely; thus: 'The Servant of God N., if he is not already baptized, is baptized, etc., etc.,' or at least permit me to receive and understand their act of rebaptizing me as being virtually, even if not explicitly, conditional."⁴⁸

The question was of great importance to him not only because "Baptism, past or future, is, or must be, the beginning of my Christianity; and

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 51.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, pp. 109-110.

the first practical question for me in seeking any communion is this: Have I already been baptized, or must I now seek to be baptized,”⁴⁹ but also, and first of all, because the question directly affected the question of the Church Unity: “I do not agree with you – Palmer writes to Khomyakov – in thinking that a declaration that the existing difference does not affect the unity of the Church would be a possible solution; because this would amount to a decision that is unnecessary for proselytes to know whether they are baptized or not.”⁵⁰ The very matter of the question is whether it is necessary to be baptised at all, and as the answer is “yes,” all the other questions arise. On the other hand, it is not to be ignored that obviously one of Palmer’s most intimate wishes was the desire to be recognised as a Christian by the Eastern Church; this also proved his ecclesiastic theory that he defended and promoted. This was the thing he deeply believed and intensely struggled for.

That was “the last drop,” Palmer thought. He had already been ready to join the Eastern Church (as part of the whole Catholic Church), as he wrote, “till I found the two parts of the Eastern Church split asunder on the first preliminary question and step. And after this, whatever they may be in themselves, or abstractedly, to me they must be regarded as separate and divided, till they speak to me with a single, and not with a double voice. There may indeed be underneath the double and discordant voice only one being, or Church, which ventriloquises, and thinks it of no great consequence so to mock and perplex individuals with a double voice. But I feel no sort of divine call upon my conscience to become a party to such trifling.”⁵¹

He will not join the Eastern Church because it lacks unity in itself: on the one hand, the Greeks will not admit him without rebaptism, which is unacceptable for him; on the other, he is very unwilling to seek the communion of the Russian Church “otherwise than as a mere part of the Eastern or Orthodox whole that is, the undue supremacy of the Civil Power.”⁵²

Though the problem with the rebaptism required by the Greek Church was important, it was not the only obstacle for Palmer on his way to join the Eastern Church. The other was the problem of political and social as well as ecclesiastical kind: the lack of religious freedom in Russia, and the relations between the civil and ecclesiastical powers within the Russian Empire.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, p. 146.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, pp. 149-150.

⁵¹ Ibidem, p. 147.

⁵² Ibidem, p. 148.

Palmer regards the present state of the Church in Russia as unacceptable: “The difficulty – he writes to Khomyakov – which with me seems insurmountable, is this: that the present relations of the Spiritual and Civil Powers within the Russian Empire are such as to be inconsistent with the due exercise of the Apostolic Office.”⁵³

At first glance, this unacceptability is rather of personal sort; it is the state of things unacceptable for a Westerner, whereas for a Russian it is simply unalterable: “In Russia itself the administration of the Government and the Censorship keep all things quiet as they are, so that individuals neither perceive the true nature of many questions, nor the inevitable developments and consequences of principles which have once been admitted (...). But to a Western seeking to join the communion of the Russian Church the case is very different. If I join the Russian Church, I must be able to defend myself to my own conscience, and to reasonable men (whether Protestants or Roman Catholics) in the West, for acting in a manner so contrary to their idea of reason.”⁵⁴

But Palmer sees things differently; the *Holy and Ruling Synod* as a replacement of a personal Primate is unacceptable: “I admit – he writes to Khomyakov – your distinction between an undue subservience to such influences in fact only, or also in principle: and I am far from imputing to the Russian Church the latter. The excesses or thunderings of censors, or other subordinate agents of governments, are matters of secondary importance. What I find fault with is, not the undue timidity or subserviency of a Metropolitan or Patriarch or a Synod, but the permanent existence of irregular institutions calculated and introduced by the Civil Power expressly to transfer to itself upon the whole, and by virtue of the system, a large portion of that power which belongs essentially to the Apostles. (...) The canons of the Universal Church require a personal Primate (he might indeed be assisted by a Synod) in every Province and Nation: and the four Patriarchs of the East had no more right nor power to legitimatise the Synod (...). The admission of such machinery into the permanent institutions of the Church is the indirect admission of a principle subversive of the Apostolic mission and authority.”⁵⁵ He regards the present state of the Church in Russia as such that affects the very definition of the Catholic Church, more and more growing in his inclinations towards the Roman Church: “the points of weakness or difficulty in the Russian Church are

⁵³ Ibidem, pp. 117-118.

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 118.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, pp. 150-151.

such as affect the definition of the Catholic Church itself, but the points on which I now differ from Rome are points of detail, capable of being ruled by the definition of the Church.”⁵⁶

He intended to go and to “study at Rome, with the hope of learning something there to enable me to change my mind and submit to her claims, since I can no longer defend the Anglican, nor find a satisfactory entrance to the Eastern Church if, after all, I should not be able to get rid of my present doctrinal agreement with the Eastern Church, then (as I could not profess to believe what I do not believe) I should have nothing open to me but to wait for any possible change which time might produce either in the Levant or in Russia, and, in that case, I might probably live a good deal in the Levant, perhaps at Mount Athos.”⁵⁷

Thus, eventually, Palmer decided not to seek the communion with the Eastern Church any more. Though the decision was taken, it felt like a sacrifice rather than a normal state of things, as he loved the Eastern Church: “But having made this sacrifice, I have no feeling of pain or despondency at finding difficulties to lie in the way of my joining the Eastern, rather than the Roman Catholic Church, for I have no sort of reason to wish to find the lesser section of Christendom right rather than the greater, the Eastern than the Western, or Constantinople than Rome. Of course, so long as my personal opinions and belief agree on points of detail rather with the Easterns than with the Westerns, I am forced by the duty which I owe to truth and sincerity to avow this; and I cannot, to please Rome or to obtain her communion, say that I believe, or will believe, what I do not believe.”⁵⁸ He eventually decided to submit that this was his will and his wish: “But I can say this and do – Palmer continues – that I would wish to agree with Rome rather than with Constantinople, and that, seeing great and increasing reason to doubt the conclusions of my own understanding when they agree with inferior authorities against superior, I will listen attentively to all that the superior authority can say to me, and will do my best to find out that it is right, and that my individual mind and the inferior authority, with which at present I rather agree, is mistaken.”⁵⁹ He still wavered between Rome and Constantinople at heart, but the circumstances were all against him; however, at any rate, Rome eventually prevailed in 1855.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 120.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 152-153.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 153.

To conclude this brief overview of the correspondence between Alexis Khomyakov and William Palmer, let us summarise all this we have been trying to demonstrate on the basis of the very source, i.e. the texts of the letters.

First, it should be noted that William Palmer was one of those who were deeply affected by the tragedy of schism and separation of Christians, believing that it could be healed. He accepted the task to strive for the Christian unity as his own, personal one, but unlike the rest of the Oxford Movement, in his hopes for the reunion of the Christendom, he looked rather towards the East and the Oriental Churches. Bearing this purpose in mind, in 1840–1841 he went to Russia, for he hoped to obtain from the Russian Imperial Synod such a recognition of his right to the Graeco-Russian Sacraments, which would be an irrefragable proof that the doctrine of the Anglican divines was no mere theory, and that the Anglican Christian was *ipso facto* an Oriental Orthodox also.⁶⁰ Despite the fact he was not recognised as a true orthodox Christian, and the permission to receive the Sacraments of the Eastern Church was granted neither by the Russian Synod nor by the Greeks, for almost fifteen years William Palmer kept knocking at the door of the Eastern Orthodox Church, after which he eventually had to turn to Rome.

Second, the correspondence between Alexis Khomyakov and William Palmer of Magdalen College, Oxford is one of the brilliant documents of the deep and sincere spiritual quest for the Catholic Church that took place in the middle of the nineteenth century both in the Russian Church and the Anglican Church. Our belief is that the quest was prompted not by a mere interest, but rather by a deep, vital and lively craving for the Unity among the divided brothers. And the correspondence itself is a brilliant illustration of it.

Third, at the very core of the correspondence lies the idea of the Unity of the Church. Both Alexis Khomyakov and William Palmer are ardent supporters of it, though their understanding of it is radically different: Khomyakov represents the traditional vision of the Eastern Church, whereas Palmer endeavours to find the answers to the toughest questions of ecclesiology almost exclusively with the help of his own intellect, intuition, and common sense, as well as by means of the Grace that Christianity may offer for individual use, e.g. prayer and devotion.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. vii.

Fourth, Palmer's inquiries in quest for the Catholic Church resulted in the creation of an authentic ecclesiological outlook. A system of oppositions and quite subtle distinctions made by Palmer in his letters to Khomyakov is of no little relevance today. Thus, Palmer speaks about the opposition of "the Doctrine of the Church – prejudices of Church members," which, as we suppose, follows from the traditional distinction between the dogmatic and the moral teachings of the Church. Of some interest are his views on different ecclesiological statuses of religious communities: "the Catholic Church," "the Universal Church," "the Orthodox Church," a Particular or Local Church, "small community." "The Catholic Church," "the Universal Church" and "the Orthodox Church" are synonymous, but not identical,⁶¹ as they represent the three necessary characteristics of the true Church: catholicity, universality and orthodoxy. All the three are not to be separated one from the others as they are the three necessary characteristics of the whole we call the Church, in the highest sense. The main and defining, substantial feature of this true and Catholic Church, as Palmer states, is the ardent zeal to proselytize and to bring all and the entire World to the perfect state of the Catholic Unity. A "Particular" or "Local Church" is the true Church as far as it possesses these three necessary characteristics; if it is lacking in anyone of them, it becomes "schismatical" (if ceases to be the Universal), "heretical" (if ceases to be the Orthodox). A "small community," as Palmer calls it, is a Church-like group that does not possess any necessary characteristic of the Church, and therefore may be called church, but nominally. There are two ways of the reunion of the separated brothers as individuals, as Palmer presents them: either conversion (of heathens, heretics, infidels, atheists), or reconciliation with brethren (schismatics). However, there are three ways to reunite the Bodies: 1) conversion (of the outward into the body), 2) submission (of the smaller or less important to the bigger and more important, or a schismatical to the Catholic), 3) reconciliation (between equal schismatical parts).

Fifth, despite the fact that the answers to these questions provided by Palmer quite often fall short of satisfying today's reader, it must be admitted that the achievement of Christian unity itself in quite a great measure depends on the answers to these questions. In spite of the fact that the *most intimate and dearest wish* "to praise God in the same Church" has never come true (Khomyakov stood his ground, and Palmer, after such a long

⁶¹ Frequently enough, that these characteristics have been confused, both in the 19th century, earlier and in our days. For such confusion in Palmer's time, see the work of one of his friends: J. Gagarin, *Réponse d'un Russe à un Russe*, Paris 1860.

personal strife for the true and the Catholic Church, found his rest, being admitted to the full communion with the Roman Church), the correspondence reveals a certain number of controversial, but crucial points between Christians, belonging to the eastern and western parts of the Christendom in their outlooks on the same Christian Tradition. However, the greatest response to Alexis Khomyakov's letters William Palmer could make was not with ink and paper; the final and ultimate response was made in life itself: it was Palmer's conversion.

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Victoria Kravchenko

The Natalya Nesterova Academy of Education (Moscow, Russia)

*Dedicated to the 160th birth anniversary
of the Russian Philosopher*

VI. S. Solovyov's oeuvre reflected in foreign philosophy

The great Russian philosopher Vladimir Sergeevich Solovyov (1853–1900) became famous in his native country as early as in his youth. He was famous throughout his life: a keen interest from the colleagues (often – a spiteful one) and from time to time enthusiastic, scandalous at times, hype among the general public.

This is exceptionally rare in Russia; however, in his lifetime Solovyov was recognised as an original thinker, religious and philosophical columnist, distinctive poet, mysterious visionary, towering lecturer, prominent collaborator of the renowned Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary as well as an uncommon and magnetic personality; and at the end of his life he was recognised as a prophet (a prophet in his own land!).

As for recognition in foreign countries, after his death Solovyov was not immediately acknowledged as a picturesque and prominent philosopher, and so far his creative work has been assessed as rather ambiguous.

Our study aims at identifying certain stages and trends concerning the understanding of Solovyov's output. Considering numerous sources, we will refer to the first foreign publications on Solovyov; however, we will focus on well-balanced judgments on Solovyov's legacy in present-day philosophical schools of the West. Later on, we will focus on peculiar approaches to his work in some countries. Although it may seem strange in the context of the era of globalisation, it corresponds to the historical and philosophical realities.

On the other hand, we will turn our attention to the fact that in the history of the 20th century Russian philosophy, foreign studies of Solovyov's

output, in terms of emerging frequency, coincide with the development of Russian philosophy, that is, they are “split” into two periods: before the Soviet period and afterwards.

The article aims at marking the three stages concerning foreign studies of Solovyov’s works: 1) western theologians and philosophers referring to Solovyov’s oeuvre during his lifetime; 2) western foreign studies of Solovyov’s works after his death (from 1900 to the end of the 1980s – the period of Perestroika in the USSR); 3) From the 1990s up to the present.

1. The beginning of study of Solovyov’s works in the West

It was Solovyov himself who largely contributed to his religious philosophical reputation in the West. It is known that the philosopher made his first academic trip abroad from Moscow University to London, formally, to study ancient manuscripts. Actually, as Lukyanov assumed, and I prove it in my monograph, Solovyov yearned to get to London, because he was keen on spiritualism and desired to see mainly the well-known spiritualists and their séances.¹

In London Solovyov spent a lot of time in the British Museum Library, and didn’t make any close acquaintances with any British philosophers, writers or public figures. Sergei Lukyanov, the philosopher’s biographer, pointed out that Solovyov didn’t have a good command of English, therefore he preferred to communicate with compatriots and Mr Rollston, a Russian-speaking manager of the Rossica Department in the British Library. Solovyov visited Olga Alekseevna Novikova, who was a close friend of the British Ambassador in Russia; besides, her husband was a brother of the Russian Ambassador in Constantinople. Many Russians and English celebrities of that time, including a historian T. Carlyle, visited Novikova’s high society salon in the centre of London. M. M. Kowalewsky, an Associate professor from Kharkov, who was also in London at that time on an academic trip, recalled: “The English clergymen gathered in Novikova’s salon, and they were very concerned about the idea of the Orthodox and the Anglican Churches convergence.”²

Apparently, even then in some conversations with the Anglican Church clerics Solovyov expressed the pro-Catholic views on the relations

¹ See В.В. Кравченко, *Вестники русского мистицизма*, Москва 1997, p. 53 ff.

² С.М. Лукьянов, *О Вл. Соловьёве в его молодые годы. Материалы к биографии В.С. Соловьёва*, vol. 2-3, Петроград 1918–1921, p. 141.

between churches. It is no coincidence that in the early 20th century Michel d'Herbigny published the brochure in the title of which Solovyov was named *The Russian Newman*,³ i.e. he was associated with Cardinal J. H. Newman, a Tractarian who had passed from the Anglican Church to Catholicism.

The most important fact about Solovyov's creative biography was that it was in London that he started writing the greatest work of his life – *Sophia*. It was in the British Museum that he met Sophia for the second time when she demanded that Solovyov went to Egypt, and he obeyed. It is unlikely that Solovyov told the Anglican and Anglo-Catholic clergy the real reasons for his visit to London, the results of his spiritual séances and the experience of writing the first chapters of his “theosophical-theurgical” treatise at dictation, let alone the reasons for his sudden and inexplicable departure to Egypt.

What echoes of the London academic trip can be found in Solovyov's works? Knowledge of gnostic, kabbalah and mystical writings as well as some contemporary spiritualist works, some of which he much later chose to translate from English, e.g. *Phantasms of the Living* (his friend A. N. Aksakov, a staunch propagandist of spiritualism in Russia, published this book).⁴

Thus, in London Solovyov appeared before his western friends in his main capacity as a pro-catholic-minded religious writer. He was considered neither a philosopher nor a poet, neither a mystic nor a public figure. Little wonder that theologians were the first in Britain who expressed and kept a steady interest in Solovyov's work. This interest started a major trend in the Solovyov studies abroad.

A somewhat different situation in terms of professional relations and important publications developed for Solovyov in France. Solovyov had a perfect command of French, and it was of crucial importance. He wrote his most important works in French, he found publishers and published his works in France since his youth. We know that his fundamental “philosophico-theurgical” manuscript *Sophia* was started in London, continued in Egypt and Italy, and it was supposed to be published in France. In essence, *Sophia* was a basis for two of his theses and fundamental works of *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge*, *Lectures on Godmanhood*

³ M. d'Herbigny, *Un Newman russe Vladimir Soloviev*, “Etudes Paris,” vol. 46, 120 (1909), pp. 767-786.

⁴ Е. Герней, Ф. Майерс, Ф. Подмор, *Прижизненные призраки и другие телепатические явления*, transl. and preface by Вл.С. Соловьев, Санкт-Петербург 1885.

and others. (Actually, for the first time the manuscript *Sophia* was published in French only in 1978 (!). It was not until 1992–1996 that it was translated into Russian and for the first time published in Russia only in “Logos” Journal!).⁵

In France, most of Solovyov’s basic works were released in French. It was a matter of principle for the author who realised that in those days his books would never be published in Russia. And he obviously believed that his books could be interesting and expedient for western readers.⁶

We find the first French review on Solovyov’s lifetime publications in 1888.⁷ But we can’t find any profound and systematic French studies of Solovyov’s ideas during this period. Only in his obituary did Eugene Tavernier, who was in correspondence with the philosopher for a long time, mention the Russian philosopher’s great achievements.⁸ Later in London, he published his article about Solovyov.⁹

It is known that in the last years of his life Solovyov spent many months in Finland, working on his landmark work *The justification of the Good*, major aesthetic articles, and the well-known poems.¹⁰ We can find some sketches of Solovyov’s everyday life of this period in George Brandes’s memoirs, but nothing is said about Solovyov’s philosophical activity.¹¹ Neither in Finland nor in Denmark was anyone interested in Solovyov’s philosophic work up to the late 20th century. Hence, despite rather active work abroad and a set of lifetime publications, Solovyov’s philosophic reputation in the West at the end of the 19th century couldn’t be compared to his national recognition in his homeland.

⁵ V. Soloviev, *La Sophia et les autres écrits français*, ed. by F. Rouleau, Lausanne 1978; В.С. Соловьёв, *София*, transl. by А.П. Козырев, “Логос” 2 (1992), pp. 171-198; “Логос” 4 (1994), pp. 274-296; “Логос” 7 (1996), pp. 145-167.

⁶ V.S. Soloviev, *L’Idée russe*, Paris 1888; idem, *La Russie et l’Église universelle*, Paris 1889; idem, *Lectures on the Social Question*, in K. Huret (ed), *Enquete sur la Question sociale en Europe*, Paris 1897, pp. 307-314; idem, *La question pénale du point de vue Éthique*, “Revue internationale de sociologie” 5 (1897), pp. 514-538; idem, *La question pénale du point de vue Éthique*, Paris 1897; idem, *La Peine de mort*, transl. by M. Krogius, Paris 1898, and many others.

⁷ V. Guette, *La Russie et son église, reponse a W. Solovieff a propos de son livre “L’idée russe,”* Paris 1888.

⁸ E. Tavernier, *Vladimir Soloviev*, “La Quinzaine” 16 (1900), pp. 141-56.

⁹ E. Tavernier, *A Great Russian Philosopher*, “The Nineteenth Century and After,” vol. 80, 476 (1916), pp. 841-852.

¹⁰ See my article about it in V. Kravchenko, *Symbol of Harmony: Vladimir Solovyov and Lake Saimaa*, in E. Tarasti (ed), *From Nature to Psyche. Proceedings from the ISI Summer congresses. Acta Semiotica Fennica XX*, Helsinki 2004, pp. 59-63.

¹¹ G. Brandes, *Ruaha ved Imatra*, “Samlede skrifter” 10 (1902), pp. 557-563.

One of Solovyov's program philosophical objectives was stated in his thesis *Critique of Abstract Principles* (Moscow, 1880): "The objective consists not in restoring traditional theology, but on the contrary (...) in introducing religious truth into the form of reasonable and free thinking, as well as implementing it within data of empirical science, connecting theology with philosophy and science, and, therefore, organising the whole true knowledge into a complete system of free and scientific theosophy."¹²

Is it then so surprising that, first of all, Solovyov's oeuvre aroused the interest of theologians, mainly those manifesting Catholicism?

Solovyov visited Zagreb (Agram) in Croatia many times, and stayed there for long periods as a guest of the canon Franz Racki, or in Dyakovar at bishop Strossmayer's place. He was also in friendly correspondence with them for years.¹³ Some notes and articles about him appeared sometime right after his departure.¹⁴ And it was there that Solovyov attempted to publish his major historiosophical works.¹⁵ However, in Croatia we don't find any direct followers and serious researchers on Solovyov's philosophic activity.

In Germany a number of translations of Solovyov's books, mostly theological, as well as works about him were published during his lifetime.¹⁶ But there are no profound works confirming that a real trend in Solovyov studies was formed in that country in the 19th century. In the US in the year of the philosopher's death, an article on the contradictions of Solovyov's religious views was published. But it appears to be quite vague and so did not attract much attention.¹⁷ The same applies to another article about Solovyov published in a Catholic journal in the early 20th century, promoting d'Herbigny's ideas.¹⁸

¹² В.С. Соловьев, *Сочинения*, Москва 1988, vol. 2, p. 742.

¹³ F. Sisic (ed), *Korespondencija Rack – Strossmayer*, Zagreb 1930–1931 (Letters to and from Solov'ev, vols. 3-4); *Письма Владимира Сергеевича Соловьева*, ed. by Э. Радлов, Санкт-Петербург 1908, vol. 1.

¹⁴ I. Markovic, *Na obranu*, "Katolicki List" 45 (1886); idem, *Vladimir Solov'ev u Zagrebu. Karakteristika*, "Srbobran" 3, 240 (1886).

¹⁵ В.С. Соловьев, *История и будущность теократии*, vol. 1, Zagreb 1887 (only this one volume published of the proposed three-volume work).

¹⁶ V. Frank, *Russisches Christentum. Dargestellt nach russischen Angaben*, Paderborn 1889, pp. 113-188; W. Solowjow, *Einleitung*, in *Der russische Gedanke. Einzig autorisierte deutsche Übersetzung nebst einleitender Betrachtung des Übersetzers*, Berlin 1889, pp. 5-18; idem, *Ein Kulturfrage: Die historische Sphinx*, "Allgemeine Zeitung" 56 (1894), pp. 3-7; *Über die Mission Russlands in der Geschichte*, "Germania," vol. 19, 86 (1889).

¹⁷ R. Parsons, *Some Heterodoxies and Inconsistencies of Russian Orthodoxy*, "American Catholic Quarterly Review" 25 (1900), pp. 675-696.

¹⁸ Fr. Gerrard, J. Thomas, *Vladimir Soloviev – The Russian Newman*, "Catholic World" 105 (1917), pp. 21-36.

2. Western researches on Solovyov's philosophy in the early and mid-20th century

During Solovyov's lifetime, it was obvious that "the Russian Plato" didn't create his own school of thought, and he had no direct disciples nor followers. It is the reason for the complete discord and dissonance that can be observed in the approaches to Solovyov's legacy during his life, as well as directly after his death.

The classic version of the Russian "Solovyov Studies" began to develop on the initiative of the Russian diaspora of the late 19th – early 20th century. Even in the pre-revolutionary Russia, there was a strong westernized direction (in the 19th century – Shelling's followers and "zapadniki" (the Westernizers), the Russian Kantians, Hegelians, positivists, Nietzscheans, in the early 20th century – neo-Kantians, phenomenologists, existentialists, etc. Additionally, many Russian intellectuals graduated from the best western universities. Before the revolution, many Russian philosophers published their works in foreign languages abroad.

Russian philosophers were the first to seriously study Solovyov's outlined philosophical system, generalised the materials they could find about his life, emphasised his innovative ideas, criticised him from the standpoint of those schools of world philosophical movements which they were affiliated with.

Being "cast away" on the west bank by a wave of the revolutionary events, Russian thinkers-emigrants were rather naturally accepted into the channel formed by the western philosophical currents. (Up to now in textbooks on history of philosophy, some authors often call Berdyaev an existentialist, and Shpet a phenomenologist, which is certainly true to some extent).

Western philosophers of the early 20th century, adhering to the ideas of the formed philosophical schools (German, French and English ones), protecting the centuries-old experience, suspiciously looked at the complex world of the Russian religious philosophy, which was absolutely new and alien to them. For many years, the problem of the objective consideration of Solovyov's works remained beyond the current western research. The worldwide recognition of Solovyov as a global philosopher could raise the issue of the Russian philosophy as an independent world movement entering natural competition with historically-established western schools of thought. And all Russian philosophers-emigrants (N. Berdyaev, L. Shestov, S. Bulgakov, L. Karsavin, N. Lossky, and many others) who

gained fame outside their homeland, turned envoys of the Russian thought in the West, attempting to introduce new topics, concepts, research directions and, eventually, changes in the outlook of the western philosophers themselves. Is it any wonder that there are still many western researchers who prefer to present Solovyov as a faithful follower of Plato, Schelling, Kant and Hegel rather than to emphasise the originality of his Russian philosophical thought?

The French philosophical school, which offered a chance to reveal Solovyov's talent, having accepted into its ranks the Russian philosophers of the late 19th – early 20th century, and after the revolution having sheltered the philosophers-emigrants exiled from their motherland, has always been at the forefront of the world “Solovyov Studies.”

The first French-Russian analytical article about Solovyov as a mystic appeared in the early 20th century.¹⁹ The first French appeal to Solovyov the author belongs to a famous author Vogüé, who became acquainted with the Russian philosopher in Egypt.²⁰

The very first translation of Solovyov's book into French made by Thierry J. B. Séverac, a Doctor of Literature and Professor of Philosophy at the College of Chateau, was complemented with his own research, published in a series of books under the title of *The Great French and Foreign Philosophers (Le grands philosophes français et étrangers)*.²¹ The book immediately drew attention and was singled out in Russia by the prominent Russian philosopher V. V. Rozanov. In his article he wrote about Séverac: “In his study of Russia, Russia as a country of common people, the author of this book is not a beginner: he chose “Spiritual verses of the Russian Sect of God's people” as a subject for his doctoral thesis in Philology.²² The book about Vladimir Solovyov is quite a natural continuation of this thesis, as it has a lot of “spiritual verses” and he himself without any exaggeration can be called “God's person.”²³

Rozanov didn't agree with Séverac calling Solovyov “the first Russian philosopher,” after L. Lopatin, the Professor at Moscow University and

¹⁹ O. Lourié, *Soloviev et le mysticism*, in idem, *La philosophie russe contemporaine*, Paris 1902, pp. 9-34.

²⁰ E.-M. de Vogüé, *Un docteur russe, Vladimir Soloviev*, in idem, *Sous l'horizon. Hommes et choses d'hier*, Paris 1904, pp. 15-27.

²¹ *Vladimir Soloviev*, transl. by J.-B. Séverac, Paris 1911.

²² Today, we can read this thesis: J.-B. Séverac, *La secte Russe des Hommes-de-Dieu*, Paris 1906.

²³ В.В. Розанов, *Французский труд о Влад. Соловьеве. Очерк*, “Новое слово” 7 (1912), p. 4.

Solovyov's close friend (Roazanov himself, who knew the thinker and impartially wrote about him, put Solovyov after A. Khomyakov, Kireevsky brothers, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, and others). But he highly appreciated Severac's compilation of excerpts from Solovyov's works *Philosophical Principals of Integral Knowledge, Readings on Godmanhood, Spiritual Foundations of Life, The Justification of the Good*, and Solovyov's famous articles reflecting the main ideas of the Russian philosopher.²⁴

Prominent philosophers of the Russian diaspora contributed a lot to the formation of the powerful French-Russian "Solovyov Studies." In 1925 in Paris the Orthodox theological St Sergius of Radonezhsky Institute (the Sergiyevskoje Podvorje), with a religious and pedagogical department, was created as the spiritual centre of the Russian emigration. The well-known publishing house "YMCA-Press," which since December 1925 had been located in Paris, published the most significant philosophical works of the Russian philosophical emigration. V. Zenkovsky's historical-philosophical researches, works of K. Mochulsky, G. Florovsky, N. Lossky and many others, which were published there, are the classics now.²⁵

In addition, this publishing house released a number of periodicals, among which there was "The Way" ("Put") Journal (1925–1940). It was claimed to be the body of the Russian religious thought at Religious and Philosophical Academy in Paris; its priority was to maintain continuity of the spiritual Russian culture. The articles of the leading researchers of Solovyov – N. Berdyaev, S. Bulgakov, B. Vysheslavtsev, N. Lossky, etc. – appeared in Russian in this journal. The research into Solovyov's works was at the same time an elaboration of his religious philosophy, with the focus on sophiological ideas (Fr S. Bulgakov), religious and philosophical quest (N. Berdyaev, L. Shestov), religious and church problems, etc. The French researchers of Solovyov were directly guided by the achievements of the Franco-Russian "Solovyov Studies."

The tradition of Catholic research into Solovyov's works, which had been formed at the end of the 19th century, in some aspects split the philosophy of the Russian diaspora into the Orthodox and the pro-Catholic branches. A separate Protestant direction in researching Solovyov's ideas was also formed.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 9.

²⁵ В.В. Зеньковский, *Русские мыслители и Европа. Критика европейской культуры и русских мыслителей*, Paris 1926; idem, *Владимир Соловьев*, in idem, *История русской философии*, Paris 1948, vol. 2, pp. 11-72; К.В. Мочульский, *Владимир Соловьев. Жизнь и учение*, Paris 1936.

In 1966 – the 1970s the Catholic Bruxelles Publishing House “Life with God” published the by far most unabridged 12-volume edition of the collected works of Vl. Solovyov in Russian (mainly, a reprint of the second version edited by S. M. Solovyov and E. L. Radlov supplemented with the philosopher’s letters).²⁶

Judging by the first publications about Solovyov in England, the Russian-foreign and French “Solovyov Studies” motivated English researchers to work as well. After the article by S. Rapoport had been published, and the research by Solovyov’s French friend E. Tavernier had been translated into English, and the study by E. Trubetskoy, who was keen on Solovyov’s works, had been published, the first English research into the religious ideas of the Russian thinker appeared.²⁷

After the revolution, the Russian philosophers-emigrants revealed Solovyov’s legacy in all its diversity for the English colleagues.²⁸

In Germany some interest in the Russian philosophy and its history emerged in the late 19th century.²⁹

The German-Russian line in “Solovyov Studies” chronologically was opened by Lu Andreas-Salome’s article *The Russian Philosophy and*

²⁶ В.С. Соловьев, *Собрание сочинений Владимира Сергеевича Соловьева*, 12 vols., Брюссель 1966–1969.

²⁷ S.J. Rapoport, *The Religious Philosophy of Vladimir Soloviev*, “Contemporary Review” 108 (1913), pp. 635-642; E. Tavernier, *A Great Russian Philosopher*, pp. 841-852; idem, *Introduction*, in V.S. Soloviev, *Trois entretiens sur la guerre, la morale et la religion*, transl. by E. Tavernier, Paris 1916, pp. i-civ; E.N. Trubetskoi, *St Sophia: Russia’s Hope and Calling*, transl. by L. Alexeiev, London 1916; V.S. Solovyof, *War and Christianity – From the Russian Point of View: Three Conversations by Vladimir Solovyof*, transl. by St. Graham, London 1915; J.N. Duddington, *The Religious Philosophy of Vladimir Solovyev*, “The Hebbert Journal” 15 (1917), pp. 434-447.

²⁸ N.O. Lossky, *The Philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov*, transl. by N.A. Duddington, “Slavonic Review” 2 (1923–1924), pp. 346-358; idem, *Precursors of Vladimir Soloviev and Vladimir S. Soloviev*, in idem, *History of Russian Philosophy*, London 1950, pp. 73-80, 81-133.

²⁹ A good example here is an offer by the Professors of Bern University, first of all, Gebler and R. Aiken, who belonged to the German philosophical school, extended to the first Russian female philosopher Maria Bezobrazova to write the thesis on the early history of the Russian philosophy. They not only suggested the idea of a doctoral dissertation “The manuscript materials for the philosophy history in Russia,” but also gave moral support to her in the preparation and defending the thesis. So, the western interest in the Russian philosophy was great, but turning it into research was offered after all to our compatriot, and not to some Western “slavist.” On this see my preface *Жизненный путь и творчество Марии Безобразовой*, in М.В. Безобразова, *Розовое и черное из моей жизни*, ed. by В.В. Кравченко, Москва 2009, pp. 5-50.

Semitic Spirit,³⁰ published during Solovyov's lifetime. Lu Salome, a well-known woman of the Russian-German origin and a prominent psychoanalyst, who had left her mark in the biographies of Nietzsche, R. M. Rilke and S. Freud, appeared at the head of the powerful movement of the German-Russian, and then actually German, "Solovyov Studies."

The early German-Russian philosophical studies only appeared in the early 20th century.³¹ F. Stepun and S. Hessen were co-editors in the known "Logos" Journal, which was the Russian version of the international edition of the so-called Heidelberg community of the Russian and German students (1904–1910). The Russian edition of "Logos," "the international year-book on cultural philosophy," was published in Moscow (1910), Petersburg (1914) and in Prague (1925). The German edition of "Logos" was to be published in Freiburg, Heidelberg and Tubingen.³²

In the preface to the first issue of the "Logos" Journal (an extensive editorial note), Stepun wrote: "The basic principles of the Russian philosophy were never forged on slow fire of theoretical brainwork, but were taken in most cases quite ready from the dark depth of internal experiences. (...) We have to recognise that no matter how significant some phenomena in the Russian scientific philosophy may have been, the philosophy which previously used to be Greek, now is mainly German."³³

Recognising Vl. Solovyov as the brightest figure of the Russian philosophy, Stepun wrote about the "inconsistency and failure of his philosophical concept (...) rooted in the fact that for Solovyov (...) the sphere of rational thinking at all isn't eventually the sphere of original creativity. Solovyov's work is entirely based on the dark roots of his irrational experiences. His rational constructions are not creative at all, but only passively narrative." The main conclusion is that "Vladimir Solovyov hardly created something new and considerable."³⁴

In 1910, in Leipzig F. Stepun defended the dissertation on Solovyov (begun in Heidelberg) where he further explicated the idea, which he had

³⁰ L. Andreas-Salomé, *Russische Philosophie und semitischer Geist*, "Die Zeit" 172 (1898), p. 40.

³¹ N. Melnikow, *Der russisch-japanische Krieg und Solowjew's "Kurze Erzählung über den Antichristen"*, Mainz 1904; E. Tumarkin, *Wladimir Solowiew als Philosoph*, Inaugural Dissertation, University of Bern, 1905 (Halle 1905).

³² *Über die gegenwärtige Lage der Philosophie in Russland (Aus der Einführung in die russische Logosausgabe)*, "Logos" 1 (1910–1911), pp. 151-158.

³³ *Om педагогии*, "Логос" 1 (1910), p. 13.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

expressed in “Logos” – that the Russian thinker’s philosophy was a secondary one.³⁵

D. N. Uznadze, a future outstanding psychologist, philosopher of Georgian origin, and a Leipzig University graduate, tried to protect the originality of Solovyov’s metaphysics in his thesis.³⁶

However, Alexander Kojève (Kozhevnikoff), one of notable theorists of the philosophical avant-garde movement in 1930–60s, continued the line of the rejection of Solovyov’s metaphysics. He studied philosophy in Berlin, wrote his dissertation (1926) under the guidance of K. Jaspers and defended it in Heidelberg.³⁷ Analysing Solovyov’s metaphysics in the aspect of the West European/German philosophising, Kojève proved that, using creative practices of the German philosophers (above all Schelling and Hegel), their theoretical materials and schemes, the Russian thinker did not introduce anything new into world philosophy. According to Kojève, Solovyov unsuccessfully tried to connect Christian faith with philosophical metaphysics. However, Kojève scrutinised Solovyov’s historiosophy in his latest work, also published in Germany.³⁸

We should not forget that in 1922, along with the famous “philosophers’ ship” the Russian thinkers went abroad by two trains – one of them to Riga, and the other to Berlin. The intellectual centres of Germany provided refuge to the Russian emigrants who made a great contribution to the dissemination of Solovyov’s ideas abroad.³⁹

In the German “Solovyov Studies” several lines were clearly defined: protestant, philosophical and metaphysical, anthroposophic and Jewish one.

The solid and fundamental dissertation of Dmitry Belkin was defended in Tübingen.⁴⁰ It is devoted to the reception of Solovyov in Germany, and contains, in essence, comprehensive bibliography until the end of the 20th

³⁵ F. Steppuhn, *Wladimir Solowjew*, Phil. Dissertation, Leipzig 1910.

³⁶ D. von Uznadze, *W. Solowiew, Seine Erkenntnistheorie und Metaphysik*, Halle 1909; idem, *Die Metaphysische Weltanschauung W. Solowjows mit orientierendem Überblick seiner Erkenntnistheorie*, Halle/Saale 1909.

³⁷ A. Koschewnikoff, *Die religiöse Philosophie Wladimir Solowjews*, Heidelberg, Diss. 1931 (Maschinenschrift).

³⁸ A. Koschewnikoff, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Wladimir Solowjews*, Bonn 1930.

³⁹ К. Мочульский, *Вл. Соловьев и Н. Федоров*, “Круг” 1 (1936), pp. 148-150; Г.В. Флоровский, *В мире исканий и блужданий*, III: *Пафос иже-пророчества и мнимые откровения*, “Русская мысль” 3-5 (1923), pp. 210-231.

⁴⁰ D. Belkin, “Die Rezeption V.S. Solov’ev’s in Deutschland” (Ph.D. diss., Eberhard Karls University, Tübingen, 2000).

century. We can only add to D. Belkin's paper that within a century, German philosophers tried "to fit" Solovyov into variety of frames – from Schelling and Hegel to Steiner, Teilhard de Chardin and Husserl. They seldom wrote about the certain identity of the Russian philosopher in the field of ethics and eschatology, preferring to write about Catholic and Protestant, ecumenical, anthroposophic and even occult interests.

In the mid-20th century, when the researches of Solovyov's works considerably waned worldwide, the German philosophers and Protestant thinkers kept their interest in Solovyov's religious and philosophical heritage. We are obliged to the school of German Slavists, notably Ludolf Müller in cooperation with V. Shilkarsky and V. Lettenbauer, that in the darkest years for "Solovyov Studies" they prepared and published in German collected works of Solovyov.⁴¹

Prague was also one of the most important centres of the Russian diaspora since the pre-revolutionary times. But the translations and research of Solovyov's works were obviously under the influence of German philosophical and theological schools.⁴²

We should also mention in line with the German philosophical school a famous Czech philosopher and a public figure, the first President of the Czechoslovak republic Thomas Masaryk. In his extensive work entitled *Russia and Europe: An essay on spiritual movements in Russia*, Masaryk abandons his traditional pro-German consideration of Solovyov's views and insists that Solovyov wasn't under the influence of Kant, but developed his original mystical-religious philosophy.⁴³

Solovyov's works inspired some interest in, for example, Bulgarian philosophers owing to the influence of the German school. According to the Bulgarian researcher N. I. Dimitrova, Janko Yanev was the only Bulgarian philosopher who paid close attention to Solovyov's legacy in the early 20th century. Yanev wrote his essay on the Russian philosopher in Heidelberg

⁴¹ W. Solowjew, *Deutsche Gesamtausgabe der Werke von Wladimir Solowjew*, transl. by W. Szylkarski, ed. by W. Szylkarski, W. Lettenbauer, and L. Müller, 8 vols., München 1953–1979.

⁴² W. Schumann, *Wladimir Solowjew. Ein Hauptwerk slawischer Philosophie*, "Deutsche Arbeit" 14 (1914–1915), pp. 49–53; V. Solovjov, *Duchovné základy života*, transl. by A. Tesková, Praha 1915; idem, *O almužne a pôstu. Z "Duchovné základy života,"* transl. by A. Tesková, Praha 1915; idem, *O modlitbe. Z "Duchovné základu života,"* transl. by A. Tesková, Praha 1915.

⁴³ T.G. Masaryk, *Vladimir Solovjev – Die Religion als Mystik*, in idem, *Russland und Europa. Studien über geistigen Strömungen in Russland*, vol. 1, Jena 1913, pp. 225–277; idem, *Zur russischen Geschichte- und Religionsphilosophie*, Jena 1913, vol. 2, pp. 429–430.

(sic!) where he received a classical philosophical education. Drawing on Solovyov's ideas, Yanev tried to overcome the ontologico-gnoseologic, rational western paradigm in favor of the irrational creative philosophising.

However, the main context of the Bulgarian culture, where Solovyov's spiritual presence appeared, was literary criticism of the Russian Silver Age and especially the Bulgarian theologians' works. By the way, it was also not devoid of some German influence. In Marburg the Bulgarian theologian Konstantin Tsitselkov defended the dissertation devoted to Solovyov's ethics under the scientific supervision of Friedrich Hayler.⁴⁴

N. Dimitrova highlighted in another paper that in the Socialist Bulgaria under the ideological influence of the USSR it was not possible to acquaint oneself with the Russian religious philosophy up to the mid of 1970s. Only in the late 20th century, already under the influence of the historical-philosophical school revived in Russia, the Bulgarian researchers began to study Russian religious philosophy in general, and Solovyov's works in particular.⁴⁵ It is needless to say that the same fate befell Solovyov's studies in all former socialist countries.

Aurelio Palmieri, a renowned expert in the religious philosophy of Solovyov was the first who began the Italian research into Solovyov's works in the 20th century.⁴⁶

The Catholic direction of the Italian Solovyov studies (as well as German and French ones) is worthy to be the subject of a lot of thesis.

Let us mention only the known facts about the reaction of popes to Solovyov's works. Just after the book *Russia and the Universal Church* had been released in France, Pope Leo XIII commented on the project of the universal theocracy, saying that it was a great idea, but we needed a miracle to make it come true. Pope John Paul II (secular name Karol Józef Wojtyła) showed particular interest in Russia; he knew Vl. Solovyov's works, and often quoted him. Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger), as a doctor of theology and a former professor of dogmatics and fundamental

⁴⁴ Н. Димитрова, *Владимир Соловьев в болгарской культуре (первая половина XX века)*, "Соловьевские исследования" 4 (2010), pp. 25-27.

⁴⁵ Н. Димитрова, *Владимир Соловьев и болгарская философская мысль второй половины XX века*, "Соловьевские исследования" 2 (2011), pp. 78-82.

⁴⁶ A. Palmieri, *Vladimir Solovev e la sua filosofia religiosa*, "Rivista storico-critica della scienze teologiche" 3 (1907), pp. 209-221; idem, *Vladimir Solovev. L'apostolo dell'unione della chiese in Russia. Alla luce di nuovi documenti*, "Rivista internazionale di scienze sociali e discipline ausiliare," vol. 17, 50 (1909), pp. 153-170; idem, *Vladimiro Solovev. L'apostolo dell'unione della chiese in Russia*, Rome 1909; idem, *Vladimir Soloviev e la sua opera apologetica*, "La Civiltà Cattolica," vol. 63, 1 (1912), pp. 169-182, 529-544.

theology in Bonn, Münster, Tübingen and Regensburg, knows the German philosophical tradition in the religious studies of Solovyov fairly well. As a theologian, J. Ratzinger reinvents the ideas of the Russian philosopher in his study of contemporary religious issues, which is clearly shown, for example, in his dialogue with the philosopher Jürgen Habermas (2004). The perception and rethinking of Solovyov's ideas was also reflected in his theoretical works, for example, in the book *Many Religions, One Covenant: Israel, the Church, and the World*, translated into Russian (2007).⁴⁷

The Russian philosophical diaspora had an impact on philosophical thought over the ocean. In 1920, the American Association of Young Christians (YMCA) was created and then it was connected with the Russian Students' Christian movement, based in 1923. Under the auspices of YMCA the publishing house was established, which moved from USA to Berlin, and then, as it was mentioned above, settled in Paris in 1925.

No doubt that Solovyov's American researches began with translations of his works into English by the leading figures in the Russian philosophy abroad.⁴⁸

In the 20th century Solovyov's Russian and growing western glory gradually spread throughout the world, having turned into international branches and various schools of "Solovyov Studies" by the early 21st century.

Do western researchers share a similar position and to what extent? Below I will try to explain my experience.

3. Some notes concerning the present-day studies of Solovyov's works

First of all, it is necessary to address fundamental issues concerning foreign studies of Solovyov's oeuvre.

1. The central question every researcher of Russian philosophy has to immediately answer: Is it an original phenomenon in the context of the global philosophical process? As we know, even Russian philosophers haven't yet come to an agreement on the issue. Before proceeding to the study of Solovyov's output, a foreign philosopher, as far as it seems, should formulate an answer to the following question, related to the former

⁴⁷ J. Ratzinger (Benedikt XVI), *Die Vielfalt der Religionen und der Eine Bund*, Hagen 1998.

⁴⁸ N. Lossky, *The Absolute Criterion of Truth*, "Review of Metaphysics," vol. 2, 8 (1948–1949), pp. 47-96.

one: Does he develop his own philosophical tradition with the help of Solovyov's works, or does he try to understand the Russian tradition or solve a certain global problem concerning universal philosophy development?

2. Even if a foreign researcher recognises the originality of Russian philosophical thought, still a new problem arises: What are the specific features of this originality? As for the first issue, we can assume a definite answer, but the second one gives too many answers which actually mean a particular direction of a foreign philosopher's own research.

Generally, western researchers do not pay attention to one of the key problems concerning Solovyov's works in particular, which, in fact, marked the beginning of a truly original modern Russian philosophy. As of today, there is no consistent translation of Solovyov's original terms: All-Unity (absolute unitotality), Godmanhood, sophiology, integrated knowledge, mysticism, etc. On the one hand, it does not seem wrong, since every author reads his own thoughts in the translation of one or another term. Unfortunately, we often refer to the philological translation of a term but not to the philosophical understanding of it. The biggest problem is related with the term "mysticism:" some western scholars have not acknowledged it, since they do not even have a clue that by this term Solovyov meant something different from the present-day understanding of this term. The same is with the term "All-Unity..."

Without delving into these "nuances," western researchers also do not follow the specificity of a philosophical line of reasoning which is often the very essence of Russian religious and philosophical thought. It is no surprise that while riding on the surface of lines of philosophical reasoning of Russian thinkers who, in fact, create a completely new philosophical discourse, western researchers do not see familiar philosophical patterns in Russian ideas; and sometimes it results in their denying the philosophical status of the Russian thought. This is a form of Eurocentrism – an inability to tolerate a different kind of philosophy and other ways of philosophical exploration.

3. The issue of the demarcation line in Solovyov's works between philosophy itself and the spiritual and religious thought (including not only theology, but also mystical, occult, esoteric and other courses). As we know, Solovyov did not have time to create his own system of "theoretical philosophy." However, it is evident that for him "philosophy," which managed its "historical affairs," was based on the fundamental idea of "integrated knowledge." That is why it also touched on both "spiritual/religious foundations of life" and the issue concerning God, which paved the way

for the consideration of “All-Unity,” “Godmanhood” and Sophia as well as ethics, aesthetics, economic, social life, etc. In other words, today any theologian can find a wide research field in Solovyov’s works; likewise, professional philosophers (including those committed to atheism) can get much chance in the world of Solovyov’s gnoseology, dialectics, logic, social and political thought, etc. But how will theological and philosophical studies separately be adequate to Solovyov’s own aspirations?

4. The issue of correlating philosophy and poetry in Solovyov’s works. Let us point out: for Solovyov, poetry was a special kind of philosophical creativity; that is why his poems were often self-contained philosophical writings rather than illustrations of some philosophical reflections. It can be said that Solovyov followed a certain tradition of great Russian spiritual culture, which implied that philosophical thought in poetry was not reflected but created. Here, it would be appropriate to recall Solovyov’s great predecessors.⁴⁹

For Russian philosophers, Solovyov’s major works as well as many of his poetical works were equable in terms of their theoretical value. In 1915 Bulgakov wrote: “(...) Solovyov’s poetic effect is more elusive and subtle, but then again more profound and solid than a purely philosophical one. (...) As for Solovyov’s works, absolute authenticity belongs only to poetry; so his philosophy could and must be verified by means of poetry.”⁵⁰

Today, Solovyov studies are booming both in Russia and abroad. Having gained “school” character (in Russia by losing the taste of “a forbidden fruit”), research into Solovyov’s works naturally fits into the current academic trends; it has got the usual theoretical “label,” has shifted into the area of, in the first place, the socio-political ones. And foreign philosophers are absolutely free to do it, because there were no Solovyov schools! A school like that is rather in its infancy, resisting pressure of western studies based on their own scientific principles and traditions.

All modern Russian professionals are still waiting for the collected works of Solovyov, and publication of his unknown manuscripts. We are still proving to each other his identity, justifying his crucial role in the formation of Russian philosophy and the establishment of the unique Russian spiritual tradition.

Let us leave behind the consideration of those foreign works which try to prove that Solovyov was a follower of Kant, or he was a Russian

⁴⁹ For more information concerning the issue, see *Preface* of my monograph: В.В. Кравченко, *Философия в стихах*, Saarbrücken 2012, pp. 5-9.

⁵⁰ С. Булгаков, *Тихие думы*, Москва 1996, p. 52.

Hegelian, or a disciple of medieval scholastics, or a late Slavophile, or a reactionary obscurantist, or a dark occultist, etc. All such similar definitions are not quite adequate approaches to Solovyov's activity.

Let us dwell on some western researches on Solovyov which are really worthy of attention.

In the late-20th-century British researches it is possible to note a continuation of the traditional line of consideration of Solovyov's religious works in a Catholic way, and in this regard F. Copleston's works,⁵¹ which were in a way classical for the Soviet researchers, as they covered Solovyov's religious views in addition to the Orthodox and theological works of the historians of the Russian diaspora philosophy.

However, similar works appearing at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries appear completely anachronistic.⁵² The problem of the researches similar to Paul Valliere's work is that he tries to comprehend the whole spiritual way of Vl. Solovyov, actually relying on Solovyov's biographies (in this case the ones by K. Mochulsky and Sergey Solovyov-junior⁵³ which are classical ones, but do not contain enough fact today. And in the declared paragraph "Young Soloviev: Mystic and Critic" (p. 109 ff), the author does not even mention the manuscript *Sophia* (the basic ideas of which, by the way, were generally retold by Sergey Solovyov), and it is unclear what kind of Solovyov's mysticism he speaks about without this work. Therefore, it is obvious for me that the British theologian is interested, in fact, not in mysticism of the young Solovyov, who was keen on spiritualism in London, but the philosopher's theological quest which, as we can see, attracted interest of the old Anglican Tractarians. In other words, in 100 years the approach to Solovyov of most English theologians has changed little.

At the same time, we can highlight a really modern and new approach to Solovyov studies, which is in tune with the Russian spiritual tradition. Johnathan Sutton's book, released in London in 1988,⁵⁴ not only connects Solovyov with modern spiritual problems, but also reveals in his heritage

⁵¹ F.C. Copleston, *Russian Religious Philosophy: Selected Aspects*, Tunbridge – Notre Dame 1988.

⁵² P. Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov: Orthodox Theology in a New Key*, Michigan 2000.

⁵³ К.В. Мочульский, *Владимир Соловьев. Жизнь и учение*; С.М. Соловьев, *Жизнь и творческая эволюция Владимира Соловьева*, Брюссель 1977.

⁵⁴ J. Sutton, *The religious philosophy of Vladimir Soloviev*, London 1988 (the Russian edition: Дж. Саттон, *Религиозная философия Владимира Соловьева. На пути к переосмыслению*, transl. by Ю. Вестель, Киев 2008).

an original and truly Russian-cultural aspect, i.e. the spiritual “doing,” as well as moral and practical pathos of religious and philosophical works.

We can agree with A. L. Dobrokhotov, the reviewer of the Russian edition of Sutton’s book, that it is “the experience of the English author in reading Solovyov as a guide to moral action.”⁵⁵

In modern American Solovyov studies the most notable researches are sophiological studies that naturally combine the consideration of Solovyov’s views in the mainstream of western mysticism (Boehme, Swedenborg) with the interpretation of his philosophical poetry (in English translations and in-depth comments on them).⁵⁶ In this line see my article.⁵⁷ Also in America, since the end of the 20th century a connection of Solovyov’s apocalyptic ideas with spiritual religious movements, in particular New Age, could be traced.

There are foreign centres studying Russian philosophy and Solovyov’s works, for example, at Nijmegen University (under the direction of Dr Evert van der Zeverde).

We should emphasise Solovyov’s spiritual bonds with Poland and the echo of Polish reciprocal interest in the heritage of the Russian philosopher. In the early 20th century a number of works on Solovyov were released in Poland.⁵⁸ The first article on the ethics of Solovyov appeared in Polish still in the philosopher’s lifetime.⁵⁹ The first book was published at the beginning of the 20th century.⁶⁰ And both appeared in Kraków, where the Russian philosopher repeatedly visited his friends.

In the early 20th century some articles about Solovyov appeared,⁶¹ but there was no solid research into the Russian philosopher. The first serious Polish study of Solovyov appeared only at the end of the 20th century.⁶²

⁵⁵ А.Л. Доброхотов, *С другого берега*, “Новый мир” 6 (2009), pp. 189-197.

⁵⁶ J.D. Kornblat, *Divine Sophia. The Wisdom Writings of Vladimir Solovyov*, Ithaca – London 2009; *Vladimir Solovyov’s Poems of Sophia*, transl. by B. Jakim and L. Magnus, Hudson – New York 1996; V.S. Solov’ev, *The White Lily*, transl. by B. Jakim, New Haven 1995.

⁵⁷ В. Кравченко, *Поэтические переводы Вл.С. Соловьева: философско-художественные находки и утраты*, in eadem, *Философия в стихах*, pp. 137-157.

⁵⁸ V.S. Solov’ev, *Talmud*, Warszawa 1906.

⁵⁹ K. Czaykowski, *Etyka Solowjewa*, “Przegląd Powszechny” 61 (1899), pp. 362-377.

⁶⁰ J. Urban, *Wł. Solowiew i biskup Strossmayer*, “Przegląd Powszechny” 101 (1909), pp. 159-171.

⁶¹ W. Gostomski, *Ostatnia myśl Włodzimierza Solowiewa*, “Przegląd Powszechny” 87 (1905), pp. 202-224.

⁶² G. Przebinda, *Włodzimierz Solowjow wobec historii*, Kraków 1992.

We should also make a special mention of the beginning of research into Solovyov's legacy in Australia.⁶³

Thus, the overseas studies of Solovyov can be divided into three stages.

Stage I: formation and development of certain lines and even stereotypes in the perception of Solovyov outside Russia, in many respects inspired by the philosopher during his life or friends who personally knew him.

Stage II: gradual formation of the western historico-philosophical and religious-philosophical research into Solovyov's works within main European schools.

In fact, that generation of Solovyov's western readers who knew his French works at the end of the 19th century and, probably, valued truly originally innovative religious, philosophical and mystico-philosophical ideas in line with spiritualist, spiritual, religious and philosophical-mystical directions, did not leave significant critical essays and in-depth research about it. The emergence of positivist, structural and, above all, atheist directions in western philosophy since the beginning of the 20th century threw Solovyov's religious and mystical legacy to the margin of western thinking, having mixed it with writings of such medieval scholastics as Swedenborg, Boehme, which are too suspicious for sober western philosophical minds.

Steady historical-philosophical work of the representatives of all the generations of the Russian diaspora – intellectuals from the pre-revolutionary Russia, who sought European education, and several waves of exile from the Soviet state up to the Perestroika times – constantly fed the western "Solovyov Studies" and, to a certain extent, corrected it. Our compatriots excited true interest in Solovyov's works among foreign philosophers. The most stable, deep and diverse interest in Solovyov was noted at this stage in the mainstream of the German philosophy.

Let us mention the well-known "break," certain hard times in the visible development and research of the Russian religious thought in Soviet Russia (though, of course, there were latent cultural currents both in Russia and abroad), which in many respects defined a completely negative attitude in the USSR official ideology and a rather cool attitude to Solovyov's heritage abroad.

And finally, Stage III: revival and a decidedly rapid development of Solovyov Studies after the Perestroika, manifested both in Russia and abroad.

⁶³ R. Chambers, *Vladimir Solovyov and the state*, "Australian Slavonic and East-Europe Studies," vol. 6, 1 (1992), pp. 43-71.

Recognising the inevitability and infinity of disputes between Russian and foreign researchers concerning who Solovyov actually was or was not, and what he actually wanted to tell and wrote on this or that occasion, I emphasise at once my own view on the problem – in what way Solovyov’s heritage abroad was perceived in the past and in the present. Thus, I realise and emphasise basic inexhaustibility of this problem.

Today, we can also single out individual directions in the world research into Solovyov.

Direction 1: philosophico-theological/theological, Christian-philosophical approach (established by the religious philosopher himself). In turn, it diverges into several branches: the Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. The ecumenical approach to the works of Solovyov, whose dream was to create the “Universal Church,” gradually appears.

Direction 2: research into Solovyov’s works in various religions which is represented, first of all, by the Judeo-Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist studies (as “responses” of foreign researchers to Solovyov’s direct interests in these religions).

Direction 3: extra religious Solovyov Studies (theosophy, New Age, a variety of spiritual and religious, mystical and occult currents). It begins with the harsh criticism of Solovyov by H. P. Blavatsky, the characteristics of the Russian philosopher which were given to him by Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophical research, etc.

Modern researchers can associate Solovyov’s philosophical views with his theological, metaphysical or mystical views, or they can consider these strictly in the aspects of systematic philosophy. Recently there have appeared certain currents and entire schools developing various aspects of Solovyov’s doctrine: gnoseological, ethical, social and philosophical, legal, aesthetic, religious and mystical, sophiological, utopian, etc.

The bibliography of Western and Eastern Solovyov Studies at the early 21st century is really vast. For a new generation of foreign Solovyov researchers the question of originality and worldwide importance of his works is already solved. There are new trends and new approaches in the research into the Russian philosophy as a whole, deserving special reviews.

The dialogue between Russian researchers of Solovyov’s works and their western and eastern colleagues is an issue of particular interest. The dialogue reveals actual aspects of the Russian spiritual enthusiast’s philosophy, as well as it enables a more complete understanding of his philosophical legacy which still remains an open question even to experts.

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Tatiana Poletaeva

St Tikhon Orthodox University, Moscow; Belgorod Orthodox Theological Seminary (with missionary orientation), Belgorod (Belgorod, Russia)

On V. Solovyov's gnoseology and some aspects of its comprehension by Western philosophers in the context of West – East dialogue

One of the research directions in the study of anybody's philosophy is a clarification of influences and receptions. The formation of Solovyov's religious philosophy took place in the context of his critical re-comprehension of Western rationalism with the aim of philosophical apologetics of Christianity. This direction of philosophising was picked up by spiritual followers of Solovyov, who, developing his ideas, brought Russian philosophical thought to an adequate level, so that since the second decade of the 20th century it has begun to attract attention in the West.¹

Among the Russian philosophers who devoted their works to the comprehension of Solovyov's philosophical, mystical and gnoseologic ideas, one should reckon such names as S. Trubetskoy, E. Trubetskoy, S. Ascoldov, priest S. Bulgakov, Fr P. Florensky, A. Kozlov, N. Berdyaev, V. Ern, V. Ivanov, D. Merezhkovsky, N. Lossky, S. Alexeev, L. Karsavin, S. Frank, P. Novgorodtsev, I. Iljin, B. Vysheslavtsev. Following Solovyov's philosophical tradition, the problem of the integral Christian world-understanding set by him for the development of Christian thought in faith, these spiritual followers of Solovyov formed a direction of gnoseological ontologism in the Russian thought.

In their turn, Western thinkers also investigated Solovyov's versatile philosophy, including the comprehension of his gnoseological views, as well as philosophical and mystical ideas related to them. This article addresses

¹ Н.В. Мотрошилова, А.М. Руткевич (eds), *История философии. Запад – Россия – Восток*, Book 3, Москва 1998, pp. 248-285, <http://philosophy.ru/edu/ref/mot_srf1.html>.

the doctrine of inner experience and mystical insight in Solovyov's early philosophy and its re-comprehension in his late philosophy, as well as it presents how Western philosophers, and in particular E. Swiderski, Y. Kravitskiy, H. Dahm, analyse Solovyov's views in this sphere.

Solovyov developed his doctrine of inner experience and mystical insight in his early works (*The Crisis of Western Philosophy: Against Positivism*, 1874; *Sophia*, 1876; *The Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge*, 1877). This doctrine substantiated the significance of mystical knowledge which was imagined by the philosopher as a base of an integral knowledge system – unity of theology, philosophy and science. The key role in acquisition of this knowledge was connected in Solovyov's thought with mystical insight (called by him intellectual insight, as well). Solovyov developed his concept in the context of a critical re-comprehension of one of the main problems of Kant's gnoseology and Western rationalism – the problem of unknowableness of “the thing in itself.” Spinoza's ideas about three kinds of cognition (the sensible one, the rational one, and intellectual insight)² resolutely influenced the philosopher, and the beginning of his own doctrine of mystical (intellectual) insight became a re-comprehension of Schelling's idea of *Intellectuelle Anschauung*.³

² Before B. Spinoza, the description of a way of the truth cognition through ingenious knowledge (intellectual insight) can be found in the antique philosophy of Plato. In the Western philosophy the idea of intellectual insight became one of the main concepts of rational gnoseology of Descartes and Leibniz. Descartes described intellectual insight as “a conception, formed by unclouded mental attention, so easy and distinct as to leave no room for doubt in regard to the thing we understand” (R. Descartes, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, transl. by E. Anscombe and P.Th. Geach, <<http://renedescartesquote.blogspot.com/p/rules-for-direction-of-mind.html>>). Leibniz spoke about intuitive knowledge as the Absolute one. Spinoza considered intellectual insight as the highest – the third kind of cognition, which is a base of the second rational and reasonable deductive knowledge of mathematical type. However, Kant, whose gnoseology was critically re-comprehended by Solovyov, recognised only sensible intuition, with which he connected a priori forms of a “clear” vivid idea, and on which he based the possibility of mathematics, though, as V. Asmus writes, mathematics cannot be based on intuition in Kant's understanding; on the contrary, it appeals to “intellectual insight of founders of mathematics of new time – Descartes and Leibniz” (В.Ф. Асмус, *Проблема интуиции в философии и математике. Очерк истории: XVII – начало XX века*, Москва 2004).

³ Schelling and Kant's follower, Fichte could restore to the theory of cognition the concept of intellectual insight. V. Asmus stresses that these German classics developed an idea of intellectual insight in a different direction than Descartes and Spinoza. Religious philosophers Gaman and Jacobi influenced German classics to a high degree (В.Ф. Асмус, *Проблема интуиции в философии и математике*, p. 46). It is interesting that in Schelling's doctrine the accent in understanding of intuition shifted from intellectual to mystical. Investigations have displayed that the reason was Schelling's reference to Plato, to

Solovyov connected his concept of mystical insight with the comprehension of all-unity, viewed by him as “unconditional reality, on which (...) every other reality depends, and as all-unity, it is a mind or sense of everything that exists.”⁴ Namely, the all-unity of everything existing – in the philosopher’s opinion – makes the process of cognition possible. What was the place which Solovyov determined for mystical insight in the gnoseological system of the all-unity philosophy? He called mystical insight along with sensible and rational kinds of cognition, “the third kind of cognition,” or belief (a religious source), which allows a cognizing subject to cross the border which separates him from an object, to penetrate into it, to realise such a relation between a cognizing subject and a cognizable object, “in which they are connected together (...) in the very foundations of their being;”⁵ at that “existing reality (...) in its ingenuous substantive being which can be reached only by means of a similar ingenuous feeling or faith.”⁶ Considering mystical insight an alternative of religious faith and “initial base of integral knowledge,” Solovyov stated that it belongs to all people in various degrees.⁷

Mystical insight, he considered, has a divine origin, which is traced through all mental (human) and natural phenomena and things. In Solovyov’s opinion, the proof of mystical insight is artistic creative work.⁸ But insight is also a main form of true philosophy. Moreover, without intuition philosophy “both in successive empiricism and in successive rationalism equally leads to absurdity.”⁹

Mystical insight is a part of inner experience, the final goal of which is the cognition of God, and at the same time it receives integral knowledge about the world, because mystical insight allows one to contemplate

his analysis of mysteries (see Т.А. Полетаева, *Рецепция западной рационалистической и мистической традиции в религиозной философии В.С. Соловьева: Дис. ... канд. филос. наук, 09.00.13*, Белгород 2009, pp. 32-34). Evidently, this ambivalence in the idea of intellectual/mystical insight was borrowed by Solovyov from Schelling, and like the latter, he used both kinds of insight as interchangeable in his doctrine about inner experience.

⁴ В.С. Соловьев, *Критика отвлеченных начал*, in idem, *Сочинения: в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 1, p. 693.

⁵ Ibidem, pp. 719-720.

⁶ В.С. Соловьев, *Философские начала цельного знания*, in idem, *Сочинения: в 2 т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 197.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ *Философский словарь Владимира Соловьева*, ed. by Г.В. Беляев, Ростов-на-Дону 1997, p. 150. Commentary: In this it is seen influence of Schelling, who firstly sought for mystical insight in art.

⁹ В.С. Соловьев, *Философские начала цельного знания*, p. 193.

the essence of things. The reason why a human can contemplate “existing ideas,” as Solovyov asserted, was the influence of “ideal, or transcendental creatures” upon us.¹⁰ This statement of the philosopher is similar to the opinion of the western philosopher of the 9th century – Johannes Scotus Eriugena, who imagined divine ideas as creatures, the created starting principles by means of which God creates the Universe.¹¹ Like Eriugena, who according to Lossky did not feel the difference between essence and energies,¹² Solovyov offered to obtain the notion about the essence of things not out of the divine world sphere (although he insisted on that!), but from the sphere of the world of “a subtle creature.”

It is noteworthy to compare this statement of Solovyov to the nature of his personal mystical experience which according to the evidence of investigators, was a mediumistic experience peculiar to the Western mystics such as George Gihel, Gottfried Arnold and John Pordedzh, Baader and Swedenborg.¹³

It is possible that the world picture described by Solovyov in *Sophia* was partly seen by him in a mediumistic “revelation.” All this verifies Losev’s words who considered that it was exactly the mystical insight that led Solovyov to a global scheme-construction with a “cabbalistic, gnostic, theosophic and occult state.”¹⁴ As a whole, the author’s investigations (into the comparison of aspects of the doctrine about inner experience in cabbala, Schelling’s conception, interpretations of the mysteries by Plato, in a philosophical model of saint fathers and in Solovyov doctrine) show that the ideas of cabbala and Western mysticism – mainly of protestant tradition – had great influence on Solovyov in his doctrine about inner experience).¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 207.

¹¹ More detailed it’s written in Т. Полегаева, *Три грани метафизического поиска в философии В.С. Соловьева (учение о внутреннем опыте, софиология и личный мистический опыт)*, in Т. Obolovitch (ed), *Metafizyka a literatura w kulturze rosyjskiej. Metafizyka i literatura в русской культуре*, Kraków 2012, pp. 307-308.

¹² В.Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви. Догматическое богословие*, Москва 1991, p. 74.

¹³ On this fact there are indications of S. Solovyov, K. Mochulsky, G. Chulkov, A. Kozurev (i.e. А.П. Козырев, *Гностические влияния в философии Владимира Соловьева: Дисс. ... канд. филос. наук*, Москва 1996, pp. 4-5).

¹⁴ А.Ф. Лосев, *Русская философия*, in idem, *Философия, мифология, культура*, Москва 1991, pp. 227-233.

¹⁵ The detailed substantiation is in Т.А. Полегаева, *Рецепция западной мистической традиции в раннем учении В.С. Соловьева о внутреннем опыте и феноменологическое переосмысление этого учения в “Теоретической философии,”* “Соловьевские исследования,” vol. 30, 2 (2011), pp. 87-97.

The religious explanation of the mystical character of Solovyov's early philosophy, which is also proved by the above-mentioned conclusions, can be found in the investigations by the Polish philosopher J. Krasitsky. In his article devoted to the examination of the problem of evil in Solovyov's philosophy, he writes that in the early period of his work Solovyov "assumed an unforgivable rationalization of 'the mystery of evil' (...) [his] Christianity of this period was deprived of elements of passionate, existential resistance to evil, of feeling of the Golgotha mystery. That is why Solovyov's mysticism of this period is also almost completely deprived of the existential content and feeling; this mysticism is theosophical."¹⁶ It is interesting that Krasitsky, mentioning these arguments, on the one hand mentions K. Leontiev, referring to Solovyov's early worldview as "a rose-coloured Christianity;" and, on the other hand, quotes from Berdyaev's writing as follows: when Solovyov "was writing his large and greatest systematic, philosophical and theological treatises, he was to a large extent a gnostic-idealist, and his Christianity was optimistic and rosy."¹⁷

The examination of the late and unfinished articles of the philosopher known under the title of *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy*, with a view to comparing the gnoseological approaches in them and in Solovyov's early doctrine about inner experience and mystical insight, allows us to conclude that *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* features an original re-comprehension of the above-mentioned early doctrine by the philosopher in the phenomenological context. Here, there are no gnostic ideas or ideas of intellectual (mystical) insight, but there are traces of the early gnoseological doctrine, which is to be seen when the philosopher uses such ideas as "inner experience," "belief as a kind of knowledge,"¹⁸ them being connected by "early" Solovyov with mystical insight.

On the other hand, in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* there is a doctrine about the philosophical attainment of unconditional knowledge, stated with the aid of ideas which can be referred to as "phenomenological."¹⁹

¹⁶ Я. Красицкий, *Бог, человек и зло. Исследование философии Владимира Соловьева*, transl. by С.М. Червоная, Москва 2009, <http://www.modernlib.ru/books/yan_krasitskiy/bog_chelovek_i_zlo_issledovanie_filosofii_vladimira_soloveva/read/>.

¹⁷ В. Berdyaev, *The problem of East and West within the religious consciousness of Vl. Solov'ev*, <http://www.krotov.info/library/02_b/berdyaev/1911_053_eng.html>.

¹⁸ В.С. Соловьев, *Теоретическая философия*, in idem, *Сочинения: в 2 т.*, vol. 1, pp. 774-775.

¹⁹ The detailed substantiation is in Т.А. Полетаева, *Феноменологический проект богопознания в "Теоретической философии" В.С. Соловьева*, "Вестник ПСТГУ. I: Богословие. Философия," vol. 34, 2 (2011), pp. 61-74.

However, taking into consideration that the term “phenomenological” was used by Solovyov also in his conception about inner experience in *Sophia*, we can confirm that in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* feature the conception about inner experience re-comprehended by phenomenological language.

To prove this, an opinion of the Western philosopher H. Dahm can be cited. He writes that “conclusions of Solovyov’s philosophy (...) anticipated almost all tools of German phenomenology.”²⁰

From this point of view, *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* can be called an original sketch, or a forerunner of phenomenology.

Let us examine several specific examples of the similarity of Solovyov’s ideas in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* with the ideas of Husserl’s phenomenology (as a classical variant of phenomenology). So, Solovyov uses a concept of a self-realising and reflective subject – this concept, as it is known, was also the starting point of Husserl’s phenomenology. Then, Solovyov calls a pure subject of thought a phenomenological fact, which is authentic “only in the structure of the present content of consciousness.”²¹ The philosopher writes that the pure Ego differs from psychic states with which it correlates in that these psychic states are various and changeable, while the pure Ego remains the same. A pure Ego is “an empty and colourless channel” through which a stream of psychic existence flows, i.e. it is a phenomenological subject, “a form containing psychic material of any individuality,”²² and any psychic subject which has a consciousness is Ego, though one question remains open, as the philosopher notes; it is the question about what this Ego is – empiric or transcendental.²³

The above-mentioned argumentation of Solovyov about the pure Ego as a phenomenological subject of cognition, i.e. as a constant form, and about the subdivision of the Ego into an empiric Ego and a transcendental Ego make it possible to draw an analogy with the Husserl’s approach to the Ego: as it is known, the German philosopher confirms the existence of “a natural Ego” (real) and “an ideal Ego” (transcendental), in which connection the psychological and transcendental spheres of experience, as he thinks, are parallel thanks to the identity of the Ego.²⁴

²⁰ H. Dahm, *Grundzuge russischen Denkens: Personallichkeiten und Zeugnisse d. 19. u. 20. Jh.*, München 1979, p. 33.

²¹ В.С. Соловьев, *Теоретическая философия*, p. 783.

²² Ibidem, pp. 785-787.

²³ Ibidem, p. 794.

²⁴ E. Husserl, *Phenomenology (Article for the Encyclopaedia Britannica)*, transl. by R.E. Palmer, <<http://pl.scribd.com/doc/60798124/Husserl-Encyclopedia-Britannica-Article>>.

Another analogy that can be drawn between the argumentations of Solovyov and Husserl is a problem of intentionality. The idea of intentionality, as it is known, was borrowed by Husserl from Brentano, who said that psychic phenomena were directed at an object, they were always correlated with some content. The essence of intentionality in Husserl's understanding, as P. Prechtl says, was more precisely expressed by Paul Ricouer, who defined it as "a primacy of consciousness of something over self-consciousness."²⁵

The western philosopher E. Swiderski in his article on the comparison of Solovyov's writings of *The justification of the Good* and *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* finds close notional analogies with the idea of intentionality in the following statement of Solovyov: "there is a psychic fact present, the content of which (...) goes beyond any presence; there is a fact meaning something more than any fact."²⁶ Swiderski considers that by these words the philosopher means a "intentional directivity of mental acts."²⁷ Nevertheless, as the investigator notes further, "he does not pursue the idea in a direction which might suggest familiarity with Brentano's earlier work, never mind that of contemporaries like Frege, the Gestalt psychologists, and of course Husserl who, at the time Solov'ëv was meditating about *Theoretical Philosophy*, was just shedding the remnants of psychologism."²⁸

To describe the transformation of Solovyov's views in the sphere of gnoseology Krasitsky cites an opinion of A. Besançon, who pointed that "Solovyov's way leads from theosophical gnosis to naturalness and simplicity of faith (*pistis*), from theosophical confusion and 'sophiological' complication and philosophical speculations (speculative arguments and conclusions), characterising his early (the first) and the middle periods of works, to 'God's simplicity' of the last two years."²⁹ This "God's simplicity," though not expressed simply, accompanied by vivid artistic images, sudden paradoxes and discourses, so loved by Solovyov, is to be found in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy*, in the doctrine of the philosophical attainment of unconditional knowledge. Let us pay attention to the first key

²⁵ П. Прехтль, *Введение в феноменологию Гуссерля*, transl. by И. Инишев, Томск 1999, p. 21.

²⁶ В.С. Соловьев, *Теоретическая философия*, p. 801.

²⁷ E. Swiderski, *Vladimir Solov'ëv's "Virtue Epistemology"*, "Studies in East European Thought," vol. 51, 3 (1999), p. 207.

²⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹ A. Besançon, *Sfalszowane dobro*, transl. by W. Prus, "W Drodze" 6 (1989), p. 52.

idea of this doctrine of Solovyov: a human as a subject of cognitive process is declared by the philosopher as a phenomenological subject. What does Solovyov mean by that besides that this subject, as it was mentioned above, is a “form, including psychic material of any individuality?” First of all, the essence of Solovyov’s phenomenological approach to the human person in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* can be understood from the fact that it was there that the philosopher negated the substantial character of the person.

As E. Trubetskoy explained, during the last period of Solovyov’s work, only God was a single substance in the true meaning of this word, and so in the phenomenology of *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* we can see a confirmation of the doctrine “about creative nature of all existing substances, except the single and absolute one.”³⁰ Indeed, there is a significant phrase in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* about the single way of finding the truth – it is “to forget about a subjective centre for the sake of the unconditional centre.”³¹ Secondly, in Solovyov’s interpretation a phenomenological subject is a subject of philosophy which “presents itself as becoming the reason for the truth.”³²

Another key idea of Solovyov’s doctrine of the philosophical attainment of unconditional knowledge, from our point of view, is the definition of moral purity of a cognizing subject as a prerequisite for cognitive process. Solovyov calls a conscience, a moral factor an initial point in the realisation of intention to cognize the truth.

The philosopher honesty is infused with motivation and impulses which are in their essence moral and cognitive at the same time.³³ Therefore E. Swiderski calls *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* an “epistemology of virtue” and considers that Solovyov shows in it “an apersonalist account of consciousness” and “‘philosophizing’ is in fact no longer a self-directed enterprise. The truth is too awesome and, despite the existence of the moral order, we are only parts of it and had better supersede ourselves for the sake of the bigger picture.”³⁴

There is also another interesting opinion of E. Swiderski; he says that in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* Solovyov restored a classical

³⁰ Е.Н. Трубецкой, *Мирозерцание В.С. Соловьева*, Москва 1913, vol. 2, p. 251.

³¹ В.С. Соловьев, *Теоретическая философия*, p. 827.

³² Ibidem, p. 820.

³³ Ibidem, p. 760.

³⁴ E. Swiderski, *Vladimir Solov’ev’s “Virtue Epistemology,”* p. 213.

conception of philosophy, in which “transcendental ideas” (i.e. ideas of variability of objective reality, truth, good) get their supreme meaning.

From this point of view all the philosopher’s argumentation about reliability and pure consciousness are nothing else but means showing the main thing – “if there is ‘pure’ philosophical knowledge, the formal object of which is the truth, then the truth is inseparable from the good, and that this insight should determine the shape of any so-called theory of knowledge.”³⁵

So Solovyov, re-comprehending his early gnoseological doctrine about inner experience, underlines the necessity of high moral purity of a cognizing subject and in this, from our point of view, moves closer to saint fathers – mystics who said that for the cognition of God as well as general cognition first of all it was necessary to attain a pure heart. Still, it is worth bearing in mind that Solovyov’s early gnoseological doctrine of inner experience, stated by him mainly in the works of *The Crisis of Western Philosophy*, *Sophia*, *The Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge*, made no demands for moral purification.³⁶

Another key idea of Solovyov’s late gnoseology is that self-denial of the psychological Ego becomes the most important condition of attainment of the truth and abiding in it. In particular, E. Swiderski draws a conclusion here, writing, that “in the third and last meditation, Solov’ev has moved far enough that he is able to affirm that, first, thinking in its form aspires to Truth as universal, cosmic; that, there-fore, second, rational assent to this Truth entails a kind of ascetic renunciation of the psychological or empirical self; and that, lastly, truth is coeval with the Absolute Good.”³⁷

On the one hand, the demand for self-denial of the psychological Ego, at which Solovyov hints not so evidently as repeatedly on the pages of *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy*, resembles Husserl’s method of “epoche.” On the other hand, there is a parallel to the doctrines of saint fathers (Clement of Alexandria, Evagrius of Pontus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor), who said that rising to Divine mysteries demands from an ascetic not only religious faith, but

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 201.

³⁶ However, this can be countered with the logic of *The Critique of Abstract Principles*, which begins with ethics, and where morality, according to Solovyov, precedes cognition. At last, *The Spiritual Foundations of Life* clearly enough underlines the significance which is attached by the philosopher to Christian morality. However, in these works there are no ideas concerning the doctrine of mystical insight or inner experience.

³⁷ E. Swiderski, *Vladimir Solov’ev’s “Virtue Epistemology,”* p. 211.

purification of a soul from any passion, which is possible by way of prayer and spiritual feat.

In *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* Solovyov adds to his gnoseology the aspect which in mystical theology of saint fathers is named catharsis. It is necessary to emphasise that Solovyov's early gnoseological doctrine of inner experience, which was stated in the works mentioned above, did not include self-denial of the psychological Ego, i.e. some ascetic principle. And although asceticism, which is a philosophical and theoretical point in question, in respect of the demands mentioned it can be compared (though not completely) with the asceticism of Eastern saint fathers – hermits.

With regard to Solovyov's statement about the truth as a universal form accompanying the Absolute Good the following can be said: though throughout *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* the philosopher does not even once expressly mention the cognition of God, there is no doubt that his words about the Absolute Good imply nothing but God. So, bearing in mind the incompleteness of *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy*, and not knowing how Solovyov would develop his thought further, considering his understanding of the human subject as a phenomenological subject (who, according to Solovyov's idea, whereby "to give himself completely in to the truth itself," he must forget himself "for the sake of the unconditional centre"), and also remembering that the aim of Solovyov's gnoseological doctrine of inner experience (which in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* is developed within the phenomenological context) was the attainment of God, we can assume that philosophical cognition according to Solovyov must be crowned with the cognition of God. The above makes it possible to interpret Solovyov's *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* as a phenomenological design for the cognition of God.³⁸

³⁸ Certainly, inner experience of Eastern Christian mystics is more complicated. Description of this experience in versification of venerable Maximus the Confessor demonstrates that the key ideas of Solovyov's doctrine of the philosophical attainment of unconditional knowledge can be compared to some ideas of the Eastern mystical theology. Like other fathers-mystics, Maximus the Confessor emphasised that in order to embark on the road to cognition, necessary is moral purification, catharsis, i.e. casting away of the "dusty cloud of matter," which darkens the eyes of the soul and deceives with "unreasonable feeling" (Maximus the Confessor, *Questions to Thalassius*, Quotation from: Максим Исповедник, *Вопросоответы к Фалассию*, transl. by А.И. Сидоров, in *Творения преп. Максима Исповедника*, Москва 1994, vol. 2, pp. 21-22). It means that all cravings and desires must be restrained, and the mind must really rule the human, be the focus of all strengths of the soul. But the attainment of meekness is more difficult, according to venerable Maximus. At last, the main thing is to block the way leading to temptations, i.e. practising the feelings to

Examination of the essence of the doctrine of inner experience and mystical insight in Solovyov's early philosophy and its re-comprehension in his late philosophy, as well as clarification of how in the context of this theme Western philosophers analyse Solovyov's gnoseological views leads to the following conclusions:

In his early works Solovyov – critically re-comprehending ideas of Western rationalism – developed the gnostic doctrine of mystical insight and inner experience under the influence of Western mystics of the Protestant and cabbala tradition, but at the end of his life he revised it in the phenomenological context and, having abandoned gnostic ideas, he transformed it into the doctrine of philosophical attainment of unconditional knowledge – statements which can be compared to the ideas of Husserl's phenomenology and to the ideas of Eastern mystical theology.

Referring to the ideas of such Western philosophers as E. Swiderski,

Y. Krasitsky, H. Dahm, A. Besançon for the sake of the explanation of some aspects of formation of Solovyov's gnoseology and especially in the interpretation of *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* demonstrates, on the one hand, interest in Solovyov's philosophy as a whole in the West; and on the other hand, it offers additional arguments, widening the understanding of the philosopher's views in the sphere of gnoseology.

overcome sinful thoughts. All the way pure prayer is important, which means bareness of the mind of any mental images, ascension of the mind above all images and the transfiguration of the mind itself, achieving simplicity, "mono-kindness." Attainment of dispassionateness is connected in a hermit with complete love – "agape," on wings of which the mind achieves theological grace. At first, having become free, Maximus writes, a soul begins to gather "through natural contemplation in a spirit logos of created reality," after which it appeals to intelligible [substances], which are perceived as "simple speculations" by her mind, pure of sensible thought, and apart it perceives "simple competence, connecting everything with the other in the initial Word of Wisdom" (ibidem). Venerable Maximus says that the cognition of God in His highest reality is possible, but not in concepts of reason, but in thought-surpassing competence, in ecstasy. This moment of the attainment of the highest summits of holiness happens, when, having left all words and "heavenly sounds," the mind reaches into "over-radiant darkness, in which He abides, Who exists without the limits of everything" – into "truly mystical darkness of ignorance." Describing the further state of the human mind after it has become "mentally merged" with God Himself, venerable Maximus notes that by virtue of this the human mind obtains from God the inexpressible learning of the abiding truth and does not return to sin any more.

As demonstrated, Y. Krasitsky, addressing Solovyov's philosophical and mystical ideas, explains the nature of Solovyov's early mysticism as non-perception of the nature of evil in the works from this period, i.e. a rational and non-Christian attitude to the problem of evil, which was the reason for the philosopher's keenness on such Gnostic doctrines as occultism, spiritualism, esoteric and mediumistic practices undertaken by many young people in those days.

As for Solovyov's gnoseology, Western philosophers appreciate *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* very much. For instance, Dahm considers that this work features almost all prototypes of German phenomenology tools. E. Swiderski gives examples demonstrating the comparability of the ideas in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy* to some ideas of Husserl's phenomenology, but, on the other hand, he calls the doctrine of philosophical attainment of unconditional knowledge an epistemology of virtue and the restoration by Solovyov of classical approaches to the understanding of cognitive process, which are based on the main conviction that the truth is inseparable from good.

Given the example of Krasitsky it is possible to see that Western researchers who interpret Solovyov's philosophy show tendency not only to original thinking, but to readiness to receive and develop the ideas of Russian philosophers.

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Marek Urban

The Pontifical University John Paul II in Cracow (Cracow, Poland)

In quest of aesthetics. Hans Urs von Balthasar's reading of Vladimir Soloviev

Introduction

Hans Urs von Balthasar referred to Vladimir Soloviev's works and thought in many of his works. His theological aesthetics appears to have been most deeply researched, for Balthasar devoted the second part of his *Trilogy* to it. "Were I to be asked which volumes of the *Ästhetik (The Glory of the Lord)*, I love most, I would reply: the one (...) in which I tried to expound twelve great theologians, beginning with Irenaeus and ending with Soloviev; in their integrity they let the sound of what I have wanted to make heard ring out"¹ – he wrote, thus characterizing his writing activity. Hans Urs von Balthasar was a man of superior mental capabilities of holistic reasoning, encompassing not only philosophy and theology, but also literature and arts.

Once asked about the relation between philosophy and theology, Balthasar expounded it, pointing to the three stages of human thought conception,² which he perceived above all as attempts at understanding the meaning of being. Firstly, before the coming of Christ every philosophy was always a theology, where the central moment was man's search for the Absolute. The love of wisdom resulted in the necessity of posing the question and in attempting the comprehension of what being is, or – to use theological language – searching for the answer to the question whether man, given his limited capabilities, is able to find the infinite God. Secondly, a crucial role in Christianity is played by the capability of the reasoning

¹ H.U. von Balthasar, *Another ten Years*, transl. by J. Saward, in idem, *My Work. In Retrospect*, San Francisco 1993, p. 108.

² Cf. *Geist und Feuer. Ein Gespräch mit Hans Urs von Balthasar*, "Herder Korrespondenz," vol. 30 (1976), pp. 72-82.

subject, as well as the fact that theology directly and necessarily carries philosophy within. Various philosophical forms, which are characterized by their ability to be captured in diverse ways, can be the expression of theological content. The transition from pictorial and mythical thinking to philosophical thinking is distinctly characteristic of the descriptions found in the Holy Scriptures. Thirdly, the difficulty in determining the relation between philosophy and theology arises after Christ's Redemption of the world, as well as of man present in it. In Christ the comprehension of the meaning of being came to be fully elucidated, for Christ Himself is the meaning.³

Thus, religion and natural theology were presented with complete explanations, and the searching man was found by God. Granted, one can rebuff this theistic line of reasoning, and embark on the path of atheistic reasoning, present in the post-Christian sphere, but Balthasar is convinced that there is no way back to the times before Christ's Revelation. After Christ, Christians must become guardians of philosophy. Thus, "that which over the centuries was and is lively in the Christian philosophy, owes its life to faith and theology. Great Christian thinkers are only inasmuch great philosophers as they are theologians. The decision about Christianity is located in them in the same place where non-Christian thinkers decide on the Absolute – on their god. Christian philosophers themselves become theologians, if they are thinkers of the ultimate passion."⁴ Balthasar was continually inspired by the question about the superhistorical dimension of human thought and activity, the question about the relation between

³ At this point it is worthwhile mentioning Vladimir Sloviev's thought against the backdrop of Platonic philosophy: "Before Christianity, the natural principle in human nature was the given object (the fact); divinity was something that was sought for (the ideal), and it worked on man in an 'ideal' way, simply as the object of seeking. But in Christ what was sought was given to us, the ideal became fact (...). Before Christianity, the firm foundation of life was human nature (the old Adam); the divine was the principle of change, motion, progress. After the appearance of Christianity, the Divine itself, incarnate now for evermore, stands over against man as a firm foundation, as the element in which our life exists; what is sought is a humanity to answer to this Divinity; that is, a humanity capable of uniting itself with it by independent action, appropriating it for itself. As the object of seeking, this ideal humanity here becomes the active principle of history, the principle of motion and of progress. The outcome must be man divinized, that is the humanity which has taken the Divine into itself." H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. III: *Studies in theological style: Lay styles*, transl. by A. Louth, J. Saward, M. Simon, R. Williams, ed. by J. Riches, San Francisco 1986, p. 287.

⁴ H.U. von Balthasar, *Von den Aufgaben der katholischen Philosophie in der Zeit*, Freiburg 1998, pp. 19-20.

that which is human – worldly and that which is Christian – supernatural. Balthasar was convinced that western humanism, from Greek philosophy through German idealism and to classical cultural forms of the West appeared as a unity, which must be forever discovered anew.

This unity also served as a demand that the thought in the West come closer to the philosophical and theological achievements of the East. Balthasar evidently looks for inspiration in eastern philosophical tradition.⁵

The Christian task of guarding philosophy over the centuries follows not only from the care taken over the correctness of philosophical thinking and the necessity of philosophy and theology mutually permeating each other, but it above all serves to define the goal of true Christian philosophy, which is the restoration of the secularized thinking to its true form. Balthasar discerns this secularized form of Christian thinking above all in “sentences of seemingly pure philosophy, e.g. in gnosis, in heretic mysticism of the Middle Ages from Eriugena to Böhme, in idealism from Kant to Hegel, as well as in the philosophy of life and existential philosophy, both fully pervaded with Christian motifs.”⁶

Among the guardians of philosophy Balthasar reckons Vladimir Soloviev and places him next to J. G. Hamann. According to Balthasar, “Soloviev knew how to embed the depths of German Idealism in the dimensions of his ecumenical thinking better than today’s evolutionists.”⁷ This ecumenical dimension will bear the fruit of universal philosophy in Soloviev’s work.

In the introduction to the second volume of *The Glory of the Lord*, Balthasar will state, in an even more pronounced, manner that “Soloviev stands at the other end of idealistic philosophy, bringing its enormous harvest into Christian theology, while at the same time he draws in the whole theological tradition of the East, from the Greek Fathers, through Byzantium and ancient Russia, to Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy and Leontiev: a thinker of universal genius, who anticipates the vision of Teilhard de Chardin and to some extent corrects it.”⁸ It seems that the other end of idealistic

⁵ Cf. H.U. von Balthasar, *Christlicher Humanismus*, “Gloria Die,” vol. I, 1 (1949), p. 37.

⁶ H.U. von Balthasar, *Von den Aufgaben der katholischen Philosophie in der Zeit*, p. 21.

⁷ H.U. von Balthasar, *In Retrospect*, transl. by K. Batinovich, B. McNeil, in idem, *My Work. In Retrospect*, p. 83.

⁸ H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. II: *Studies in theological style: Clerical styles*, transl. by A. Louth, J. Saward, M. Simon, R. Williams, ed. by J. Riches, San Francisco 1986, p. 19.

philosophy ultimately leads to the overcoming of it, which consists in showing the point at which the opening up to the “ultimate” takes place. Thus, in the confrontation between German idealism and Christian line of thought, the mutual permeation of theology and philosophy comes to be most clearly explicated. The idealist dialectic reveals absolute dualism in the reflexive subject, not pointing to the possibility of the effective overcoming of the tensions and contradictions inherent in it. Apparently, deriving philosophizing from subjective standpoints, and not from the objective being, results in delineating of the philosophical horizon exclusively from the perspective of the problem of the subject itself, disregarding object determinants, which can somehow shape the being itself.

Theological aesthetics

Balthasar presents the discussion of Vladimir Soloviev’s thought chiefly as part of his aesthetics.⁹ He gives over more than seventy pages to Soloviev, whom he refers to in the second volume of *The Glory of the Lord*.¹⁰ Balthasar’s idea to present that which in Christianity is (exceptional) unrivalled, in the form of a synthesizing image, led him to lay down the outline of *Trilogy*, the first part of which is dedicated to theological aesthetics. Balthasar entitled it *Glory*, for as he himself explains, “God can be known only in his Lordliness and sublimity (*Herr-heit* and *Hehr-heit*), in what Israel called *Kabod* and the New Testament *gloria*.”¹¹ God descends into the world “to display and to radiate himself, the splendor of his eternal triune love in that ‘disinterestedness’ that true love has in common with true beauty.”¹² Thus, “the ‘glorious’ corresponds on the theological plane to what the transcendental ‘beautiful’ is on the philosophical plane. But for the great

⁹ Describing Balthasar’s texts about Soloviev, Iso Baumer writes: “It is truly vertiginous to consider how out of these admittedly vital, but still fragmentary parts of the whole work, and despite those as yet mistranslated poems (...) he manages to create an insightful and concise synthesis: each statement on these well-nigh seventy pages is substantiated, and yet it does not read like a pedantic philosophical treatise, but like a brilliant and fascinating essay.” I. Baumer, *Vermittler des Unzeitgemäßen. Hans Urs von Balthasar als Autor, Herausgeber und Verleger*, in K. Lehmann, W. Kasper (eds), *Hans Urs von Balthasar – Gestalt und Werk*, Köln 1989, p. 94.

¹⁰ Cf. H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. II: *Studies in theological style: Clerical styles*.

¹¹ H.U. von Balthasar, *In Retrospect*, p. 80.

¹² *Ibidem*.

thinkers of the West (from Homer and Plato via Augustine and Thomas down to Goethe and Hölderlin, Schelling and Heidegger), beauty is the last comprehensive attribute of all-embracing being as such, its last, mysterious radiance, which makes it loved as a whole despite the terrifying reality it may hide for the individual existent."¹³ Even though Balthasar is aware that from the epistemological viewpoint aesthetics remains on the plane of light, image or examination, and yet its metaphysical meaning points not only to the "beauty" in its philosophical (transcendental) meaning, but also to its elevation in "glory" as the shining of the divinity of God Himself.

Theology is enlightened and moved with God's glory, and thanks to that it can keep developing and display the radiation of glory in the world. However, it is difficult and actually impossible to define what it really is, for it expresses the essence of God Himself. Both the content and form of the great currents can only testify to that which is inexpressible. Hence, Balthasar's choice of twelve theologians, poets and philosophers in the second volume of *Glory* is somewhat arbitrary. First, he mentions Irenaeus, Augustine, Dionysius, Anselm and Bonaventure. They shaped the Christian theology, while Dante, St John of the Cross and Pascal are figures endowed with individual spirituality. Soloviev and Hamann appear as "the watchmen at the dawn and dusk of German Idealism."¹⁴ Striving to overcome German idealism, both Balthasar and Soloviev entered the sphere of universal meaning of Christian thought, turning it into both ecumenical value and philosophical depth.

Balthasar finds Soloviev a great Catholic thinker. Arguably, Soloviev's formal affiliation with the Catholic Church remains a controversial issue, yet Balthasar was convinced that "the Church, which is sent into the world, owes it to this world to find an intellectual language that can in principle be understood by the present period. She must stand in dialogue with the thought of the age – of every age. The Church Fathers and the theologians of the high scholastic period remain the model for this."¹⁵ The dialogue with Soloviev's thought was greatly constructive and was intended to find the right place for philosophical consideration in the theological discourse.

There are many sources of Soloviev's coming closer to the Catholic outlook on the world. First and foremost, Soloviev "both delivers his final verdict on Kantian and Hegelian formalism, and at the same time secures

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 83.

¹⁵ H.U. von Balthasar, *A short guide to my books*, transl. by B. McNeil, in idem, *My Work: In Retrospect*, p. 40.

a place for the theological aesthetic already in existence but not hitherto recognized as a proper discipline of thought, by giving it at least the outline of a formal structure. He is also ‘the only Russian writer to have left us an aesthetic system.’¹⁶ Theological aesthetics according to Balthasar wants to achieve universal perfection, where the world is pervaded by God. Soloviev is a Russian writer who has sympathy for the “Roman form of the Church” not only on the basis of an aesthetic vision, as in the case of romantics, but he fully derives his look from “the aesthetic-social standpoint.”¹⁷ Secondly, Soloviev creates an attempt at synthesizing the Hegelian system with the eastern form of Christian thinking. The synthesis follows from the understanding of the central Hegelian thought, in which “the subject is a person only because it becomes objective spirit: this spirit mediates between the subject and that which lies outside it, and as such it has structure and form. But so long as this form remains limited by the particular – especially the national – the spirit has not yet acquired the universality that properly belongs to it.”¹⁸

Thus, the way from the subjective to objective spirit becomes an image of the overcoming of individual thinking, particularly national one, and leads to the understanding of the Catholic universality. Both Balthasar and Soloviev are convinced that “Hegel’s all-embracing intellectual structure in its systematic as well as its historical aspects has been of invaluable service to Eastern Christianity, a means for it to transcend its national limitations, leading it back to its true identity.”¹⁹

Transcending national limitations gives rise to a universal line of thought, which has its source in the Hegelian system, in the dialectic of the finite and infinite, but can only remain a process of dynamic development, ultimately not attaining the unity, that which is absolutely infinite. Hence, Balthasar presents Soloviev as the one who could map out the road out of the Hegelian thought, thus heading towards the overcoming of the dialectical tension. “In place of the Protestant ‘dialectic,’ which relentlessly transcends all things to find its term in the absolute Spirit, the basic conceptual model in Soloviev’s thought is the catholic *integration* of all partial points of view and forms of actualization into an organic totality that annuls and

¹⁶ H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. III, p. 281; cf. also Maxime Herman in the Introduction to V. Soloviev, *Crise de la philosophie occidentale*, Paris 1947 (M. Herman, *Vladimir Soloviev, sa vie et son oeuvre*, pp. 5-157).

¹⁷ H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. III, p. 281.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 282.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

uplifts (*aufhebt*) all things in a manner that preserves that which is transcended far more successfully than in Hegel."²⁰

Thanks to the power of integration, individual forms of existence find their adequate places in the world, creating a coherent and harmonious unity of various philosophical visions. Integration thinking has its origins in a distinct and unequivocal comprehension of God, who transcends "personalism (God as the free *hen*) and beyond vulgar pantheism (God as *pan*)."²¹ Christian thinking conceives of God as *Hen kai Pan*. As Soloviev writes, "God is not exhaustively defined in terms of personality. He is not only an independent entity, He is everything, not only a distinct individual but the all-embracing substantial being of things, not only an existent but Being itself."²² The opening of every finite being up to infinity is instrumental in freeing from all subjectivism and selfishness, as well as opens up to change and desire to unite with the One who is Everything.

Balthasar presents a broad opening of Soloviev's thought to the activity of great thinkers and theologians from the past, as well as his simultaneous anticipation of initiatives of future philosophers and culture creators of the 20th century. In St Thomas Aquinas' thought Soloviev finds a brilliant capability to order and organize the history of the philosophical outlook on the world, with his own integration method he surpasses Dilthey with his spirit forms, Spranger with his forms of life, or Spengler with his forms of civilization. Soloviev's thought overcomes Edmund Husserl's monadological idealism, thanks to opening up to theoretical philosophy based above all on ethical carrying on to activity and freedom. His ethical considerations bring him close to Max Scheler's philosophical premises, where a religious starting point, a criticism of Kantian formalism and phenomenology of basic ethical data are predominant; ultimately, these cause the tension between material reality and ideal, divine reality. Approximating to Freud's theory of sublimation reflects the transformation of selfish forces into what is good in man. In Balthasar's opinion, the greatest affinity connects Soloviev's works with visions of comprehensive outlook on the world in Teilhard de Chardin, for whom "the collective evolution of humanity and the cosmos toward the complete coming into being of God in the world, in the mystical Body of Christ."²³

²⁰ Ibidem, pp. 283-284.

²¹ Ibidem; cf. V. Soloviev, *Twelve Lectures on Godmanhood*, transl. by P. Zouboff, Poughkeepsie 1944, lecture 5, p. 91.

²² H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. III, p. 285.

²³ Ibidem, p. 290; At this point Balthasar adds: "If Christians eighty years ago had taken

Balthasar describes Soloviev's works in three distinctly separate parts. The first one constitutes an attempt at the extension of theosophic system. Theosophy was to be understood as an integration of philosophy and theology, but not in the approach of German idealism. Idealism recognized an ideal of absolute knowledge as both philosophy and theology, whilst for Christian thinking the integration between philosophy and theology is conditional upon free acts of free God, which at the same time constitute a revelation of the supreme absolute reason.²⁴ The second part of Soloviev's work describes the ecumenical effort of ecclesiastical reconciliation between the East and the West, the aim of which is, among others, "to vindicate the faith of our fathers and to raise it to a new level of rational consciousness: to show how this ancient faith, when freed from the fetters of local isolation and national egotism, coincides with eternal and ecumenical truth."²⁵

At last, the third part "returns again to philosophy, outlining the system in its final form, with the accent this time on 'theurgy' and apocalypse."²⁶ Soloviev's aesthetics derives from the tension between progress and apocalypse, as well as it shows "the total opposition between Hegel's dialectic of absolute knowledge (which again first takes flight – as the 'owl of Minerva' – in the twilight of the end of history) and Soloviev's."²⁷ In Hegel's dialectic knowledge, evil is only ignorance, whereas in Christian thought, it becomes a conscious rejection of love. The ultimate fight is of eschatological dimension, goes beyond the possibility of logical settlement of historical process.

Aesthetics and apocalypse

Understanding Hegelian dialectic, which surpasses finite forms, opened up for Soloviev a Christian form of integration thinking, where a vision of organic whole gives rise to a new look at the universal line of thought. A view of that vision from an aesthetic perspective might result in an overall outlook on reality. Balthasar is interested in theological aesthetics set

Soloviev's world picture seriously, there would be no cause today for all the anxious efforts to refute Teilhard" (ibidem).

²⁴ Cf. ibidem, p. 293.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 294.

²⁶ Cf. ibidem, p. 297.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 296.

forth by Soloviev, who came to understand that "Rome possessed that form of catholicity that alone can unite the world and lead it toward the Kingdom of God."²⁸ On the one hand, the rapprochement between the theological tradition of the East and the Roman face of the Church bears the fruit of ecumenical effort, while on the other it outlines the mental manner in which to comprehensively view reality. Balthasar knew that "Soloviev dreamt of the unification of the world, not in a totalitarian monarchy, but in a total free theocracy, into which all things, secular and spiritual, must be integrated."²⁹ The unification of the worldly and divine worlds is a challenge for new aesthetics.

Soloviev's last years of life, related to the speculative work on the creation of theosophical system, were to result in the transition from ethics and theory to aesthetic. It seems that aesthetics, which never attained its final form, "was to have been an aesthetic that was the issue both of the 'realisation of the good' (the idea taking form) and of perfected truth (the idea, that which is worthy of being, becoming real), and so a 'science of the apocalypse,' of the revelation of God's Kingdom, God's ultimate coming-to-be in man and the world."³⁰

Balthasar discerns the fact that the two words: "glory" and "apocalypse" are closely linked, and Soloviev endeavours to reduce the meaning of apocalypse to aesthetic, understood as an ultimate harmony. "This revelation, and the glory of God's children that all creation awaits in hope consists in the fact that the free union of God and man is to be fully realised in the whole of humanity, in every sphere of its life and activity (...), all these spheres must be led into the condition of divine-human, harmonious unity, must enter the state of free theocracy in which the Church Universal will attain to the full measure of Christ's maturity."³¹

However, reducing the meaning of apocalypse to aesthetic is not Soloviev's final thought. The way leading up to the freedom of creation seems necessary. The meaning of aesthetic as harmony must be engulfed by the biblical meaning of apocalypse. The aesthetic image of the world will be complemented with the freedom of creatures, and it will eventually find its fulfillment in God's will. Soloviev's early philosophy already outlined the problem of man's freedom, stating that "all true freedom rests upon

²⁸ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 338-339.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 340.

³¹ *Ibidem*; cf. V. Soloviev, *The Spiritual Foundation of Life*, transl. by D. Attwater, London 1938.

the overcoming of the power to say no, and that the depth of denial that is possible increases in proportion to the increase of consciousness and spirituality.”³²

How to relieve the tension between abstract thinking and concrete action? The solution might be an acceptance of the historical process in which development lies in the hands of a man becoming, and reaches its height in Logos incarnate, which offers superhuman capabilities and life to every human.³³ Yet, it remains an open question whether our knowledge of Logos allows us to fearlessly accept the fact that “as the powers of good advance through history, so too do the powers of evil, since progress can in no case outplay the free decisions of humanity, least of all if we conceive the world-soul as ‘coming to itself’ in man, and if man is not cast down from his throne to be a mere function of a monistic *Weltgeist*.”³⁴ If we take into account the transition from aesthetic understood as harmony to the aesthetic viewing of the world, where the central moment is the freedom of the creation, a comprehensive question that remains unanswered is: what in fact is the content of aesthetics?

Dostoyevsky’s words of “beauty saving the world” – preceding the essay on aesthetics – set the direction that Solovyov pursues, constructing universal aesthetics. Absolute beauty is not presented to humanity, but posed as a task; it is man’s job to find a means to accomplish this task. In Balthasar’s opinion, Soloviev is a staunch opponent of idealist aesthetics, according to which beauty can only be an illusory opinion, a phenomenon and not a reality. “According to Hegelian aesthetics, beauty is the embodiment of a universal and eternal idea in individual and transitory phenomena; in this embodiment, moreover, these phenomena remain transitory, disappearing like individual waves in the stream of the material process. Only for a moment do they reflect the light of an eternal idea. This is possible only if the relation between spiritual principle and material phenomenon is accidental. True and perfect beauty, on the other hand, since it expresses the full solidarity and mutual penetration of these two levels, must necessarily allow one of them (the material) to come really to share in the immortality of the other.”³⁵ Soloviev calls for a turn towards realism, which brings the possibility of opening up to the truth of the world and true reality of the whole, which in turn brings – in the sensual sphere – an

³² H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. III, p. 340.

³³ Cf. *ibidem*.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 341.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 343.

incarnation of the idea of good and truth, eventually lending it a form of beauty. Hence, the ideal being is one that is endowed with existence, and which at the same time is true, good and beautiful. The idea in its entirety also requires the unity of the whole, as well as a freedom of its individual parts. Ultimately, “this idea of beauty is indeed eternally real in God himself, in so far as he exists as the eternal actuality of all his potential in the fullest degree of freedom.”³⁶ The idea characterized by freedom and belonging to the whole is love. “Love in the extended sense in which this concept coincides with that of unanimity, harmony and peace, the concept of the totality of the world, the concept of *kosmos*. In this sense, the Good, the True and Beautiful are only the various images of love. (...) The will of the Good, however, is in its essence genuine love, or love’s source, the Idea of the Idea.”³⁷

In Soloviev’s considerations Balthasar finds a confirmation of his original intuitions related to the construction of overall aesthetics. For it seems that the essence of aesthetics is to be “a revelation (an apocalypse) of the truth of God and of man – of God as God-Man and man as man-God – each opened to the other in their apocalyptic depth; and above all it is the unimaginable and incomprehensible justification of the good in and through this death-dealing reciprocity.”³⁸ Such an answer leads to the acceptance of the statement that in the reasonable examination of the world, the final word has the right of death and resurrection. The process of the world development runs in compliance with the idea of beauty, which is a living and free organism, yet under dramatic circumstances it frequently heads towards that which is the opposite of beauty (e.g. intemperance, degeneration). The emergence of imperfection “provides the basis of the eschatological hope of glory for the entire cosmos in its interior development.”³⁹

Beauty in nature exists both objectively in forms themselves and subjectively through persons viewing and experiencing beauty. It appears in all places where the spiritual element predominates over that which is material, e.g. in the diamond, where light brightens matter and turns it into perfect unity. Still, in nature Soloviev sees a lack of perfect balance; harmony is in internal discord, in jeopardy, gives off traces of temporality. Given that, aesthetic as harmony must be complemented. “Only in the resurrection of the body is the inwardly necessary goal of the world process

³⁶ Ibidem, pp. 344-345.

³⁷ Ibidem; cf. V. Soloviev, *Twelve Lectures on Godmanhood*, lecture 7, pp. 138-139.

³⁸ H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A theological aesthetics*, vol. III, p. 345.

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 347.

achieved, the resurrection as the complete illumination of chaotic matter by the loving spirit; but only God can bring this to perfection."⁴⁰ All man's action and all art are nothing else but "the perceptible representation of an object from the perspective of its ultimate condition or (which is the same thing) in the light of the world beyond."⁴¹

Ultimately, there is no individual perfection without overall perfection of everything. The process of world development takes place in an invisible way. The integration of the world takes place in Christ, and only He can provide an overall outlook on reality. The unification of the human and the divine outlook on the world was eventually effected on the Cross.

Transl. by Łukasz Malczak

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⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 346.

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 347.

Soloviev V., *Twelve Lectures on Godmanhood*, transl. by P. Zouboff, Poughkeepsie 1944.

Solovyev V., *The Spiritual Foundation of Life*, transl. by D. Attwater, London 1938.

Olga Zaprometova

St Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute (Moscow, Russia)

The Conceptualization of Religious Experience: From Solovyov to Moltmann

The crisis of self-identity that our society has undergone as the result of social and cultural changes leads to the formation of new stereotypes. The new paradigm shift had already started before the First World War and in the area of theology might be defined as a shift from *ortho-doxo* (which in the West is related more to the correct understanding of doctrinal statements, and in the East more to the correct form of worship) to *ortho-pathy* (which emphasizes an experiential versus a rational approach to theology). It is a well-known fact that the main theme in the Bible is Love: the love of God to His creation, to Man.¹ We do not love concepts or doctrines, we love persons. From this perspective the salvation story is revealing us the relationship between God and man which was first experienced and only later conceptualized. The Torah, the TaNaKh, the Bible and its narratives may be presented as the self-revelation of the Divine.² Christian doctrine, which Jaroslav Pelikan defines as the content of saving knowledge, derived from the word of God,³ was always enriched by the conceptualization of religious or spiritual experience. Although Christianity traditionally identifies itself with *ortho-doxo*, and Judaism with *ortho-praxy*, there always were and still are those in both traditions for whom the starting point and

¹ Arkady Kovelman, the prominent specialist in Jewish Studies, in his recent interview with the “New Times” clarified his opinion on why the Bible lies at the foundation of Judeo-Christian civilization in the following way: The Bible is a book about love, a fantastic love story between God and the nation, God and Israel (...). This is a meta-history. See *Голос тонкой тишины*, “Новое время” 30 (257), 24.09.2012, <<http://newtimes.ru/articles/detail/57418/>>, accessed: 17.02.2013.

² O. Zaprometova, *The Symbol of Torah as Wisdom and Light reflected in Eastern European Culture*, in T. Obolevitch, J. Bremer (eds), *The Influence of Jewish Culture on the Intellectual Heritage of Central and Eastern Europe*, Kraków 2011, pp. 137-146.

³ J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1: *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, Chicago – London 1975, p. 2.

the final goal of their spiritual and intellectual journey lies in the sphere of *ortho-pathy* (or experiencing the Divine). The knowledge of the Divine always relates to and interacts with the cultural context of its time, receiving a new interpretation and, in turn, becoming itself a formative cultural factor. The example of the apostle Paul and his encounter with the divine Light on his way to Damascus (Acts 9:3-5) may be viewed as parallel with and standing the tradition that was already established in the Bible (Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc.).

The contemporary identity crisis of the era of globalization is in a sense similar to the one of late antiquity in its struggle between universalism and particularism.⁴ The Hellenistic Jewish mind, as seen in the works of Philo, tried to prove the universalism of the Torah/Law while the Palestinian exegetes preferred to underline the particularism of the Jewish law. We have to remind ourselves that the Jews in late antiquity were a small subculture in the larger Mediterranean world.⁵ The Jewish culture was just one of the cultures of the Roman Empire, and it was torn between a narrow ethnocentrism and a universalistic monotheism. Many Jews of late antiquity tried to deal with this issue, Philo and Paul on the one hand, and the Rabbis on the other. It might be this dilemma – not personal, but theological – that prepared Paul for his religious experience. Daniel Boyarin, the contemporary American scholar (in Rabbinical Studies), views the whole of Paul's ministry as motivated by a Hellenistic desire for the One. Paul's profound concern for the one-ness (all-unity) of humanity was brought about by his longing for the ideal of a human essence beyond differences and hierarchy.⁶ It was this impulse towards universalism, final towards the One, which both motivated and enabled Paul's move toward a spiritualizing and allegorizing interpretation of the Torah. This universal humanity was predicated on the dualism of the flesh and the spirit (the body being a particular, and the spirit universal). Paul's anthropological

⁴ The Judaism of late antiquity and its "rise of philosophical thinking" as "a manifestation of the inner logic of cultural history" is one of the areas of specialization of Prof. A. Kovelman (head of the Jewish Studies department at Moscow State University). See A. Kovelman, *Between Alexandria and Jerusalem. The Dynamic of Jewish and Hellenistic Culture*, Leiden – Boston 2005, p. xiv. Also Boyarin's provocative book on Paul and Pauline scholarship is highly recommended. The American scholar claims that Paul's letters are addressed to him, to a (post)modern Jew. See D. Boyarin, *A Radical Jew. Paul and the Politics of Identity*, Berkeley 1997, p. 228.

⁵ S. Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society. 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.*, Princeton 2001, p. 3.

⁶ D. Boyarin, *A Radical Jew. Paul and the Politics of Identity*, pp. 44-45.

dualism was matched with the same hermeneutics: just as the human being is divided into a fleshly and a spiritual component, so also is his language, with its outer material signs and inner spiritual manifestations. It is a fact that in the teaching of Christ, the new Torah, there is room for particularity and for universality.

What caused Russian mind of 19th century to start seeking new ways of philosophy? One may turn to the famous work of Prof. Vasilyi V. Zenkovsky *A History of Russian Philosophy* for an introduction to the cultural and historical context of the time, as well as to biographies of the most prominent representatives in Russian religious philosophy.⁷ The process of secularization which started in Russia in the 17th century led to the break between the national consciousness and church-political ideology. According to Zenkovsky, the problem of secularism and its main theme, the break with the Church, became the dominant force in Russian thought of the time. In 1902 Metropolitan Makarius, the famous missionary to Altai, called Russian women to undertake higher education in order to be missionaries in their contemporary society, and addressed them with the following words: “To be a missionary is a special calling, taking into consideration the variety of cultures and languages in our country, but the same mission is waiting for you in our own society. A part, may be even the majority, of our contemporary educated society has stepped away from Christ in such a way that the time is coming to start a mission to bring the Gospel of Christ into this society.”⁸

As I am not a philosopher but rather a specialist in the history of culture, in this presentation I will attempt: 1. To search for the development of some earlier foundational concepts in Eastern Christianity and their incorporation into the Russian religious philosophy of the Russian Silver Age; 2. To show the place of religious experience in Russian religious philosophy;

⁷ Zenkovsky opens his second volume with a description of the new period in the development of Russian philosophy which he calls the system building period, and started with Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900). The last part of his work, the 20th century, provides an analysis of the ideas of S. Trubetskoy (1862–1905), E. Trubetskoy (1863–1920), D. Merezhkovsky (1865–1940), Fr S. Bulgakov (1871–1944), N. Berdyaev (1874–1948), L. Karsavin (1882–1952), Fr P. Florensky (1882–1937), A. Losev (1892–1988) and others, who were greatly influenced by Solovyov. See B.V. Зеньковский, *История русской философии*, vol. 1-2, Ростов-на-Дону 1999. See also В. Порус (ed), *Россия и Вселенская Церковь: В.С. Соловьев и проблема религиозного и культурного единения человечества*, Москва 2004.

⁸ О. Запрюметова, *Провозвестниц великое множество*, in *Роль христианки в современном обществе. Доклады участниц первой межденоминационной конференции*, Москва, 6-7 июня 1997 г., “Institute for East-West Christian Studies” 1998, pp. 9-11.

and 3. To reveal some links between Russian religious philosophy and contemporary Western theology.

The Incorporation of Earlier Concepts by Russian Religious Philosophy

Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900), according to his own statement, devoted himself “to justify the faith of the fathers, raising it to a new level of rational consciousness, and to show how this ancient faith, freed from the bonds of national pride, coincides with the eternal and universal truth.”⁹ He trusted that, as a result of his own work and scholarship, the Christian faith might be “justified” in the eyes of his educated readers.¹⁰ To Solovyov, philosophy was a means to salvation, an idea which had become very alien to European thought of his time. Following the example of Philo of Alexandria and of Paul, he thought of himself as a citizen of the world, a “reconciler of all ideas.” It was Philo, the famous apologist of Judaism, for whom the reconciliation of the Jewish and Greek concepts of salvation increased to the point of their becoming almost identical.¹¹ Like Paul Solovyov, lived in a world where there was *neither Jew nor Gentile*¹² and considered his life to be a ministry, as can be seen in one of his last sayings, just before his death: *Heavy is the Lord’s work (ministry)*.¹³

⁹ В.С. Соловьев, *История и будущность теократии*, Зарепб 1887, p. iii. Quotation from J. Sutton, *The Religious Philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov. Towards a Reassessment*, London 1988, p. 30.

¹⁰ His trust was justified, as evidenced by different international conferences and seminars on Russian religious philosophy. Solovyov’s Seminar in Ivanovo (Russia) organized by Mikhail M. Maksimov is just one example. See <<http://www.solovyov-seminar.ispu.ru/>>, accessed: 17.02.2013.

¹¹ The first Jew who spoke clearly of a divinization of humankind, he wrote about the divine illumination by the “light of light” (*De Praemiis et Poenis*, 46) and about departure from the body for the sake of unification with God (*De Fuga et Inventione*, 92). However to describe his longing to reach the state of imitation to God and to achieve a clear vision of the Almighty, which still meant for him longing for an intellectual enlightenment, Philo had to use the language of mysticism. See К. Шенк, *Филон Александрийский. Введение в жизнь и творчество*, transl. by С. Бабкина, Москва 2007, p. 115.

¹² Gal 3:28.

¹³ See E.B. Rashkovsky, *Three Justifications: Some Pivotal Themes in the Last Decade of Solovyov’s Christian Philosophy*, in W. van den Bercken, M. de Courten, E. van der Zweerde (eds), *Vladimir Solov’ev: reconciler and polemicist: selected papers of the International Vladimir Solov’ev Conference held at the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands, in September 1998*, Leuven 2000, pp. 29-38.

What was there in the “ancient faith” that Solovyov considered to coincide with “eternal and universal truth?” The national religion of Russia, known as Eastern Orthodoxy, or Greek Orthodoxy, continues the uninterrupted tradition of the ancient Eastern and the Byzantine Church. In spite of many Western influences Russia has experienced since the time of Peter the Great (about 1700), the strongest current of Orthodox spirituality, shaped by Greek culture, has remained faithful to the Eastern tradition. Literally, spirituality means life in God’s Spirit, and a living relationship with Him. The mystical unity of a human being with God is hidden from the eyes of others. Gregory the Theologian (4th century) is considered to be one of the creators of the Theology of Light in the Christian tradition, which was further developed later by the Hesychast movement so influential in Russia. His teaching on the vision of God is inseparable from his teaching on the knowledge of God. Gregory the Theologian points out that a person can see God only by feeling His mystical presence. The pinnacle of the whole Christian life, according to him, is *deification* or *theosis* (unification of a human being with God).¹⁴ Patristic theology stands for the idea that a human being is able to join him/herself to God only through the Son in the Holy Spirit. Maximus the Confessor (6–7th centuries) expresses this in the following words: “The intellect that succeeds in the practical [life] progresses toward prudence; the one that succeeds in contemplation advances toward gnosis. It is up to the first [life] to bring the one that struggles to the distinction between virtue and vice; [it is up to] the second, on the contrary, to lead the one that participates in this distinction to the knowledge of incorporeal and corporeal beings. But one is finally judged worthy of the grace of the knowledge of God who, having surpassed but the wings

¹⁴ According to Plato, and the principle as old as Greek philosophy itself, the like is only known by the like, the νοῦς, the superior part of the soul, would not be able to see the Ideas if the soul were not “related to the divine, to the immortal, to the intelligence, to the simple, to the indissoluble, and to the immutable” (*Phaedon*, 80a-b). The result of this relationship between the individual and divinity is that human duty and happiness consist in absolute submission to universal reason; to follow the dictates of the divine order. Platonism remained the root of Stoicism that may be defined as a religious philosophy with its thirsting for purification, for salvation and for divinization through personal union with God. The Pauline concept of “deification” or *theosis* (Greek: “making divine”) – the unification of a human being with God, the theology and mysticism of the apostle, presents divinization as the direct effect of the assimilating union with the Holy Spirit. The development of this concept has been shown by the French scholar Jules Gross who has attempted to investigate the New Testament roots of this doctrine that developed in a uniquely Christian form from the time of Irenaeus onward. See J. Gross, *The Divinization of the Christian according to the Greek Fathers*, Anaheim 2002, pp. 44-83.

of love all that has just been enumerated and settling down in God, applies the intellect, as much as possible for the human mind (voŭc), to the study of the knowledge which has God as the object.”¹⁵

The traditional Russian translation points out very clear here that it is only through the Spirit that the human mind is considered to be worthy to fly on *the wings of love* to God to find itself in Him. Thus, this is the grace of God: a true *theological gift*, the gift of knowledge of God to the ultimate extent that is possible for a human mind through the Spirit.¹⁶ Theology begins when one first prays, since praying is a deeper mode of understanding than knowing by means of reason alone.

Theology that is seeking the knowledge of God as God is in Himself is achieved in the mysterious encounter with God at the last stage of higher unification with God. The doctrine of deification sums up the theological system of Simeon the New Theologian (10–11th centuries), whose entire life testified that this deification is a reality experienced in our world. Official theology ignored Simeon’s writings and his works have been preserved mainly by the monks of Mt. Athos.¹⁷ One can also mention among the spiritual followers of the mystical branch of the Orthodox tradition Sergyi of Radonezh (14th century), Nilus of Sora (15–16th centuries) and Seraphim of Sarov, who maintained that *the true goal of a Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit*.¹⁸ Fedotov mentioned that although these words of Seraphim repeat the words of Macarius of Egypt (4th century), it was a kind of revelation for the vast majority of spiritually minded people in the 19th century Russia.¹⁹

Thus, it is obvious that religious experience is inseparable from the spirituality of the Eastern Church tradition, which was part of the cultural context of the personal formation of those whom we know as representatives of Russian religious philosophy. In the works of its most prominent

¹⁵ *Carit.* 2, 26. Quotation from J. Gross, *The Divinization of the Christian according to the Greek Fathers*, p. 252.

¹⁶ Святой Максим (Исповедник), *О любви в четырех сотнях*, Санкт-Петербург 1991, p. 27. See also A. Нестерук, *Логос и космос. Богословие, наука и православное предание*, transl. by М. Гольбина, Москва 2006, p. 45.

¹⁷ Especially during the time of Hesychast movement (14th cent.) – Gregory Palamas and others, Siluan from Mt. Athos and archimandrite Sophromius (Sakharov).

¹⁸ *Саровское чудо. О цели христианской жизни (Беседа Преподобного Серафима Саровского с Н.А. Мотовиловым)*, Москва 1998, p. 40 ff. See also S.M. Burgess, *The Holy Spirit: Eastern Christian Traditions*, Peabody 1997, p. 79-83; П. Евдокимов, *Православие*, transl. by С. Гриб, Москва 2002, pp. 155-171.

¹⁹ G.P. Fedotov (ed), *A Treasury of Russian Spirituality*, London 1950, pp. 244-245.

figure, Vladimir Solovyov, *theosis*, the traditional concept of Eastern Christianity, is expressed through the idea of *all-unity* (*vseedinstvo*).²⁰ The newly created term *all-unity* was used by the philosopher in order to show that the Church's teaching on the mystery of the Trinity itself expresses the notion of God's all-comprehensive, all-unifying nature.²¹

Solovyov's encounter with the Divine is well known and was described by him in his poems. In the most famous one, *Three Encounters*, he wrote about his spiritual experience as "seeing and feeling – (...) I came to see the incorruptible royal purple and felt the shining of the Divine"²² (1898). The complete spiritual fulfillment of humanity was the subject of the philosopher's third and final mystical vision, in which harmony prevailed and past, present and future times were reconciled. The philosophical approach to the analysis of his own mystical experience led Solovyov to the formation of the idea of Sophia as the Divine (personified) Wisdom.²³ In its final form, *Sophia* became for the philosopher the concept of "universal substance," "the substance of the Divine Trinity," "the true source of creation and its goal," "the principle (the beginning) according to which God created heaven and earth," "the substance of the Holy Spirit,"²⁴ "radiant and heavenly being (...)." ²⁵ One might conclude that Sophia becomes a symbol²⁶ rather than a concept and that as a symbol it transferred the

²⁰ Е. Зайцев, *Учение В. Лосского о теозисе*, Москва 2007, p. 103. The works of V. Lossky (1903–1958), the founder of the "neopatristic" synthesis in the Russian Orthodox theology, is known to contemporary Russian readers much more than the other representatives of the Russian diaspora in the Western Europe. Less known is Pavel Evdokimov (1901–1970), who studied under Bulgakov and Berdyaev, and was greatly influenced by both. He defined his theological anthropology as "the anthropology of theosis." See П. Евдокимов, *Православие*; idem, *Женщина и спасение мира. О благодатных дарах мужчины и женщины*, transl. by Г. Кузнецова, Минск 2007.

²¹ E. Munzer, *Solovyov. Prophet of Russian-Western Unity*, London 1956, p. 66.

²² В. Соловьев, *Стихотворения и шуточные пьесы*, Ленинград 1974, pp. 125–132.

²³ Earlier I showed in what dimension Russian religious philosophy was enriched by Rabbinic thought (and its development of the earlier biblical tradition with its understanding of the Torah as a revealed Wisdom) due to Solovyov's appreciation of the treasury of the Talmud. See О.М. Запрометова, *Раввинистические мотивы в софиологических идеях русской религиозной философии*, in В. Порус (ed), *Софиология*, Москва 2010, pp. 233–240.

²⁴ Gen 1:1–2.

²⁵ Quotation from Zenkovsky. See В. Зеньковский, *История русской философии*, vol. 2, pp. 50–51.

²⁶ From Greek verb συμβαλλω, some of whose meanings are "unite, compare." As an ideal construction, a symbol keeps in itself in a hidden form all possible the manifestations of an object and creates a perspective for its endless unfolding (A. Losev). See А.Ф. Лосев,

ideas of the ancient (biblical and patristic) culture with its traditions from one cultural level to another, thus performing at least two major functions: the adequate conveying of meaning and the creation of new meanings. Solovyov's philosophy, which was built upon the principles of "positive all-unity" and was "sophiic" by nature, introduced the eternal values of Christian culture in a new way. The intellectual elite of his time required a new framework or system that would be in a form more appropriate to it, i.e. in the form of a theory.²⁷ It was an attempt to harmonize the mystical and the rational within the framework of one philosophical system, which remained open. In a sense it became a new starting point for the theological discourse that followed and that is still going on.²⁸

According to Aksenov-Meerson, many aspects of the theological understanding of the Trinity as love and community which became central for 20th century theology and are a subject of contemporary research projects were foreseen by Solovyov.²⁹ His seminal and provocative idea of *all-unity* may be traced through Russian religious philosophical thought in the works of: Sergey Bulgakov, Nikolay Berdyaev, Lev Karsavin and others, right up to our own contemporaries (Pavel Evdokimov, 1901–1970; Jürgen Moltmann, b. 1926; Mikhail Aksenov-Meerson, b. 1944 and others, as was

Символ, in Ф.В. Константинов et al. (eds), *Философская Энциклопедия*, Москва 1970, vol. 5, p. 10.

Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945) in his three-volume *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* presented the conception of human beings as most fundamentally "symbolic animals," interposing systems of signs or systems of expression between themselves and the world. A symbol is a kind of an idea given through an image while a concept excludes any imagery. A symbol is something such as an object, picture, written word, or particular mark that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention. All language consists of symbols that serve to help us in understanding the most difficult concepts or ideas. As a category of culture, a symbol represents by itself a comprehensive and collective concept, which reflects natural existence and its expression meaningful for a given culture. See K.A. Свасьян, *Философия символических форм Э. Кассирера. Критический анализ*, Ереван 1989, pp. 143-149.

²⁷ See E.B. Гутов, *Всеединство*, <<http://www.term.ru/dictionary/183/word/vsedinstvo/>>, accessed: 27.02.2013.

²⁸ Assmann's theory of *communicative and cultural memory* could be an example of the postmodern approach to historiography with text as its main object and which presents the formation of a new way of thinking. See S. Jordan, *Theorien und Methoden der Geschichtswissenschaft*, Paderborn 2009, p. 169; J. Assmann, *Guilt and Remembrance. On Theologization of History in the Ancient Near East*, "History and Memory. Studies in Representation of the Past," vol. 2, 1 (1990), pp. 5-33.

²⁹ М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой... Парадигма Любви в русской философии троичности*, Киев 2007, p. 59.

shown by the last author in the book that followed his doctoral thesis, and to which I referred earlier).

Russian thought at the beginning of 19th century is characterized by Zenkovsky (in the chapter entitled “The Religious-philosophical Renaissance in the 20th century in Russia”) as “revolutionary or reformativ” in the area of religious philosophy, full of eschatological hopes.³⁰ In his opinion, the most brilliant and gifted representative of this “revolutionary-mystical excitement” was D. Merezhkovsky,³¹ who was influenced in great measure by Solovyov, may be more by the poet than by the philosopher. Merezhkovsky followed Solovyov’s trinitarian principle summing up the history of mankind and extending the framework of the Church or churches, which he called “historical Christianity,” and developed it further. He believed that the doctrine of the Trinity is preparing the way to “apocalyptic Christianity,” in which “historical Christianity” will be totally dissolved in due time.³² In his famous historical novels (*Death of Gods*, 1896–1905; *Christ and Antichrist*, 1901–1904; *Tolstoy and Dostoevsky*, 1901–1903; *Paul I*, 1905; and others) and essays (*Eternal Companions: Portraits from Worldwide Literature*, 1907; and others) which are all centered on one mystical theme, Merezhkovsky pictured the divine tragedy, the extreme suffering of God in Christ as an expression of the Lord’s love, as the universal principle of the Christ’s humanity, embracing all of history. In *Tolstoy and Dostoevsky* Merezhkovsky tried to overcome Christian dualism (of Spirit and flesh).³³ He was the first and the best in his exposure of the problems of 19th century Russian literature, of Russian spirituality and its dualism, by pointing to the unsatisfied spiritual hunger of the nation’s intellectual elite as the root of the problem.³⁴ His life-long activity may be better understood in the light of two movements of his time: symbolism and the “new religious consciousness”.³⁵ The rejection of religious dogmas as abstract

³⁰ В. Зеньковский, *История русской философии*, vol. 2, p. 335.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 340.

³² See М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой...*, p. 153.

³³ These great authors/writers represented two poles of the Russian consciousness, the Russian mentality and the author himself.

³⁴ Д.С. Мережковский, *О причинах упадка и о новых течениях современной литературы. Лекция, прочитанная в конце 1892 года*. See Д. Мережковский, *О причинах упадка и о новых течениях современной русской литературы*, in idem, *Лев Толстой и Достоевский. Вечные спутники*, Москва 1995, pp. 522-560.

³⁵ A complex social and cultural religious-philosophical idea introduced at the turn of 19th and 20th centuries by Merezhkovsky and later developed by a group of intellectuals to which belong N. Berdyaev, V. Rozanov and others. See O. Petrikovskaya, *The Image of*

structures and the desire to discover the universal layer of experience led many in Russia at the end of the 19th century to withdraw from the official Church.

The reconsideration of the doctrine of Trinity by Merezhkovsky was the most important contribution for those who later developed his ideas. We have to take into account that this reconsideration must be viewed also in the light of his perception of personalism,³⁶ political liberation and the mysticism of love. For Merezhkovsky the most essential for human identity as well as one's faith in the Trinity was mystical love, such as of Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross and others. This idea found its best expression in one of his last essays on Therese of Lisieux.³⁷

The Mystery of Encountering the Divine

Aksenov-Meerson (b. 1942), whose doctoral thesis "The Love Paradigm and the Retrieval of Western Medieval Love Mysticism in Modern Russian Trinitarian Thought" was defended in 1996 in New York (Fordham University, the Jesuit University of New York), started his research in the area of Russian religious philosophy while still in Russia back in the mid-60s. In the Russian version of his book, to which I referred earlier (see footnotes 29 and 32) he gives an analysis of Russian religious philosophical thought to restore "the paradigm" of its Trinitarian memory, according to Fr Vladimir Zelinsky.³⁸ I believe this research of Aksenov-Meerson's is among the best available in contemporary Russia to show the recent turn

Judaism and the Problem of the Synthesis of Religions in the Philosophy of the "New Religious Consciousness," in T. Obolevitch, J. Bremer (eds), *The Influence of Jewish Culture on the Intellectual Heritage of Central and Eastern Europe*, pp. 207-213.

³⁶ A scientific, philosophical and theological perspective or *system* for which the person is the ontological ultimate and for which the person is the fundamental explanatory principle. Personalists hold that a person combines unity and variety, permanence and change, causal activity and receptivity, actuality and potentiality, subjectivity and objectivity, mechanism and purpose, identity and creativity. Russian *personalism* was developed by Solovyev and Berdyaev and presented by N. Lossky (1870–1965) in his *History of Russian Philosophy* (1951). See B. Gacka, *A Presentation of Personalism*, <<http://www.Personalism.pl/biannual/number-1/a-presentation-of-personalism/>>.

³⁷ See Д. Мережковский, *Испанские мистики*, in idem, *Реформаторы. Испанские мистики*, Москва 2002, pp. 311-507.

³⁸ В. Зелинский, *Встреча с Троицей в таинстве любви*, in М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой...*, pp. 13-17.

of theological thought from its ontological and dogmatic way of perceiving religious experience to a personalistic one, one that follows the trajectory of contemporary philosophy and its interest in anthropology.³⁹ Through his research Aksenov-Meerson introduces a new concept, which he defines as the paradigm of love that is shared by both Western and Eastern theology. Notwithstanding the limits of this paper, I would like to mention his reference to Merezhkovsky as the person to whose philosophy of the divine compassion Jürgen Moltmann (b. 1926) pointed as one of the important sources for his own theology of the Suffering God.⁴⁰

It was Solovyov and his ideas that laid the foundations for the Russian personalistic approach to the 20th century doctrine of the Trinity. Merezhkovsky and Karsavin enriched it by borrowing from the medieval mystic and love tradition. Later these ideas were developed by f. S. Bulgakov and led to his doctrine of the Trinity as a *perichoretic*⁴¹ kenotic love. Paul Evdokimov, who was called “the conductor between East and West” by the famous contemporary French Eastern Orthodox theologian Olivier Clement, is not so well-known in contemporary Russia as his teachers, Berdyayev and Fr Bulgakov⁴². In the first chapter of his *L’orthodoxie* (1959), “Historical Introduction,” Evdokimov discussed the issue of “grace” and “salvation” and the understanding of these concepts by Western and Eastern theological thought, pointing to their difference, and the central role of *perichoresis* in the redemptive story of mankind.⁴³ He emphasized that it was the idea of Godmanhood, foundational in Solovyov’s philosophy, that

³⁹ Russian scholars express their concern over the emerging problems of the new “informational anthropology.” See the recent publications of Prof. Konstantin K. Kolin (Principal Researcher of the Institute of Informatics Problems of the Russian Academy of Sciences): K.K. Kolin, *Philosophy of information and fundamental problems of modern Informatics*, in *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on the Foundations of Information Science*, 21-24 August 2010, “Sciforum Electronic Conferences Series,” 2010, fis037:1-7, <<http://www.sciforum.net/presentation/283>>.

⁴⁰ М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой...*, p. 150.

⁴¹ From Greek *perichoresis* – “penetration.” This is a term used in the theology of the Trinity to indicate the intimate union, mutual indwelling, or mutual interpenetration of the three members of the Trinity. D.K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, Kentucky 1996, p. 207. In the Greek Fathers it refers to the circular dynamic bond which unites the Trinity in its reciprocal interaction. *Perichoresis* defines the unlimited dialogue that takes place within the Trinity. See М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой...*, pp. 51-52.

⁴² А. Кырлежев, *Биографическая справка*, in П. Евдокимов, *Женщина и спасение мира*, pp. 263-265.

⁴³ П. Евдокимов, *Православие*, p. 33.

directs theological thought “towards Christological perichoresis: the interpenetration of divine and human characteristics.”⁴⁴

Aksenov-Meerson managed to bring together the traditions of the Church Fathers (from Augustine and medieval Western mysticism to Neoplatonism and the Eastern Church Fathers), German classical philosophy and the personalism of Russian religious thought by offering his version of the development of the Trinitarian paradigm of love. He showed that this paradigm, revealed in a new way by the Russian authors of 19th and 20th centuries, is shared nowadays by the growing numbers of contemporary Orthodox theologians (among whom he mentioned Alexander Shmemann of his *L'orthodoxie* (1959), 1923–1988; Dumitru Staniloae, 1903–1993; Kallistos Ware, b. 1934).⁴⁵

The theology of the Crucified God, anticipated by Merezhkovsky and Berdyaev within the “new religious consciousness,” as well as the theology of Mystical Experience with its pneumatological language, were later expanded by Moltmann. Moltmann proves that the experience of the Spirit is equal to the experience of fellowship (2 Cor 13:13), which means “opening for one another, giving one another a share in ourselves.”⁴⁶ He challenges contemporary Christianity to “look for a third way, so as to discover God’s love *in* the love between human beings, and the love between human beings *in* God’s love” comparing Patristic and medieval traditions with modern European humanism.⁴⁷ This is so much in tune with the personalistic views and ideas of Russian religious philosophy! As expressed by Aksenov-Meerson: “We are taking communion with God/taking part in the Eucharist through love, which, according to Solovyov, is the universal law of God and the world and the invisible connection in the mystical union between a human being and God.”⁴⁸

The Eucharist is perceived as the foreshadowing of the coming Kingdom, the entrance to which is possible only through the sacrifice of Christ; it is an image of the Kingdom of God that is yet to come and that is already

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 57.

⁴⁵ М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой...*, pp. 291-296.

⁴⁶ J. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, transl. by M. Kohl, Minneapolis 1994, p. 218.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 248.

⁴⁸ М. Аксенов-Меерсон, *Созерцанием Троицы Святой...*, p. 92. According to Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenkov, 1880–1961) the essence and the goal of the Eucharist is the mystical reunion of Christ with those who are partaking of the holy gifts (John 6:56). See Митрополит Вениамин Федченков, *Мысли о литургии верных*, in idem, *Литургия верных*, Москва 2006, pp. 55-356.

here on earth.⁴⁹ The Russian Bible goes back to the translation of the Holy Scripture into the Slavonic language by two Greek monks, the brothers Cyril and Methodius in the 9th century. Cyril, also known as Constantine, was a humanist scholar, known to his contemporaries as Constantine the Philosopher. Photius, the patriarch of Constantinople initiated Byzantium's greatest cultural triumph, the conversion of the Slavs to Orthodox Christianity. In order to have worship services in the Slavonic language, Cyril and Methodius first had to create a script for the Old Church Slavonic language and only after that could they translate liturgical books into Slavonic. Cyril expanded the Slavonic language with Greek loanwords, *calques* (loan translations), and phraseology.⁵⁰ It is obvious that the first Slavonic translation had been changing constantly during the following centuries (mostly due to continuous corrections made according to different Greek manuscripts), but we are grateful that the foundational translation was done by those for whom Greek was their mother tongue and who spoke Slavonic fluently (as was common for Thessalonians).⁵¹ In the Russian language the word for sacrament is *tainstvo* which derives from the word "mystery/secret" – μυστήριον (1 Tim 3:9 – *the mystery of faith*).⁵² It reminds us of hidden things or secrets that have their hidden purpose and are beyond our understanding in their fullness while we are here in this world, but that will be revealed in the world to come. The Kingdom of God revealed to us in the Eucharist may be viewed as the perfected *perichoretic* unity of God and the world. Therefore the final goal of the Lord's Supper is not just reunification and fellowship with the Son of God the Saviour, but is

⁴⁹ He emphasizes the difference between the Western tradition which connects the Eucharist with Calvary (following Anselm of Canterbury's theology with its climax in the sacrifice of Christ as a satisfaction for sin) and the Eastern one which connects the Eucharist with the Kingdom of God. See И. Зизиулас, *Евхаристия и Царство Божие*, in idem, *Церковь и Евхаристия*, transl. by Леонтий (Козлов), Богородице-Сергиева Пустынь 2009, pp. 203-298.

⁵⁰ The brothers started by translating the Book of Psalms, then the books of the New Testament. After Cyril's death Methodius and his disciples continued the work, finishing the New Testament and almost the entire Old Testament.

⁵¹ The empire's second city had been surrounded by Slavic settlers and this was the reason why the Slavonic language was heard in Thessalonica as often as Byzantine Greek. C. Wells, *Sailing from Byzantium. How a Lost Empire Shaped the World*, New York 2007, p. 187.

⁵² The ways of God, especially God's plan for salvation, which cannot be known with the rational, finite human mind, but can be experienced only by the revelation of God. The Orthodox Church also uses the term *mystery* for the sacraments of the Church. See *The Orthodox Study Bible: New Testament and Psalms*, Nashville – TN 1997, p. 803.

also much more. This experience of grace in the Eucharist is described by Moltmann in the following way: “Thanksgiving, prayer, adoration, praise, and the silent sinking into wonder, all proceed from the energies of the Spirit, Who gives life, are directed towards the Son, and go with the Son to the Father.”⁵³

The idea of perichoresis, or reciprocal indwelling, derives from the theology of the Greek fathers.⁵⁴ However, while in Greek patristic writings perichoresis defined the circular dynamic bond that unites the three Persons in their interaction, the Latin authors emphasized the mutual fusion and rest of the Persons united in nature. Moltmann clarifies that the Latin translation of this Greek word was first of all *circumincessio* (indicating a dynamic interpenetration – *incedere*), and later also *circuminsessio* (*inse-dere* – an enduring, resting indwelling). The Latin words express a double sense of the Trinitarian unity: dynamics and rest, complete peace and complete turbulence at the same time.⁵⁵

With a grateful heart we are praising (and asking) the Lord for our participation in the fellowship of the Divine. Rublev’s famous icon of the Trinity, which Moltmann defines as “an image of the perichoretic doctrine of the Trinity,”⁵⁶ invites us to join its perfect fellowship. I always remind my students that there is an open space left for us so as to show us that we are welcome and it is not a surprise that even the secular Russian philosophers of today remind us that the mystical encounter of God and a human being is a process which starts with the intervention of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷ Thus Moltmann, emphasizing the existence of reciprocity between Pneumatological Christology and Christological Pneumatology ever since the Cappadocian Fathers, takes us back to the Trinitarian experience of the Early Church and the importance of the communal spiritual experience.

⁵³ J. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 298.

⁵⁴ Gregory of Nazianzus (the Theologian, 329–389/390) was probably the first to use this concept (a movement from one another, passing round and going round) for the description of Trinity. See Иеромонах Иларион (Алфеев), *Жизнь и учение св. Григория Богослова*, Москва 1998, pp. 268-269.

⁵⁵ J. Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, arise! God’s Future for Humanity and the Earth*, transl. by M. Kohl, London 2010, pp. 152-160.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 169.

⁵⁷ According to Russian contemporary scholars, the future of mankind is envisaged in the acquisition of religious meaning. Kiselev is pointing to Russian religious philosophy, which has been waiting for the new birth of Christianity already since the end of the 19th century. See Г. Киселев, *Пост-модернизм и христианство*, “Вопросы культурологии” 12 (2001), pp. 3-15.

The Trinitarian Memory in the Framework of Contemporary Theological Discourse

This paper presents an attempt at cultural memory analysis by investigating the understanding of the role of religious experience and its conceptualization in Russian religious thought and its perception of Western contemporary theology. The process of turning the experience of Trinitarian love into a key concept or symbol that transfers the main truth (the texts and the doctrines) of the ancient cultures to a new cultural level has come to be of primary interest over the last two centuries. The ideas that were introduced to Russian religious philosophy by Vladimir Solovyov and others who belong to the Russian Silver Age and led to the formation of a doctrine of the Trinity as a perichoretic love are expanded by one of the most influential contemporary theologians, Jürgen Moltmann. In recent history, the concept of Trinitarian Love appears at the center of the discussion within both Eastern and Western Christianity, functioning, according to Lotman, as a “semiotic condenser,” emerging as the mediator between textual synchrony and cultural memory.⁵⁸ It is possible to discover in the different approaches of Russian religious philosophy the patterns that might be defined as implicit (traditional) and explicit (the concepts that are in the process of formation, defined by Jan Assmann as *theological discourse*⁵⁹). Georges Florovsky (1893–1979), another prominent theologian of the 20th century, among whose opponents were Bulgakov and Berdyaev, and among whose disciples we may name John Zizioulas (b. 1931), appealed to the creation of the spiritual “philosophy of heart.”⁶⁰ This idea is rather ambivalent in bringing together two apparent opposites: the discursive, which claims reason and logic, and the nondiscursive, which is intuitively and emotionally grounded.

The issue of religious experience and its conceptualization is becoming an area of special research for cultural constructivists at the end of the 20th century. As has been shown, the term “religious experience” which was traditionally conscripted to denote a way of knowledge that is free of sensory input and blocks out everything except awareness of the divine,

⁵⁸ Ю. Лотман, *Символ в системе культуры*, in idem, *Статьи по семиотике и типологии культуры*, Санкт-Петербург 2002, pp. 211-225.

⁵⁹ This term Assmann borrowed from M. Foucault. See Я. Ассман, *Египет. Теология и благочестие цивилизации*, Москва 1999, p. 244.

⁶⁰ Г. Флоровский, *Пути русского богословия*, Вильнюс 1991, p. 512.

was always culturally conditioned.⁶¹ For the representatives of Russian religious philosophy of the last two centuries it was mostly a new symbolic organization of the reality of life that reflected their culturally constructed experiences. Their philosophical approach and the search for new concepts and systems provided an alternative point of view for society, which was important for resolving the tension between their expectations of the inescapable impending future (the tragedies of the 20th century) and their own circumstances.

It is a culturally conditioned intellectual knowledge that shapes how an individual understands emotions, which, in turn, inform an individual's religious beliefs as well as a culture's intellectual traditions. Nowadays we are finding ourselves in a completely new environment that requires from us in addition a certain adaptation, and result in certain changes in our psychology and social skills.⁶² The search for a more solid and constructive dialogue between followers of Eastern and Western Christian traditions is one of mankind's most urgent tasks, especially in the light of changing cultural contexts and globalization. There is a need to remind ourselves that no Christian tradition is sufficient in itself. We have to explore ways of enhancing mutual understanding and co-operation. There always were and still are those who are not afraid to go beyond the boundary of their own tradition. It is always a risk, and one must be well-rooted in the Trinity, the Scriptures and in a theology that is built primarily on the interpretation of Scripture and the history of traditional interpretation. However there is much to be learnt from religious encounter as well. Theology was born and developed in dialogue. If we are to enter into any sort of dialogue with other theological traditions, secular society and culture, and with the academic world, we have to seek an encounter with the Divine. Russian religious philosophers realized the need of their society for the (perichoretic) relationships and, through the conceptualization of their own religious experience and the contextualization of traditional concepts, offered ways that laid the foundations for a new paradigm. This paradigm fits also the

⁶¹ See the recent collection of essays on religious experience in Early Judaism and Early Christianity: C. Shantz, *Opening the Black Box: New Prospects for Analyzing Religious Experience*, in C. Shantz, R.A. Werline (eds), *EXPERIENTIA*, vol. 2: *Linking Text and Experience*, Atlanta 2012, pp. 1-15.

⁶² It is of special interest that alongside the general speeding up of information technology a shift to "close reading" and "slow reading" is taking place that is connected to post-structuralism and postmodern philosophy. See the works of Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) that are so influential for contemporary, cultural memory studies (J. & A. Assmann, J. Ruesen), Jewish studies (D. Boyarin, A. Kovelman and others), etc.

anthropological orientation of 21st century individuals, giving us hope that goes beyond the barriers of tradition and calling us to find ourselves within the Trinitarian love.

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Gennadii Aliaiev

Poltava Yuri Kondratuk National Technical University (Poltava, Ukraine)

S. Frank and M. Scheler: by the Source of the Twentieth Century Philosophical Anthropology

It is a widely acknowledged thesis that the founder of philosophical anthropology as a philosophical school in the twentieth century was Max Scheler. Also, among the *dii minores* recognised are usually such western scholars as H. Plessner, A. Gehlen, K. Löwith, etc. Russian philosophers, in particular, Semyon Frank, are not normally mentioned as belonging to the school. Most western scholars such as Manfred S. Frings,¹ Eugene Kelly,² John-Raphael Staude³ and some others, in their studies on M. Scheler's philosophy mention neither S. Frank nor the Russian philosophy. An interesting exception, though, is the book of Helmut Dahm, in which he compares the views of Vladimir Solovyev and Max Scheler, first of all on the point of the History of Phenomenology.⁴ However, it is a detached comparative study rather than a proof of any influence the Russian philosophy could possibly exert upon Scheler. S. Frank is mentioned in the book, but not in connection with his anthropological studies. Also, speaking of the mutual influence wielded by Scheler's anthropology and the Russian philosophy on each other, Russian scholars do not normally mention S. Frank.⁵ The only exception is the study of N. Plotnikov, who

¹ M.S. Frings, *Max Scheler: A Concise Introduction Into the World of a Great Thinker*, Milwaukee 1996; M.S. Frings, *LifeTime. Max Scheler's Philosophy of Time: A First Inquiry and Presentation*, Dordrecht 2003.

² E. Kelly, *Max Scheler*, Chicago 1977; idem, *Material Ethics of Value: Max Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann*, New York 2011.

³ J.-R. Staude, *Max Scheler, 1874–1928: An Intellectual Portrait*, New York 1968.

⁴ H. Dahm, *Vladimir Solovyev and Max Scheler: Attempt at a Comparative Interpretation: a Contribution to the History of Phenomenology*, Dordrecht 1975.

⁵ See, e.g. Б.В. Марков, *Макс Шелер и русская философия* [*Max Scheler and the Russian Philosophy*], <<http://www.max-scheler.spb.ru/content/view/119/52/>>.

states that S. Frank and M. Scheler hold similar opinions in relation to M. Heidegger.⁶

However, for that matter, it is hardly possible to disregard a few works by Frank, written between 1917 and 1927, in which the task to create “generalised philosophical anthropology” – i.e. “the doctrine on a human being as an especial type of reality” – is not only clearly expressed, but to a significant extent accomplished. First of all, it is *Man's Soul. An Introductory Essay in Philosophical Psychology* (1917), which is the second large philosophical work by Frank. Unfortunately, the book, written in hard and evil times of the Russian revolution and the civil war, as well as left untranslated, had no effect on further anthropological studies.⁷ In a very abridged form, it (or actually its loose ideas) appeared in Frank's paper *Zur Metaphysik der Seele. Das Problem der Philosophischen Anthropologie* (*On Metaphysics of Soul. The Problem of Philosophical Anthropology*), read at Cologne in 1925. The tasks of philosophical anthropology had been formulated by Frank in brochure *On the Nature of Psychological Life*, but its fate was also poor and unfortunate. It was written in 1927 (almost at the same time as M. Scheler's *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos – The Human Place in the Cosmos*) at the request of the émigré Eurasian publishing house for possible distribution in the Soviet Russia, but was not printed then (obviously, as the project was rather utopian one). It was eventually published in Paris in 1972, but remained almost as unnoticed as before. The accomplishment of Frank's anthropology is obviously the posthumous edition of his *Reality and Man*, issued in 1956 (though, of course, there are a good many other texts by this Russian philosopher, which one way or another deal with anthropology).

The parallels of these texts with the works of Scheler (as well as differences between them) are of great interest for the history of ideas. Moreover, the stress should be set not only upon chronological coincidence, but also upon the fact of personal acquaintance of these two philosophers. According to Frank, in the last years of Scheler's life they were “in an intensive spiritual communion.”⁸ Though direct evidence of this communication is

⁶ Н.С. Плотников, *К истории восприятия Хайдеггера в русской мысли* [*To the History of Reception of Heidegger in the Russian Thought*], “Вопросы философии” 9 (1995), pp. 169-185.

⁷ English translation (*Man's Soul*) appeared in 1993, German translation (*Die Seele des Menschen*) issued in 2008 as the Second (of the Eight) Volume of S. Frank's *Writings* in German.

⁸ С.Л. Франк, *Непрочитанное... Статьи, письма, воспоминания* [*Unread... Papers, Letters, Memories*], Москва 2001, p. 335.

rather scarce. It seems, they first met in person soon after S. Frank had been expelled from the Soviet Russia. Most probably, it happened at the presentation of Scheler's paper *On Substance and the Sense of Suffering*, which took place 18 March 1923, in the Russian Academy of Religion and Philosophy in Berlin (N. Berdyaev, S. Frank, B. Vysheslavtsev, V. Sezeman(anas), F. Stepun, S. Hessen, P. Tillich and some others were mentioned as those who took part in the discussion on the paper).⁹ Unfortunately, there is no evidence about any other meetings or correspondence. However, it should be noted that Frank's paper (already mentioned), *Zur Metaphysik der Seele. Das Problem der Philosophischen Anthropologie*, was read in November 1925 in the meeting of the Kantgesellschaft in Cologne (though, in *Kantstudien*, it was published yet four years later¹⁰). Exactly the same year, being a professor at Cologne, M. Scheler started his course "Grundzüge der philosophischen Anthropologie." It seems obvious that the invitation extended to Frank to visit Cologne, and the theme of his paper were directly or indirectly inspired by Scheler. Thus, it is possible enough to speak about German philosopher's direct interest in Frank's philosophical and psychological studies, as well as about Scheler's wish to become more familiar with them.

It also seems obvious that the direct *interaction* in genesis of these two projects of the Philosophical Anthropology did not result in their coincidence. Frank began his anthropological studies with a rehabilitation of Philosophical Psychology, undertaking the deepest philosophical and psychological analysis, the example of which is given in his *Man's Soul*. Scheler, in turn, commenced his anthropological project with axiological and ethical studies. Their attitude towards religion was also different: as

⁹ See *Chronik russischen Lebens in Deutschland 1918–1941*, Berlin 1999, p. 169. By the way, it seems worth mentioning that in Scheler's obituary Frank puts the other date – 1924, and we may presume it is not a mere lapse of memory. Perhaps, there were other presentations, or the memories of this single case merged with the others on more or less numerous Scheler's comings to Berlin to meet his Russian friends, as in Frank's own words, "he [Max Scheler – G.A.] forged friendships with most Russian philosophers who lived in exile" (see С.Л. Франк, *Макс Шелер (Некролог)* [*Max Scheler (Obituary)*], "Путь" 13 (1928), p. 86). It is remarkable that western authors' attention is usually attracted by the fact of Scheler's acquaintance with only N. Berdyaev, as if they did not notice the other Russian philosophers (see M.S. Frings, *LifeTime. Max Scheler's Philosophy of Time: A First Inquiry and Presentation*, p. 29; J.-R. Staude, *Max Scheler, 1874–1928: An Intellectual Portrait*, p. 141).

¹⁰ S. Frank, *Zur Metaphysik der Seele. Das Problem der Philosophischen Anthropologie*, "Kant-Studien," vol. XXXIV, 3-4 (1929), pp. 351-373. The Russian translation of the paper is being prepared for publication by Oxana Nazarova.

Frank continually deepened the religious substantiation of his anthropology (the ultimate of these works was posthumous publication of his book *Reality and Man*, so Scheler, in terms of Frank, “ended with militant atheism.”¹¹ About the false religious and philosophic conclusions of the German thinker Frank writes on the occasion of the publication of Scheler’s *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*, but at the same time he acknowledges the theoretical value of this brilliant work.¹² If to take into consideration that their acquaintance comes in the late, but not the early period of Scheler’s activity, it is hard enough to imagine a religious philosopher “in intense spiritual communion” with a militant atheist, if only it is nothing but a permanent discussion and persuasion. Did Frank carry any authority for Scheler? If “yes,” then, what kind of authority was it? What were the grounds of it? Why was it so ineffective? Or if effective, why did it work so wrong, and in the opposite direction? If Frank did not carry any authority at all, in Scheler’s eyes, what was the source of the intense communion?

Frank read the basic ones of Scheler’s writings on ethics right after they were published: by that time he was in Marburg and Munich, where he wrote his *The Object of Knowledge*. Frank speaks of Scheler as of one “well talented, contemporary German philosopher,” noticing close similarity of their views, first of all on ideas as a special spiritual reality, which differs as from sensual material as from mental content.¹³ Though, topically, by that time, the philosophers had been moving in different directions: Frank was dealing with ontology and theory of knowledge, whereas Scheler was ploughing through ethics; but both kept the same philosophical guidelines: along with objects (things) as material, and the thinkable as the content of knowledge, along with the physical and psychical, there is a realm of reality, represented by spiritual beings (substances), ideal forms that stand in the presence of our mind. They are immaterial, but no less real and objective. They are not subjective, but at the same time they are spiritual. Scheler’s intention was to make clear a hierarchy of material values that had a priori spiritual ontological statuses. The intention of Frank coincided with intuition of the *vseedinstvo* (i.e. the absolute unity) as a metaphysical foundation of any objective content, as a realm of being that is the

¹¹ С.Л. Франк, *Непрочитанное... Статьи, письма, воспоминания* [*Unread... Papers, Letters, Memories*], p. 340.

¹² С.Л. Франк, *Духовные основы общества* [*The Spiritual Foundations of Society*], Москва 1992, p. 76.

¹³ See С.Л. Франк, *Предмет знания* [*The Object of Knowledge*], in idem, *Предмет знания. Душа человека*, Санкт-Петербург 1995, pp. 63, 230.

preconceptual (before any experience) being, through which there is a way of transcendence towards the Absolute.

Frank's anthropological teaching begins with the primary philosophic intuition that reveals to him the conclusive evidence of the spiritual reality, which is neither to be reduced to physical, nor to psychical phenomena. Criticising, on the one hand, the materialistic naturalism, and on the other the psychologism that under the influence of the empirical psychology, it rejected any metaphysics of the human soul, the Russian philosopher had logically set and solved the task to form the representation of the human personality as an especial reality. Frank gives the proof of the necessity to restore the philosophical psychology in his *Man's Soul*. The main reason for this is that the empirical psychology is limited as it is "psychology without soul." Frank states that it inevitably leads to destruction of the representation of a human being as a whole. Human being is divided into the subject of cognition (it is characteristic of the Post-Kantian theory of knowledge) and the object of cognition, which is, in turn, split into little pieces by the psychological atomism. It is worth noticing that the concepts of "philosophical psychology" and "philosophical anthropology" are given in Frank's book as synonyms,¹⁴ though at this stage the general study of the human being is for him pre-eminently the "philosophical psychology." There is no doubt that the matter stays in connection with the discussion between psychologism and anti-psychologism and, as Frank states, reaches a deadlock, which is a crisis of the philosophical psychology, or "the philosophical problem of man as a *subject*." Frank does not deny that psychologists are partially right, and that the human mind is for us not a mere outward content of knowledge, but "some self-sufficient reality that is given to us inwardly and primarily, truly united with the *subject* of knowledge itself." Meantime, if the human mind is turned into a "subject of knowledge," and the life of the soul is recognised only as a particular realm of *the world of objects*, the reality simply disappears. In traditional psychological introspection, a human being, as a living spiritual being, is also divided into subject and object, and by this "the knowledge of a *living subject* as *such* must inevitably slip such contemplation."¹⁵

In the paper *Zur Metaphysik der Seele (On the Metaphysic of Soul)*, stating in brief the main ideas of the *Man's Soul*, Frank already applies

¹⁴ See С.Л. Франк, *Душа человека. Опыт введения в философскую психологию* [*Man's Soul. The Experience of Introduction to the Philosophic Psychology*], in idem, *Реальность и человек [The Reality and Man]*, Москва 1997, p. 27.

¹⁵ See *ibidem*, pp. 23-25.

“philosophical anthropology” as the main term, but identifies it with a “metaphysic of soul.” Philosophical anthropology is considered by Frank to be a philosophical foundation for historical, juridical, social and scientific worldview, which was absolutely unknown before. An accent is also on profound organic correlation between the teaching on the human soul and spirit and social philosophy: Frank follows his initial way according to which philosophical psychology (anthropology) “serves as a theoretical foundation and starting point for the philosophical knowledge of the *concrete world of the social and historical life* of humankind, and only in teaching of this realm of being may it find its ultimate accomplishment.”¹⁶ Incidentally, there is evidence that the paper was of some interest to the founder of phenomenological psychology – Ludwig Binswanger. In his letter to Frank, in November 1934, he wrote about a “complete coincidence of our views on man, on the matter and topics of psychology and psychopathology.” Answering the letter, with his characteristic modesty, Frank says that he regards his *Essay On the Metaphysic of Soul* as out of date, since in 1925, having come here from the Soviet Russia, he was not able yet to get familiar enough with the post-war publications, “but since then there was made a significant breakthrough in psychology, and something I had said before was quite outdated.”¹⁷

In the brochure *On the Nature of Psychological Life* Frank states the necessity of philosophical anthropology, already referring to Scheler (it is remarkable that “the predominant worldview until recently did not know the word ‘anthropology’ in such a sense”). On the one hand, the point is that natural sciences are alienated from the question concerning the man and its place in the system of being itself. “Man – Frank writes – proud of his knowledge of nature, strangely denies *his own existence*.”¹⁸ If the study of nature is helpful to understand means of human behaviour, the aims and intentions of behaviour can hardly be understood without answering the most important question, namely the one “*on nature and substance of the human being itself*.” On the other hand, separate studies of humanities did not have one theoretical foundation. To substantiate Frank’s belief there is a need for a firm foundation of social sciences and humanities, which

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 5.

¹⁷ Четыре письма из переписки Л. Бинсвангер – С. Франк [Four Letters from the Correspondence between L. Binswanger and S. Frank], “Логос” 3 (1992), pp. 264-265.

¹⁸ С.Л. Франк, *О природе душевной жизни* [On the Nature of Psychological Life], in idem, *По ту сторону правого и левого. Сборник статей* [Beyond Right and Left. The Collected Papers], ed. by В.С. Франк, Paris 1972, p. 237.

is to be found in a general theoretical teaching on the spiritual nature of human being. This is the only thing that will be helpful to overcome that “profound contradiction between passion with which people strive to make themselves happy with numerous technical and social reforms, the insistence and tension with which they endeavour to discover the right means to achieve their goals, and their absolute negligence about making clear for themselves the very goals.”¹⁹

Frank’s philosophical anthropology is not a mere elaboration of the biblical teaching on man, created in God’s own image and likeness, as we can find some other Russian religious philosophers do, e.g. S. Bulgakov and V. Zenkovsky. Frank’s starting point is not a religious dogma, but conclusive evidence, revealing itself in an act of immediate contemplation that remains undoubted, as it does not require any further proofs of its truth. Frank states that the idea of *personality* as a “living actual teleological unity” is to be restored, referring in particular to William Stern, whose influence he underwent at an early development stage of his system.²⁰ Along with this he states that “in the psycho-physical context the concept of personality is rather neutral.” The meaning of this statement becomes clear, if we take into consideration the general methodological principles of his philosophy. It is the principles of antinomian mono-dualism, which is based upon the main principle of *coincidentia oppositorum*, as it was given by Nicholas of Cusa.

A personality is neither a pure spiritual, nor a pure psychical phenomenon. It is in no way a mechanical constellation or summation of these or their relations (e.g. social relations), either. A personality is a primary union, uniting and subordinating to itself *both* of these life dimensions. A distinctive feature of Frank’s anthropology is the following: beginning with the Christian teaching on the twofold – spiritual and bodily – nature of man, he does not emphasise their opposition or come into a sharp soul-body dualism. For him “the nature of personality finds its *expression* inasmuch in psychical as in physical parts of its life, and either of them may ‘act’ towards the other only because they cooperate in substantiating and embodying the potential synthetic unity of personality.”²¹

It is here that we can notice the concrete coincidence between ideas of Frank and Scheler. The latter also wrote on the “psycho-physical in-

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 158.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 233.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 236.

difference of a person” (*die psychophysische Indifferenz der Person*),²² distinguishing the psychical functions and non-psychical acts. Scheler understands this psycho-physical indifference as localised within the acts of acceptance of values, though these acts are defining for a personality, but at the same time they are not to be regarded as a realm of a human being alongside of any other, since in them human being realises his physical and psychical functions (as if they were regarded as the realm of values considered to be separated of the realm of things). Frank solves this meta-logical situation in another way. He states that there is a mutual penetration of physical and psychical elements (Russian – “nachal(o),” i.e. lit. “beginning(s)”) throughout the whole space and in every single point of a human being. It does not mean, of course, that the physical and the psychical elements in a human being have equal statuses in defining the sense of being human. Regarding the above we should mention the analysis of the *multilevel* character of psychical life, which was accomplished by Frank in his *Man’s Soul* and became a methodological basis for his future studies on the subject.

It is worth noticing that in this book Frank often defines his method as phenomenological. Without dwelling (unlike E. Husserl) on the analysis of phenomenological reduction, in point of that he calls “the living knowledge,” he does really apply this specific reduction to the analysis of the element of psychical life as a phenomenon of being human. In this context, being human involves defining ontological states, since it is only in a human being that the absolute being does “reveal itself,” becomes transparent, gains its clarity and lucidity. Because of that it is worth noting the specific “echoes of ideas” between the Frank’s philosophic intuition, with his *cogito ergo est esse absolutum*,²³ and Scheler’s sincere amusement on “the perfectly wrong belief” – “to introduce the general statement ‘there is an absolute being’ with ‘I am’ (as R. Descartes) or ‘the world is’ (as Thomas Aquinas), hoping to reach this absolute realm, starting from the two mentioned species of being, with a mere deduction.”²⁴

²² See M. Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik. Neuer Versuch der Grundlegung eines ethischen Personalismus*, 3 unv. Auf., Halle 1927, pp. 397-411.

²³ See Ф. Буббайер, С.Л. Франк. *Жизнь и творчество русского философа. 1877–1950* [*S. L. Frank: The Life and Work of a Russian Philosopher. 1877–1950*], transl. by Л.Ю. Пантина, Москва 2001, pp. 103-104.

²⁴ М. Шелер, *Положение человека в космосе* [*The Human Place in the Cosmos*], transl. by А. Филиппов, in idem, *Избранные произведения* [*Selected Works*], Москва 1994, p. 188.

In the composition of a concrete human psychological life Frank finds and studies three general states: the state of pure psychological life, the state of self-awareness and subject consciousness, and the state of spiritual life. The first, i.e. the pure psychological life, “is a presence in amorphous community of a psychological element; here is neither subject, nor object in proper sense, nor any difference between ‘ego’ and ‘non-ego.’”²⁵ In fact, the psychological element, after Frank, coincides with the realm of the subconscious. It is the psychological life in its “narrow sense,” in a sense of the substrate or a root of the psychological life itself. It is a *presence of experience and sensations*, but nothing of that is given in and through experience and sensations. The presence does not coincide with any process, craving or activity: it is a “lively plenitude in itself,” but not an empty *form*; all its contents belong to none but itself. It is simultaneously a “chaos of pure and universal potentiality,” coinciding after its features with the universal potentiality of the Unknowable. However, the psychological life does not confine itself to the potentiality, it breaks through into the actual of consciousness “through a peculiar process of differentiation and integration: specifying the contents of subject consciousness of psychological life and forming the world or centre that is opposite to it, in a form of personal self-awareness of an individual and singular ‘ego.’”²⁶

The subject consciousness or, as S. Frank calls it, a “man’s little subject world,” is the totality of contents of knowledge; it is a result of volitional “ego” activity, intentional activity directed towards the outward object. It is properly in the subject knowledge that the opposition between the subject and the object emerges. “It is a realm of division and isolation in two points: on the one hand, in a form of a sharp division between ‘ego’ and ‘non-ego,’ the inner and outer world, subjective and objective sides of being; and on the other, in a form of the same sharp isolation of singular individual minds and different ‘ego(s).’ Such is the middle and dominant state of our concrete psychological life.”²⁷

Yet, it is there, in the power of intentionality, that Frank finds the initial unity of psychological life and knowledge. On the one hand, the world of human knowledge is defined subjectively, with formative power of psychological life, and only due to this there is some irrational and psychological *unity*, which forms knowledge in an isolated subjective whole that is necessary for daily

²⁵ С.Л. Франк, *Душа человека. Опыт введения в философскую психологию* [*Man’s Soul: An Introductory Essay In Philosophical Psychology*], p. 178.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 178-179.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 179.

life. On the other hand, a soul, as an initial origin of any actuality and life, manages knowledge *exactly because*, in its very being, it is a potential of knowledge and united with it in the deepest root of itself. “Psychical life in this sense does not stand in opposition to the objective world, as if it were an alien, strange realm to it, but it is itself an authentically formed range of the objective being, impregnated with inner psychical powers and blood.”²⁸

This quality of psychical life can be clearly contemplated in its third state that is the life of spirit. Frank uses an image of a cone that is turned upside-down. The outward part of it (the base that is turned up) has its centre and its periphery. The centre is a centre of personal spiritual life, which in its own turn is connected with an even more profound centre that lies in the deep of the cone apex point. Thus, the inner centre is connected by the central axis of volitional principle with the surface of the psychosomatic element, and at the same time enters into the objective realm of the super-individual spirit, in the absolute supersensible unity. Overcoming the opposition between the subject and the object, “ego” and “non-ego,” the inner and outer being, at this level, also leads to overcoming of and opposition between different “ego(s):” or it is rather “a fundamental modification,” passing from “the imaginary absolute division and isolation” to “the awareness and experience of the highest, principal unity of this diversity and plurality.” Experiencing the unity with the absolute being, as well as with the rest of other “ego(s),” in the state of spiritual being, our “ego” is aware of itself as “a mere portion of radiance, coming from the absolute unity of life and spirit;” but this awareness is rather a find (as it *finds*), but not a loss (as it *loses* nothing). “Our soul loses neither individual self-awareness nor objectivity and distinctness of the subject consciousness, but deepening in both, it rather acquires in itself the knowledge of the deep, in which both of them are rooted. All that is authentically creative, objective and at the same time original and individual in us, is a manifestation of the awareness of the deep and its immediate presence in us.”²⁹

Thus, the examination of the triple structure of psychical life allows Frank to shape not only a foundation of the subject and object relation unity, but to find the real foundation of individuality and creativity in potentiality as well as the transfinite character of the absolute being, due to which every range and every portion of reality is always “something more

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 149.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 179.

and other than everything that seems as if it were ready and finished.”³⁰ It is not a primary chaos of *Ungrund*, as Berdyaev thought, because if it were so, it would be a base without foundation, but the reality, metalogical unity of being is, as Franks states, the everlasting source of freedom; this allows Frank to develop an authentic concept of man and the world, which may be called “*personalism of the absolute unity*.”

The difference between Frank’s and Scheler’s thematic vectors, which has at length been discussed above, is rather to be referred to a concrete situation. Actually, it was quite often that their interests crossed or even coincided. In addition, not as philosophers only, but as personalities, they both were men of the most subtle spiritual and emotional constitution, sensitive to any manifestations of prevailing “*the general slovenliness in matters of feeling*, in matters of love and hate, from the lack of seriousness for the depths of things and of life itself,”³¹ and on the other hand, they both were able, in spite of the progressive beastliness of *humankind*, to penetrate mentally into the true spiritual essence of the human being: the essence which is the concrete manifestation of the absolute unity (Russian – *vseedinstvo*), (this is evidenced by *Ordo amoris* and *Man’s Soul*, written in the years of the First World War).

Frank’s and Scheler’s approaches to the metaphysics of human relationships, which are analysed in categories of sympathy, love and service, demonstrate a startling similarity. First of all, the similarity comes to light in the ontological approach to the situation “I-and-you,” in quest of the inner structures of the mind, constituting this relation. The central category here is the category of love.

As Manfred S. Frings writes about Scheler, “love is not only at the core of his value-ethics but is – in contrast to the philosophy of other twentieth-century thinkers – a cornerstone of Scheler’s entire thought.” The scholar quotes quite a typical statement, which, as we think, may even be called a “Max Scheler’s axiom,” from a manuscript, unpublished during Scheler’s life: “Man, before he is an *ens cogitans* or an *ens volens*, is an *ens amans*.” In other words, M. S. Frings continues, “the human being, before being one of thinking and willing, is a being of love. That is to say, not only leaning-toward and value-ception, but also both thinking and willing

³⁰ С.Л. Франк, *Непостижимое. Онтологическое введение в философию религии* [*The Unknowable: an ontological introduction to the philosophy of religion*], in idem, *Сочинения* [Works], Москва 1990, p. 243.

³¹ M. Scheler, *Ordo amoris*, transl. by D.R. Lachterman, in idem, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, Evanston 1973, p. 118.

are preceded in human beings by love. This proposition is at the core of his ethics, his philosophy of religion and philosophical anthropology.”³²

Though we dare slightly correct the leading western scholar of M. Scheler: Scheler’s teaching on love is basically in contrast to the philosophy of most western thinkers of the twentieth century (the only exception to the rule is Scheler’s former friend D. von Hildebrand and his *Das Wesen der Liebe*, they parted, as Scheler had left the Roman-Catholic Church), but congenial to many ideas of the Russian philosophy. B. Markov, for example, finds “notable echoes of ideas” between the philosophy of love of Solovyov and that of Scheler.³³ We also wish to draw attention to the similar “echoes of ideas,” but between Scheler and Frank.

Scheler’s teaching about love as an *energetic flow* of God’s Kingdom within us and the corresponding teaching of Frank can be stated in brief in five general points.

First, love is the way of transcendence that leads personality to overstep the bounds of its own seclusion and limitation, and to join the other: possibility of that comes from the fact of every personality belonging of to one absolute spiritual reality. Whatever man loves, Scheler writes, “in every case this means that he emerges from his merely bodily unity [*Leibeinheit*] and stands forth in his central unity as a person. It means that in and through the action of this unity he joins the other object in affirming its tendency toward its proper perfection.”³⁴ Frank understands love as one of the forms of transcendence-in-outside, which, along with the transcendence-in-inside, is regarded by him as the most important connection of personality with the true being. “Being one *with* the other, action of one *to* the other is here being of one *for* the other; and this being of one-for-the-other is, in spite of a division, being of *one-in-the-other*.”³⁵ At the same time, the division of being remains untouched: the being one-in-the-other cannot violate the inner being of the beloved self, therefore, the most intimate love must be – S. Frank repeats the words of R. M. Rilke – “the guardian of the other’s solitude.”³⁶

³² M.S. Frings, *LifeTime. Max Scheler’s Philosophy of Time: A First Inquiry and Presentation*, p. 24.

³³ See Б.В. Марков, *Макс Шелер и русская философия [Max Scheler and Russian Philosophy]*.

³⁴ M. Scheler, *Ordo amoris*, pp. 109-102.

³⁵ С.Л. Франк, *Непостижимое. Онтологическое введение в философию религии [The unknowable: an ontological introduction to the philosophy of religion]*, p. 371.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 387.

Second, love is regarded as an intention directed at the personality's spiritual focus of the other, which is its own most valuable treasure. Showing the difference between the understanding of love in the Classical Antiquity and Christian periods, Scheler states that the Christian love "is directed – at least primarily – at *man's spiritual core*, his individual personality, through which alone he participates directly in the kingdom of God."³⁷ Love – Frank writes – is an "immediate acceptance of the absolute value of the beloved."³⁸

Third, love is *service*. Scheler does not speak about a mere participation "in the action of an extraneous object." His purpose is to say that due to this participation a personality can join the "tendency toward its proper perfection, that he is active in assisting it, promoting it, blessing it."³⁹ Love is the *happiness of service to another*, echoing Frank, endowing us with a meaning, among others, of all the sufferings and perturbations, which this service may bring us.⁴⁰

Fourth, any love is a form of religious love, and the highest type of love is the love for God. "Every love is love for God, still incomplete, often slumbering or self-infatuated, often stopping, as it were on its way," Scheler writes.⁴¹ Love among personalities, Frank states, is often burdened with resistance of the material world, and at first sight, it seems, leading man astray, away from God. But even in its imperfect forms love is truly religious, as it is the "godly, *religious acceptance of a concrete living being*, acknowledging in it a divine principle,"⁴² and in its absolute ideal love "oversteps the limits of the empirical world and welcomes us back in the bosom of infinity."⁴³

Fifth, at length, love is a material justification of man's practical position in the world and in society; it is the power which overruns the difference between "own" and "strange," a "friend" and an "enemy." This

³⁷ M. Scheler, *Ressentiment*, transl. by L.A. Coser, Milwaukee 2003, p. 46.

³⁸ С.Л. Франк, *С нами Бог. Три размышления* [*God is with Us. Three Meditations*], in idem, *Духовные основы общества* [*Spiritual Foundations of Society*], Москва 1992, p. 317.

³⁹ M. Scheler, *Ordo amoris*, p. 102.

⁴⁰ С.Л. Франк, *С нами Бог. Три размышления* [*God is with Us. Three Meditations*], p. 317.

⁴¹ M. Scheler, *Ordo amoris*, p. 109.

⁴² С.Л. Франк, *С нами Бог. Три размышления* [*God is with Us. Three Meditations*], p. 317.

⁴³ С.Л. Франк, *Личность и мировоззрение Фр. Шлейермахера* [*Personality and Worldview of F. Schleiermacher*], "Русская мысль" 9 (1911), p. 27.

metaphysical position was much defining for political views of both Scheler and Frank. Frank applies Scheler's ideas of *Ausgleich* ("balancing") to defend the position of liberal conservatism that he keeps for a long time ("beyond right and left").

Thus, the teaching of love reveals the dialectic of the individual (in its difference to the singular) and the universal. "Individuality is *the deepest, since it is a concrete commonality*, as the commonality in sense of a 'middle equality' is the only shallow, *abstract commonality*." The more our personality is a living, concrete ray of spiritual light, the deeper we are rooted in the absolute, super-individual foundation of being and the *fuller* is our expression of it, "as every ray like that, every authentic 'contemplation of God' on its own part and in its proper kind potentially contains and reflects in itself *all* the infinite fullness of being and light."⁴⁴

The teaching on love and the immediate knowledge of the psychical life of others, an ontological relation "I-and-you" leads both thinkers to recognise the human being, and the personality as the most important, pre-eminent task of philosophical study, or in other words, it makes them recognise philosophical anthropology. The human being or personality is understood as an absolutely concrete, individual spiritual element, "as if it were" an eye of God himself (Scheler) that rises from and exists in the absolute unity (*vseedinstvo*).

Sharing the same position in regarding the human being as an authentic reality, which resulted in acknowledging the necessity of philosophical anthropology, Frank and Scheler parted on the definition of the starting point, which could be instrumental in a consistent facilitation of this knowledge in the general structure of philosophical knowledge. For Frank the reality of the human being is asufficient reason to add self-cognition to the pool of philosophic tasks, along with the knowledge of the world and the knowledge of God, i.e. philosophical anthropology, restored in its rights, is not to replace metaphysics.⁴⁵ The description of the human soul as a conjunction of three states – element of spiritual life, self-awareness (subject consciousness) and the spiritual centre (focus of spirit), two of which connect man with his other-being, i.e. the world and God – shows that the unity of self-awareness does not assimilate in itself the absolute unity (*vseedinstvo*). Scheler, for that matter, postulates that "*the world consciousness*,

⁴⁴ С.Л. Франк, *Душа человека. Опыт введения в философскую психологию* [*Man's Soul. The Experience of Introduction to the Philosophic Psychology*], p. 178.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 29-30.

self-awareness and God's mind constitute an indivisible structural unity."⁴⁶

Thus, anthropology, after Scheler, takes the place of the first philosophy. Scheler identifies the creation of the world by Logos with acts of human cooperation: both these acts blend together in something one that causes the human activity and creativity to devour the activity and creativity of God, and the becoming of man changes into the becoming of God.

Here we are back to the questions of Scheler's atheism. It should be noted that his atheism is of a peculiar type. It is not a "militant atheism" of a Marxist type, but rather a hypertrophied pantheism that has grown out of the centring of anthropological problem. The knowledge of the human being in all its fullness united with the first being at some fatal moment eclipsed for Scheler the Absolute, which alone contains any being. The human being became for him the absolute one, and the Absolute turned into an attribute of the first being, which lost its former characteristics of the absolute actuality and potentiality. The spirit is characterised as beyond time and space, but this character is only one of the two (the other is *élan*) attributes of the primary being, so the spirit is the attribute absolutely deprived of power in itself and from itself. From the idea of omnipotent actual God Scheler comes to the idea of becoming god (as M. Buber quite rightly observed, the religious man gives in him his place up to the philosopher).⁴⁷

Concluding his last book *Reality and Man*, Frank discusses the "perilous error" of "becoming a god," who is completely the subject of time, and, therefore, lacks the fullness of perfection. It is, *per se*, Frank's answer to Scheler, though the name of the latter is not mentioned. Frank writes: "Here, as everywhere, the learned ignorance must, contrariwise, state that God is a unity 'of both,' an indivisible unity of completeness, complete fullness with creative aspiration and process. In the timeless unity of God (...) creativity, and because of that the entire process of the world's being, is merely one of the dimensions of God's being and nature. Along with it, there is also in Him another dimension, in which He is the eternal rest of the already fulfilled – or, rather – everlasting fullness and harmony."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ М. Шелер, *Положение человека в космосе* [*The Human Place in the Cosmos*], p. 188.

⁴⁷ Despite this, Scheler's anthropology influenced the future development of the Catholic philosophy, and among others, the views of Karol Józef Wojtyła – John Paul II. Given that, it seems proper to note that there is some evidence that Frank's writings can't have been unknown to Pope John Paul II. In his sermon during the *Angelus* on September 15, 1996, he Quotation from Frank's book *Dieu est avec nous* (*God is with Us*).

⁴⁸ С.Л. Франк, *Реальность и человек* [*Reality and Man*], Москва 1997, p. 430.

Despite the obvious and unbridgeable ideological gap, Scheler and Frank are congenial in many of their ideas. First of all, it is about the guidelines on the necessity to create an integral philosophical knowledge of the human being. The thinkers came to the conclusions, each down his own path, and each of them expressed the conscious need of it in its own authentic way. Due to objective historical reasons, Frank's voice remained almost unheard in the twentieth-century Europe. But at a certain stage – namely at the moment of the “official birth” of philosophical anthropology – this voice was heard and came to be known by Max Scheler, and in the “intense spiritual communion” of these two thinkers, there were proposed and formulated initial ways of solving the anthropological problem. There is hope that the interest in Frank's philosophy, which is shining today, seemingly with a new light not in his native land only, but throughout the globe, will be helpful to appreciate, without fear or favour, his answer to the perennial philosophic question: “what is man?”

Transl. by Victor Chernyshov

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Alexei Gaponenkov
Saratov State University (Saratov, Russia)

European Context in the Correspondence between Nikolai Berdyaev and Semyon Frank

The correspondence of the great Russian immigrant philosophers and religious thinkers, Nikolai Berdyaev and Semyon Frank (1923–1947), has not been published yet (it includes about 70 letters¹) and is being prepared for publication at the moment. The full epistolary dialogue that lasted for many years includes the European context of cultural life of the Russian diaspora (mostly its two centers: Berlin and Paris) and the development of Russian philosophy in close contact with European philosophical thought of the 1920–1940s.

Berdyaev and Frank's epistolary dialogue is filled with different cultural issues and on the whole – the fate of Christianity in Europe. Those issues were manifested through references to mutual acquaintances (including European thinkers: J. Maritain, G. Marcel, E. Gilson, L. Brunschwig, E. Cassirer, M. Scheler, H. Keyserling, F. Lieb and others), organizations (YMCA, “Kantgesellschaft”), publishing houses (“Obelisk,” “YMCA-Press,” “Fernand Aubier”), magazines (“Way” (“Put”), “Kantstudien,” “Europäische Revue,” “Hochland,” “Le Monde Slave,” “Revue de Philosophie,” “Revue Thomiste,” etc.), lectures, and educational institutions. The philosophical core of the correspondence is made up of mutual comments on books and articles by Berdyaev and Frank. There are also summaries of their statements.

Immediately after their exile from Soviet Russia in 1922, in Berlin and Paris Berdyaev and Frank were actively involved in religious and social

¹ BAR. Ms. Coll (S.L. Frank, Box 1, Bakhmeteff Archive, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York, USA); BAR. Ms. Coll (N.A. Berdiaev, Box 1); РГАЛИ (Moscow), Ф. 1496, Оп. 1, Ед. хр. 788: письма Франка к Бердяеву (1924–1934).

activities, creating Russian organizations abroad, lecturing, and publishing their books and philosophical non-fiction collections. They actively participated in the Russian Student Christian Movement. They were among the originators of the Religious-Philosophical Academy, the Russian Scientific Institute, the “Way” (“Put”) journal, cooperated with St Sergius Theological Institute in Paris, were members of the Brotherhood of Holy Sophia.²

Both philosophers formally belonged to the Church of the Moscow Patriarchy and were faithful to it till death. This fact united them spiritually in the face of continuous strife between different foreign Orthodox parishes. Berdyaev and Frank were allies, because in each other they recognised free thinkers who professed Christianity without being theologians. Shortly before the Second World War Berdyaev reminded his correspondent about this fact: “We may argue about philosophical and social issues, but we are united by the fact that we are free thinkers. And this fact can hardly be loved or tolerated” (June 15, 1939).

Boris Zaitsev, a writer, spent the summer of 1923 with Berdyaev and Frank at the German resort in Prerow, on the Baltic Sea. With their families they all stayed in one house, and in November they found themselves in Rome. Professor Ettore Lo Gatto invited them to a lecture at Istituto per Europa Orientale. In his memoirs *The Latin Sky* Zaitsev depicted the Russian philosophers in the relaxed atmosphere of the ancient city: “I do not remember who of us started reading. (...) Berdyaev, Frank, Vysheslavtsev read in French. Osorgin, Chuprov, me – in Italian. (...) We were strangers from a mysterious country. (...) We read every day or every other day. Each of us had his own style. Berdyaev spoke triumphantly. Frank – deeply. Vysheslavtsev – brilliantly. (...) I can clearly see all of us then and there: picturesque Berdyaev from the Russian south, terse and deep Frank, Vysheslavtsev, artistic and elegant...”³ Soon we all went back to our countries, cities.

Berdyaev did not stay long in the capital of Germany, and, eventually, in the autumn of 1923, he moved to France. He settled near Paris, in Clamart, first in an apartment, and then, since 1938, in a house that had been inherited from the English admirer of his talent – F. West. He lived there with his wife, Lydia (she embraced Catholicism in 1918; her diary was published as a separate volume⁴), his sister-in-law Eugenia Rapp and his mother-in-

² See Ph. Boobbyer, *S.L. Frank: the life and work of a Russian philosopher, 1877–1950*, Athens 1995.

³ Б.К. Зайцев, *Собрание сочинений*, Москва 1999, vol. 6, pp. 263-270.

⁴ See Л. Бердяева, *Профессия: жена философа*, Москва 2002.

law. Frank, moving with his wife Tatiana and their four children from one rented flat in Berlin to another, for the time being strongly wished to live in the German capital. Vasilii Frank substantiates that with the statement: “For my father, Germany was the second cultural homeland. He studied at German universities, wrote and spoke German as well as well Russian, and culturally speaking, he felt ‘at home.’ That is why, unlike many of his colleagues, he never thought of moving to France.”⁵

Facing communication gaps in the Russian emigration community, both philosophers were trying to organize mutual discussion of spiritual problems among Germans and French. Due to his literary reputation Berdyaev was more successful in meeting the challenge: in 1926–1928 he triggered interconfessional meetings of French Catholics and Protestants, Catholic Modernists and Catholic Thomists. The meetings were attended by father L. Gillet, father L. Laberthonniere, J. Maritain, pastor Begner, prof. Leserer, Wilfred Monod. “Everyone realized that we were like a Christian oasis in the non-religious desert, in a world hostile to Christianity. At those meetings, we figured out an underlying unity in Christ alongside differences in the types of religious thoughts and spirituality of characters,”⁶ recalled Berdyaev. In conversations with J. Maritain, F. Vetter, E. Gilson and others, the Russian philosopher saw the renewal and development of classical Catholicism, which was a response to the spread of Catholic modernism. In the early 1930s, he regularly interviewed Catholic philosophers in his apartment, attended the cultural “Decade Pontigny,” an annual ten-day conference that brought together the intellectual elite of France until 1939. At the end of the 1930s his philosophy combined a primacy of spiritual freedom that was common for him, “rebellion,” the motifs of Christian faith and social justice.

How was Berdyaev perceived by the participants in interconfessional meetings? He answered this question himself in *Dream and Reality: An Essay in Autobiography*: “My position was the most ambiguous. (...) I could only express my thoughts, just my view of the world, my religious philosophy... Meanwhile, Western Christians, especially when we met for the first time, perceived my thought as typical Orthodox thought, almost like the voice of the Church. (...) They began to view the Russian Orthodoxy through the Russian religious thought of the 19th and 20th centuries, which was a kind of Russian modernism and was not approved by the conservative

⁵ В. Франк, *Русский мальчик в Берлине*, transl. by В. Михайлин, Е. Зотова, “Волга” 10 (1998), p. 114.

⁶ Н.А. Бердяев, *Самопознание*, Москва 1990, pp. 243-244.

religious circles.”⁷ Here the *reception of Russian religious philosophy* of the first half of the twentieth century in Europe is accurately noticed. To present a three-dimensional picture of Russian religious and philosophical works we need a broader base of printed and manuscript sources of Europeans themselves (articles, reviews, notes, memoirs, diaries, letters, interviews). This material sometimes quite suddenly pops up in the process of textual work and commenting, in the philosophers’ references.

The majority of letters in question is devoted to Frank’s participation in Berdyaev’s journal “Way.” The correspondence reveals a number of important biographical moments of the Russian philosopher’s everyday life in Berlin. Frank’s letters show his guidance of the “Berlin branch” of the Religious-Philosophical Academy in the mid-1920s. The work of the branch was truly active. At the same time historians of philosophy became more aware of Religious-Philosophical Academy’s work organised by Berdyaev in Paris. The correspondence contains stories about meetings with Frank, German and French philosophers, including a jurist and sociologist Georges Gurvitch.

On May 30, 1933 Frank said: “In France, my name and my work, of course, are unknown. The only thing that is written about me is an article by Gurvich: *La philosophie russe la premier quart du XX siècle*, “Le Monde Slave” 1926 August, and his own note in his book: *Les leadanees actuelles de la philosophie allemande*, Paris, Vrin, 1930.” Frank was an official reviewer of G. Gurvitch’s master’s thesis on Fichte’s ethics and philosophy of law,⁸ in April 1925. The author worked with Fichte’s manuscripts in the Berlin Royal Library. Back in Russia, he was influenced by Leon Petrazhitskii’s ideas; he emigrated to Berlin in 1921, then he moved to Prague. Gurvich had a distinguished academic career in sociology in France (he became a naturalized citizen of France), he wrote in Russian, German and French. Frank wrote an article about his book *L’Idée du Droit Social* (Paris, 1932) in “Neue Zürcher Zeitung” (December 1935). Gurvich also initiated an abridged translation of the book by Frank *The Object of Knowledge*; the translators were A. Caffi, Zoya Oldenburg and George Fedotov. The book *La Connaissance et L’Etre* (Paris: Fernand Aubier, 1937) was published under the editorship of Louis Lavelle, a French Catholic philosopher. The foreword was written by L. Lavelle and R. Le Senne.

The accuracy of the philosophical terms in French was ascertained by Georgy Fedotov. His letter to Frank dated March 22, 1935 survived.

⁷ Ibidem, p. 245.

⁸ See G. Gurvitch, *Fichtes System der konkreten Ethik*, Tübingen 1924.

It concerned some questions and comments on the text of the upcoming book: “Maybe, you haven’t been fully informed about my role in the translation of your book. It’s not possible to say that it is in ‘my hands,’ as the responsibility for it, not to mention the translation of the first two chapters, is divided between four people: M-lle Oldenburg, I, Gurvich and a French editor. I work with Oldenburg (Sergei’s daughter) who speaks French better than I do, but is poorly informed about French philosophical terminology. This terminology (at least during a preliminary stage) is a business of mine. This, as you can imagine, is not an easy task due to extreme penury and, on the other hand, the purism of the French philosophical language.”⁹ Fedotov’s “doubts” were caused by the French equivalents of the Russian terms “total-unity,” “conclusion,” “distinctness” and “perception.”

References to the review of the translation of Frank’s book written by Étienne Borne, Yves de Montchenil, J. Delessalle are poorly explored. J. Delessalle’s article in “Revue de Philosophie” in 1938 is entitled *L’affirmation de l’être et la connaissance intuitive*. In the article Frank’s work is highly appraised. Reviews also appeared in Catholic magazines, e.g. “Études. Revue catholique d’interêt général,” “Revue Thomiste.”

The religious and philosophical life of the two major centres of the Russian diaspora – Paris and Berlin – conveyed through the perception of addressees, is represented in correspondence by many memorable moments. Here Berdyaev only thinks about the creation of “Way:” “The journal should be topical, should respond to critical issues of religious consciousness. But the production order should be deep, from the perspective of eternity” (December 18, 1924). He was indignant at the Russian atmosphere in Paris: “I feel suffocated by this suspiciousness, hatred, malice, mutual taunting. What consoles me a little is a chat with the French, especially the Catholics, with neo-Thomists” (April 1, 1925).

The best relations he forged were those with Jacques Maritain: “Maritain is a charming man, one of the best people I know, he’s got some traits of holiness. He’s not a typical Frenchman, he’s free from all forms of nationalism, he’s rather a type of the Russian intellectual; in his youth he was an anarchist” (March 21, 1938). In his letter Berdyaev juxtaposed their manners of philosophizing: “Maritain himself does not enjoy any authority in Sorbonne’s academic circles, being a Catholic Thomist of aesthetics, a literary and not scientific type. In the official Catholic circles of professors

⁹ BAR. Ms. Coll (S.L. Frank, Box 1, Bakhmeteff Archive, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York, USA).

he is at the moment treated suspiciously, as a man of leftist social views, and the Catholic right-wing press calls him a Catholic Marxist. And even several times it pointed to my bad influence on him. That's why I felt quite uncomfortable. It can be annoying." By the mid-1930s Berdyaev saw himself as a "very leftist" thinker.

He suggested that Frank should write a review article on the philosophical writings of expatriates for the previous 10 years, in order to "raise the prestige of Russians in the eyes of foreigners" (December 4, 1929). Moreover, he asked him to include the works on religion, theology, psychology, and sociology. Frank had experience in writing such reviews on Russian philosophy of the previous 10–15 years for "Kantstudien" (vol. 31, Berlin, 1926), and suggested another author – a young philosopher Dmitry Chizhevsky. In another letter, Berdyaev was concerned with the language barrier of the Russian philosophy in Europe: "Philosophical books written in Russian go unnoticed and thus are almost useless. Only foreign publications provoke some interest" (October 27, 1933). Berdyaev's books had been translated into many European languages, and Frank, after getting one of those books inscribed, called his correspondent, "a famous writer from now on" (February 16, 1938).

Berdyaev, being a full-time director and editor of "YMCA-Press," assisted Frank in publishing some of his books. Frank also informed Berdyaev about his great plans and the forthcoming publications in the "Way" journal, being a close associate and reviewer of primarily German books. In August 1926, Frank suggested a topic for a report on Paris – *The Lifestyle and Spiritual Challenges of Our Time*: "Philosophical and historical attempt to show that in Soviet Russia and Western Europe there are essentially identical processes of vandalism and consequent problems of spiritual education" (August 28, 1926). Later, the report took shape of the article *New Barbarism* ("Rul'," December 28, 1926). Rilke's mysticism was of particular interest to Frank: "I have recently thoroughly read the German mystic poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who had a marvelous epiphany of the omnipresence of God, as it were self-evident in his spiritual experience. I'd like to write an article about him as a religious thinker in 'Way'" (March 27, 1928). Berdyaev used to accept such proposals immediately.¹⁰

There was a chance for Frank to meet his spiritual needs in Germany: "In Berlin all that is Russian is dying down. But there is a hope for possibility

¹⁰ See С. Франк, *Мистика Райнера Марии Рильке*, "Путь" 12 (1928), pp. 47-75; "Путь" 13 (1928), pp. 37-52.

of Germans acting. This winter I visited six German cities reporting ‘Die russische Weltanschauung,’ and there are still some trips ahead. Germans were passionately interested in Russia and the circles I dealt with were particularly interested in the spiritual problems of Russian thought” (January 5, 1926). Sent by “Kantgesellschaft” in November 1925 with his reports in German, Frank visited the Rhenish cities (Cologne, Aachen, Düsseldorf). Besides Berlin, he faced “very lively and appreciative students in Jena and Freiberg” (November 21, 1927).

“Kantgesellschaft” is a leading organization in Germany for studying Kant’s works. It was founded in 1904 by Hans Vaihinger (dismissed by the Nazis in 1938 and reinstated in 1954). In the 1920s, the organization had a network of regional offices, supported scientists, scientific publications, and lecturing. Fedor Stepun, Nikolai Lossky, Lev Shestov, Sergei Hessen all worked for “Kantgesellschaft.”

As an associate professor, Frank gave a course of lectures in Russian thought and literature for German students at the Berlin University (1931 – April, 1933). He was invited there by Max Fasmer, a professor and linguist, and an old friend of his from Petrograd and Saratov.

Finally, on April 14, 1933 the Russian philosopher had to make a hard choice: “I wish all success to the Germans in their national revival, but, being a foreigner, and not a Gentile, I cannot be active on the ideological front and I want to help the Germans with one – not to burden them with my more presence. I have to become again in my old age a refugee.” The terrible historical events, if not explicitly named, are revealed through the letters’ subtext, the authors’ disturbance over what was happening in Europe. Berdyaev’s brief remarks emphasised the tragic feeling of the upcoming events: “I have just returned from Montpellier, where I read my report at the congress of social Christianity. I met a lot of people, and I’ve got a desperate impression from the conversations. I do not know how to manage and avoid the dictatorship of Germany over the whole of Europe; this dictatorship is already there” (November 14, 1933). And there is a laconic phrase at the end of another letter: “These days are very disturbing, Europe’s fate is being determined” (September 7, 1938, Vichy).

With the “Americans” Frank had quite complex, contradictory, and even dramatic relations. Berdyaev was more involved in John Mott, Paul Anderson and Gustav Kuhlman’s projects. Perhaps Kuhlman, being Swiss and very sensitive to Russian immigrants, especially Frank and Berdyaev, understood the specific nature of the cooperation with Christian organizations in the Russian environment better. But Berdyaev warned Frank: “In

America, among American Protestants, there is a strong movement against the Orthodox Church. Some people believe that the Orthodox Church died, and they are happy about it. Thus, they come to the conclusion of the necessity of inculcating true Christianity (that is Protestantism) in Russia, and they have ceased supporting movements in favour of the Orthodox Church. Americans beware of reactionary religion or theology and they fear we've got them. The Russians are having hard times" (April 1, 1925).

For Frank the situation got worse with the arrival of Edgar MacNaughton, a representative of YMCA. He tried to "Americanise" religious work in the Russian Student Christian Movement (RSKhD), understanding little about the subject matter. He insisted on the reduction of YMCA's investments, depriving Frank of any financial support. The leaders of the "movement" (Vasily Zenkovsky, etc.), despite Berdyaev's requests, were unable to help. In fact, as a result of the financial difficulties, the Religious-Philosophical Academy in Berlin ceased to exist. In 1927 Frank seriously considered leaving. Berdyaev made arrangements, tried to write letters, advised him: "In Berlin you are objectively needed" (November 16, 1927). And Frank had to agree: "I am aware of all the difficulties and risks of moving to Paris, and I don't really enjoy the idea of moving. I consider it as a last resort. And here I am objectively needed. In spite of the fact that here I have practically nothing to do, everything will end the moment I leave" (November, 21 1927). He only had a small salary from the Russian scientific institute. Frank was looking forward to getting a teaching position at a German university. "The last resort" came ten years later, and in the early spring of 1937, being threatened by arrest, the Russian philosopher moved to France.

Living in Germany, Frank paid careful attention to the crisis of German Protestantism and theological thought. He informed the recipient about the "great phenomena of contemporary theology in Germany:" "Theologische Existenz von heute" (Berlin, 1934) by Karl Barth and the "Franciscan letter" by Friedrich Heiler. "Both are connected with the current theological, church and political turmoil and Christian believers' struggle against a new idolatry" (January 25, 1934). In the works of a Calvinist theologian K. Barth, and a religious scholar, a leader of the "Holy Church" movement F. Heiler he noticed a certain awakening of the Christian conscience and thought. Frank particularly singled out a "Franciscan letter" by Friedrich Heiler, with whom he actively cooperated. The German theologian searched for a convergence of faiths in a uniform Christian world, thus restoring St. Francis of Assisi's ideal – "just to follow Christ."

Frank was a participant in the Eighth International Congress of Philosophy in Prague held on September 2–7, 1934, and presented the topic of “Philosophy and life.” He began his summary report of the event, written for the “Way” and for Berdyaev, with the following words: “It was a true Babel, especially with the Czechs trying to attach to the Congress political significance. (...) [A]t the Congress we truly missed the Russian philosophers from Paris, especially you” (September 15, 1934). The Czechs (a philosopher E. Radley, etc.) made us talk about the “crisis of democracy,” a political subtext which testified to a real “social order” of philosophy. At the Congress two movements came face to face: “utilitarian-humanitarian” and “religious-philosophical.” In this aspect, a dialogue between a German Catholic theologian of Polish descent E. Pshivary and a French philosopher L. Brunschwig sank in memory. “Russian speakers” were represented by Lossky, Hessen and Frank. “Without saying a word to each other, they developed, though differently, in fact, the same idea of the truth as a complete and comprehensive unity.”¹¹ Frank titled his report “Spiritual vital importance of negative theology.”

Frank’s thoughts during the work on the book *The Unknowable* are of special interest. He wrote the original version of the book in German. The first mention of it can be found in a letter to Berdyaev on January 25, 1934. Frank wrote that Fedor Stepun recommended a Swiss publishing house “Reihe religiöser Russen:” “He considers it’s quite possible to publish there my book of religious and philosophical content. I have been working on the conception of such a book – it’s been already partly written in German – about ‘negative theology’ (its German title is *Das Unergründliche*), appliance of my teaching about the living knowledge and metalogic to the philosophy of mysticism.” A special creative impulse that occurred while Frank was writing the book, is described in his letter of January 19, 1935: “I consider it a God’s special gift that despite a very difficult financial situation and poor health, I managed to exercise – though perhaps poorly but fully – my creative intuitive abilities.”

It was F. Lieb who was in charge of the publishing plans for Russian books. Berdyaev advised Frank to contact F. Lieb and dispelled his fears: “The fact that you are not a theologian, cannot necessarily be an obstacle to the publication of your book in this publishing house.” I’m myself not only a theologian, but even an anti-theologian” (February 7, 1934). It is noteworthy to mention that after being awarded Dr.h.c. in theology at

¹¹ С. Франк, *Философия и жизнь*, “Путь” 45 (1934), pp. 73-74.

Cambridge University in 1947, in a letter to Frank (and not only to him) Berdyaev spoke ironically about the degree, not recognising himself as a theologian.

Preparations for publishing *Das Unergründliche. Ontologische Prolegomena zu einer mystischen Theologie* turned out to be in vain and the book wasn't released during Frank's lifetime on political grounds. After the publication of the Russian edition of *The Unknowable* (Paris, 1939) Berdyaev wrote in a letter to Frank, "I was a bit confused with the chosen name of the book. It pushes all rationalists aside" (March 21, 1938). In his review of the book in the "Way" journal, he clarified his statement: "The limits of S. Frank's thought are the boundaries of the thought that is *platoniziruyuschaya*, borders of monistic philosophy, and his emotional limits are the boundaries of German Romanticism."¹² Along with the problems of metaphysics of religion, he was concerned with European readers and a professional society of philosophers' reaction to the book.

Berdyaev and Frank met in Paris (1937–1939), where they exchanged some short messages. A long letter was sent on March 21, 1938 with Frank asking Berdyaev to support academic scholarships from London. What follows from the letter is a possibility of resuming Berdyaev's and Frank's contact with the circle of French philosophers: E. Gilson, I. Bréhier, G. Marcel, L. Brunschwig, J. Maritain and others. Frank had been acquainted with E. Gilson long before he moved to Paris. It's worth mentioning that at that time Berdyaev was a famous writer in France. Frank did not have such European recognition: "In certain aspects, it's even unnatural for an independent and spiritually-minded thinker to be supported in today's world. To starve would be much more natural for him, and I understand that very well, but with a family you take on certain duties that make you become a breadwinner" (March 23, 1938).

After 1939 the correspondence was discontinued by the war and it was resumed in 1945 with the news of Lydia Berdyaev's death. Nikolai Berdyaev was still waiting for feedback on his new books, "The Russian environment is completely dead when it comes to philosophical thought; you can't expect any reply" (December 18, 1946). For an English publishing house "Harvill-Press" Frank compiled an anthology of Russian religious philosophers' works of the late 10th – early 20th century (translated by N. Daddington). However, it wasn't published during Frank's lifetime

¹² Н. Бердяев, С.Л. Франк. *Непостижимое*, "Путь" 60 (1939), p. 67.

because of some disagreement between the editor and the compiler. Only after his death, philosopher's son Victor published it in the USA.¹³

Summarizing all his philosophical works, Berdyaev wrote: "I consider the idea of objectification to be the most important from a purely philosophical point of view. Soon, I will send to you my new book, *The Beginning and the End: Essay on Eschatological Metaphysics* written in French. It is the most important metaphysical book of mine" (November 1, 1946).

When Frank received the promised work, he tried for the last time to clarify philosophical issues with Berdyaev. Like many years before, the recipients were trying to figure out a "basic intuition," the dispute raised the issue of the primacy of the personal spirit in relation to being. At first, Frank sided with the author of the book: "The fact that creativity and freedom are more primary and deeper than any ready-being I fully accept" (December 6, 1946, London). And then he provided an opinion of what Berdyaev characterised as "denials:" of "baseless" rebellion and individualism. "I recognise the legitimacy of righteous rebellion, but only as a subordinate moment – Frank speculated. I'm afraid your rebellion against the idea of objectification is a denial of incarnation, which in its extreme leads to a kind of abstract idealism and spiritualism" (December 6, 1946).

He concluded the letter, not hoping to "prove" his rightness logically, but formulating the mission of a philosopher: "Each of us is called to express our feeling of being, to say the words, and the absolute truth knows who is right" (*ibidem*).

For the scientific community Berdyaev and Frank's epistolary dialogue is a new and unknown source on the history of Russian philosophy in the European context.

Transl. by Yulia Romaykina

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Valery Pavlov

National University of Food Technologies, Kiev (Kiev, Ukraine)

Personalism of Nikolai Berdyaev's Philosophy and French Personalism

There are many terms in the conceptual structure of philosophy, which, being close to each other in content, allow us to express the subtleties and nuances of philosophical understanding of various aspects of the human being – a man, an individual, a personality, I, a person, Ego, public, social, socialization, anthropocentrism, anthropogenesis, etc. The concept of personalism has a particular shade and its own characteristic of meaning. It is typically used in two cases: firstly, to emphasise the attention of philosophical ideas to the personality as a spiritual source; and secondly, to denote a separate trend in philosophy, in which the personality is regarded as the highest value, the centre of civilization, that direction which has religious overtones, but in a special way trying to combine religious and secular values.

The purpose of the article is to find similarities and differences in the interpretations of personalist ideas by the Russian religious philosopher of the first half of the 20th century, N. A. Berdyaev (1874–1948), and by the representatives of the French personalist philosophy.

The philosophy of personalism took shape as an independent trend in the early 30s of the previous century. Berdyaev's works played a significant role in its formation. What interest do they represent for personalist philosophers, and for the Russian thinker? Let us turn to the works of Nikolai Aleksandrovich Berdyaev. I will start by saying that the key points of his philosophy are God, identity, freedom and creativity. The theorist was interested not just in a personality, but in a personality seeking God, moving towards Him, finding its true existence only in union with God. Berdyaev's doctrine of personality was called "eschatological personalism." The thinker was convinced that the salvation of a person and mankind is

possible exclusively through sincere faith in God. Thinking about a person much and for different reasons, the philosopher distinguished between what is given to a man by nature, and what in his very nature and behaviour has unnatural, divine essence. Berdyaev used the term “individual” to refer to the former, and the term “personality” to denote the latter. An individual and a personality are different manifestations of the same phenomenon – a person. An individual lives and creates (carries out its creativity) under the laws of the natural world. A personality is a creature connected with God, as His likeness. Personal creativity is filled with divine meaning. The philosopher believed that every person has a vocation and can become a personality. This idea was also consistently maintained by the representatives of French personalism.

When assessing the philosophical heritage of Berdyaev, it is important to remember that, by his own admission, his worldview was influenced by the Gnostic and mystical traditions of the world and Russian philosophy. The Gnostic doctrine emphasised the mystical idea of knowledge which indicates a person’s path to salvation, but is gained only through divine revelation. Berdyaev shared this position entirely. Assessing the role and place of mysticism in his philosophy, he defined it as “mystical” and “anti-hierarchical” personalism. The thesis of the caducity and minor importance of the material world, if compared with the spiritual one, moved to his philosophy, in respect of Gnosticism virtually unchanged. Berdyaev and the Gnostics believed that matter is burdened with evil, so they associated salvation with leaving material existence. The above mentioned greatly explains the insatiable desire of Berdyaev to synthesise philosophy and religion in his works. He wrote, “Religion can do without philosophy, its sources are absolute and self-sufficient, but philosophy cannot do without religion, it needs religion as food, as a source of living water. *Religion is the lifeblood of philosophy, religion feeds philosophy with real being.*”¹ This approach is not only close to personalism. It composes a philosophical core of personalism and largely determines the theoretical strategy of this philosophical trend. It is confirmed by the words of the founder of the French personalism, E. Mounier: “The mission of Christianity is to be the keeper of philosophy.”²

¹ Н.А. Бердяев, *Философия свободы*, in idem, *Философия свободы. Смысл творчества*, Москва 1989, p. 20.

² Э. Мунье, *Экзистенциалистские и христианские перспективы*, in idem, *Надежда отчаявшихся: Мальро. Камю. Сартр. Бернанос*, transl. by И.С. Вдовина, Москва 1995, p. 133.

In the context of topic in question, it is extremely interesting and important for the philosophy of personalism to have a close look at Berdyaev's judgments of directly personalistic character – the interdependence of God and a man, the role of freedom and creativity in the release of the spiritual from the prison of the material, the necessity of the struggle between good and evil, etc. Considering God as the source of life and the world of man, the theorist paid much attention to the analysis of the causes and characteristics of the struggle between two basic opposites, manifesting itself in all the spheres of social life – good and evil. In Berdyaev's opinion, in this struggle both opposites have equal rights. In other words, each of them has an equal right to win. This thesis is not entirely supported by the representatives of the doctrine of personalism. According to them, even at intermediate stages the good is desired to gain victory.

In Berdyaev's philosophical constructs the interpretation of God is very far from the canonical understanding of His essence in Christianity. As an active supporter and promoter of the hugely popular idea of God-manhood in the Russian philosophy, he wrote a lot about unity and sometimes even about the identity of God and man. He emphasised that both these entities had the status of initial being. At the same time, he pointed out their differences. God and man are different aspects of initial being and creativity. God embodies creativity in its full manifestation, while man is a specific process of creativity. The freedom precedes both God and man. It is the true source of life. "Man is a child of God and a child of Freedom..."³ Creativity is the instrument, the way of unfolding freedom. According to Berdyaev, "God is immanent to the world and man. The world and man are immanent to God."⁴ These two phenomena are inseparable. The connection between them is one of interdependence. Initially, "eternal humanity" is presented in God, and God-likeness is in a man. Here is what Berdyaev writes, "Humanity is the main attribute of God. Man is rooted in God, as God is rooted in man;" "God needs a person, a creative human response to the divine call;" "(...) not only can a man not live without God, God cannot live without man either. This is a mystery of love, the need of loving in the beloved."⁵ God reveals and manifests Himself in His creations, especially

³ Н.А. Бердяев, *О назначении человека. Опыт парадоксальной этики*, in idem, *О назначении человека*, Москва 1993, p. 39.

⁴ Н.А. Бердяев, *Смысл творчества. Опыт оправдания человека*, in idem, *Философия свободы. Смысл творчества*, Москва 1989, p. 258.

⁵ Н.А. Бердяев, *Самопознание (Опыт философской автобиографии)*, Москва 1991, p. 179.

in a man. They are inseparable and so united in their being. This position is essentially identical to the position of personalist philosophy. Many researchers of Nikolai Berdyaev's works believe that in his philosophy "(...) a free man, the creator is actually put in the place of God."⁶ Berdyaev's philosophy is concerned not just with a man, creativity and God, but with god-like man carrying out godlike creativity.

Avoiding the opposition of the subject and the object in every way, Berdyaev was focused on the creative nature of a personal being. Throughout life a man does not only create the world, but masters it in a rational and sensible way, making himself a part of the world, and the world – a part of himself. This is another point of intersection of Berdyaev's ideas and philosophy of personalism. Indeed, the philosopher exaggerated the role of the personal principle in the world beingness. As a philosophical trend, personalism consistently defended the thesis of the uniqueness, oneness of each person and at the same time put emphasis on the joint lives of people, on their ability to solve, in concerted effort, problems that even a talented, smart and strong individual cannot afford to tackle single-handedly. Berdyaev's position in the philosophical literature is often called a "radical personalism," because he made the status of personality (personal being) absolute. We must agree with the well-known expert on the history of Russian philosophy V. Zenkovsky, who believed that "Berdyaev's personalism *isolates* rather than connects people;" it "(...) is self-closing, afraid of every touch with the world;" in it "(...) a person is 'more primary' than being."⁷ Berdyaev always tried to talk about being only in the context and from the perspective of personality being. Real existence of the world as if dissolved in the personal being becomes meaningful only when it is related to the needs and interests of the person. "Personality is a supreme value," asserts Berdyaev.⁸ In fact, he gives it the status of the first metaphysical principle. The logic of Berdyaev's statements on the place and role of the individual in the being of the world provides sufficient grounds to consider his philosophy not only as radical personalism, but as a radical anthropocentrism.

Although personality was the focus for both Berdyaev and philosophers of personalism, they declared very different approaches to understanding

⁶ Н.К. Бонещкая, *Апофеоз творчества (Н. Бердяев и Ф. Ницше)*, "Вопросы философии" 4 (2009), p. 94.

⁷ В.В. Зеньковский, *История русской философии: В 2 т.*, vol. 2, Париж 1989, p. 317.

⁸ Н.А. Бердяев, *Самопознание (Опыт философской автобиографии)*, p. 16.

the issues of its essence and existence. The Russian theorist constantly said that he was little interested (or rather not interested at all) in the real practical world of the human being, and also the world of material life in general. His attention was focused on the spiritual sphere which was regarded as the only territory of true being enabling true freedom and true creativity. In his philosophical concept Berdyaev consciously alienated personality from the material world (he also called it the world of "objectification of spirit") and vice versa. For him, "objectification" was inseparable from depersonalization. Berdyaev wrote, "The meaning of the religious life of mankind is a breakthrough beyond the kingdom of objectification, beyond the kingdom of the law, beyond the kingdom of necessity of society and nature."⁹ Making personality a semantic centre of his idea, he remained a personalist only in connection to the spirit which he adored. Still, he lost interest in the personality beyond its spirit. French personalist philosophy was concerned not only with an abstract personality, but also with a real person, with their problems and concerns, a person living in a specific society and engaged in specific cases.

According to Berdyaev, the creativity by which people realise their potential, is a manifestation of their love for God. The creativity itself, devoid of any divine support, according to the Russian philosopher, is a way to overcome spiritual crisis that is present in contemporary society. The overcoming is realised in man, without the objective world, without the objectification of his knowledge and faith. Creativity is a way of gaining freedom, leading to the victory of good over evil. Creativity in Berdyaev's comprehension is intended to change the reality, still not at the level of its materiality, but where the spirit prevails. Such an approach, however in a slightly different interpretation, was supported in the French personalism.

Despite the fact that Berdyaev's philosophy has an explicit personalistic character, his personalism borders with self-denial. As previously mentioned, according to his doctrine, being does not exist apart from a personality; it is always coloured with personality. However, scorning its material components, the Russian theorist depersonalized being. The contradiction was obvious. It manifested itself immediately as the philosopher "placed" identity beyond material reality, and he had to do it almost permanently. Trying to be a consistent personalist, he brought this quality (theoretical position) to negation. And he did it unwittingly.

⁹ Н.А. Бердяев, *Я и мир объектов. Опыт философии одиночества и общения*, in *idem, Философия свободного духа*, Москва 1994, p. 256.

It must be borne in mind that personalism as an essential feature of the philosophical concept of Berdyaev and the trend of French personalism are to some extent still different phenomena. Having a lot of points of contact, they differ in methodological and semantic terms, have different social goals and a different degree of reasoning and conclusions of their provisions; in the end, in many respects they have different theoretical and social bases. Although while analysing Berdyaev's philosophy, Zenkovsky conventionally marked out four periods in his creativity and singled out one of them as associated with "his *personalist* ideas,"¹⁰ it does not mean that Berdyaev was a representative of the same personalist philosophy which since the 30s of the previous century manifested itself as an independent trend in western Europe. Berdyaev's doctrine played an important role in its formation and development, but the French personalists chose their own path for popularisation and adoption of their ideas in the minds of people and society.

Personalism as a separate trend in philosophy has a relatively short history. First and foremost, one can distinguish its Anglo-American and European versions. The former appeared in the late 19th century. Its semantic field was primarily focused on issues of moral education and the problem of freedom. The latter was formed in the early 1930s. It was popular mainly in France, but spread to other countries as well. It was a philosophical response of the "left" intellectuals to the critical issues of the day. Its homeland was France, and its creator was a philosopher and journalist E. Mounier (1905–1950). Since October 1932 he began publishing the magazine "Esprit" ("Spirit") in Paris. Some of his supporters – J. Lacroix (1900–1986), P.-L. Landsberg (1901–1944), G. Madinier (1895–1958), M. Nedoncelle (1905–1976), P. Ricoeur (1913–2005), D. Rougemont (1906–1985), etc. centred around the magazine. The magazine became a theoretical organ of personalism, a spiritual centre of intellectual search of the French for many years. Berdyaev's philosophical doctrine played an important role in the establishment of the magazine as well as in the nature and style of the published materials. The Russian theorist was personally acquainted with Mounier and other representatives of French personalism. He attended the meeting where the decision was made to establish that organ, and published his own works in it. Assessing the extent of his personal involvement in the personalist philosophy at the time of its formation, Berdyaev wrote later, "The fact 'that this trend was obliged to me was repeatedly

¹⁰ В.В. Зеньковский, *История русской философии: В 2 т.*, vol. 2, p. 303.

stated by its representatives,” “The Youth of ‘Esprit’ had sympathy for the personalist philosophy, which I was the most *radical* (italics is mine – V.P.) representative of, protecting the social projection of Personalism, which is close to socialism not of a Marxist’s type, but of Proudhon’s one.”¹¹ The French personalist philosophy was focused on a personality in the variety of its social manifestations. Theoretical and methodological platforms of the doctrine were notable for their significantly eclectic character, which expressed itself in attempts to connect, to uniquely synthesise religion and secular forms of knowledge, idealism and materialism, including Christian existentialism and Marxism. Trying to rise above materialism and idealism, personalism searched for its own way to substantiate the role of a human in the functioning of reality. This is particularly evident in its tendency to bring together religious and secular spheres, as well as in the concept of “involved existence.” As a manifestation of the world outlook, the French personalism, as well as the Western European one, preferred the values of the Catholic religion. Its central idea was a personality as an incarnation of God.

Although after the Second World War personalist philosophy spread to Italy, Poland, Scandinavia, the East and the Latin America, its basic ideas were still founded and developed mainly in France – in the works of Mounier and his associates.

Trying to answer the question about what can and should be a basic and fundamental principle of the human civilization, the French personalists formulated it clearly and unequivocally – a personality. The response suffered a high degree of abstraction. To overcome this shortcoming, personalism concretised the concept of “personality” by reference to the history of philosophy and to the rich theoretical and practical experience of Christianity, especially Catholicism. “The personality acts as a unity of three main features in personalist interpretation: exteriorisation, interiorisation and transcendence. Exteriorisation is a realisation of personality outwards; interiorisation is an internal focus of personality on itself, its inner world. Being deeply co-related, exteriorisation and interiorisation are passionately involved in the movement of transcendence, aimed at higher divine values, such as the truth, beauty, blessing.”¹² Such a personality was completely different from the one in Berdyaev’s philosophy. It possessed not only spiritual but also material attributes.

¹¹ Н.А. Бердяев, *Самопознание (Опыт философской автобиографии)*, p. 278.

¹² И.С. Вдовина, *Персонализм*, in В.С. Степин (ed), *Новая философская энциклопедия: В 4 т.*, vol. 3., Москва 2001, p. 223.

The personality in personalism is a phenomenon which has an open character. It is not complete, final, having reached the limit of its development. Personality is constantly changing, improving, being in a state of never-ending self-creation. “It is growing, making the *shuttle movement*, i.e. the movement of exteriorisation, through which it rushes to the other, and the movement of interiorisation, which returns it to itself.”¹³ Moreover, personality “(...) is a source which is above all things, and shines all around;” it “is at the summit of the Universe and endows it with sense.”¹⁴ Some of Western philosophers who are critical of the conceptual principles of French personalism suggest that “(...) it turned personality into the absolute.”¹⁵ Such an estimate is more than fair. It is akin to the existence – in the world of philosophy – of an assessment of Berdyaev’s views on the place and role of the personality in the world.

One of the essential features of the philosophy of personalism is a constant correlation of the theoretical aspects of personality with the practice of its existence in the real-life social relations. In this regard, personalism does what Berdyaev did not do. Though personalists as well as the Russian theorist had a very large share of the abstract human reasoning, at the same time they paid attention to finding solutions to specific problems in society. This philosophical trend consistently pursued the idea that a man should be fully involved in the life of society, should show himself as an active subject which does not only have his own position, but consistently defends it. It is noteworthy that basing its arguments largely on the values of the Christian religion, personalism was open to the world of secular life of the individual. Mounier, as a Catholic himself, was quite tolerant of other religious beliefs as well as of the atheist worldview. In this regard, the French personalism is a philosophical doctrine that hinges on people’s uniting positions, regardless of their worldview. Personalist works treat much of “involved existence,” **participation, of people’s joint efforts directed at achieving human purposes.**

The French personalists and Berdyaev are similar not only in the common belief in the power and importance of religion and Christian values, but also in the increased attention to moral and aesthetic issues. In their

¹³ Ж. Лакруа, *Персонализм: истоки – основания – актуальность*, in idem, *Избранное: Персонализм*, transl. by И.С. Вдовина, Москва 2004, p. 136.

¹⁴ Ж. Лакруа, *Избранное: Персонализм*, p. 34, 7.

¹⁵ Ж. Лакруа, *Персонализм как антиидеология*, in idem, *Избранное: Персонализм*, p. 195.

common opinion, the spiritual needs of the individual are always very important. Both personalists and Berdyaev saw the main way of change in society not in a fundamental break-up of its economic and social foundations, but in a spiritual – especially moral and aesthetic – perfection of man. Naturally, religion had to play a significant role in this case. French personalism created its own aesthetic vision, which emphasised the importance of the way a person masters reality – including art, at the aesthetic level – and changes the world for the better. However, the phenomenon of aesthetic was largely interpreted from religious positions, and human being was regarded first of all as its “artistic being.” Following Berdyaev, Personalism tried to find an answer to the question of the relationship between the divine and the human in the aesthetic field. Personalist reasoning of it was much simpler, and, I would say, more primitive than the one of the great Russian theorist.

The problem of freedom is another point of contact between Berdyaev's philosophy and French personalism. In both cases freedom precedes personality. However, in personalism this idea is expressed in a not so well-reasoned manner as by Berdyaev. The trend states a position that “(...) there is surely an understanding of freedom *at the basis* (italics is mine – V.P.) of the idea of personality.”¹⁶ Unlike Berdyaev, personalists dwelt much upon the real freedom of the individual, which was manifested in the individual's ability, to some extent, to be independent from society in which he was exploited and oppressed. They adequately assessed the role of this phenomenon in existence of man and society, interpreted it in the spirit of existentialism as the experience of a particular state by the individual. Much attention was paid to the so-called “negative” freedom, i.e. freedom from external coercion. They rightly emphasised the role of knowledge in the acquisition of freedom by the personality, and the fact that there is no absolute freedom. Personalist philosophy shared the position that the freedom of the individual cannot be possible there where all other people are not free; “(...) the sense of freedom begins with a feeling for the liberty of others.”¹⁷ Freedom produces freedom and alienation makes new alienation.

If Berdyaev tried to overcome the distinction between the subject and the object at all, French personalists eliminated the importance of the latter and exaggerated the role of the former. They showed little interest in what

¹⁶ Ж. Лакруа, *Персонализм: истоки – основания – актуальность*, p. 159.

¹⁷ E. Mounier, *Personalism*, transl. by Ph. Mairet, London 1952, p. 58.

the activity of the subject is directed at (things, events, public relations, etc.). The main principle was activity itself and its carrier, i.e. personality. According to personalists, changing of society meant its “humanising,” making the personality’s presence in it weightier and more important. The idea of personalisation runs through all their publications. According to the representatives of this philosophy, it can be achieved when the presence of the spiritual principle in society is increased in both quantity and quality. Following Berdyaev, they ignored determination of society life and human activity by reasons of the material order and concentrated on spiritual factors. As a result, proclaiming the world personalisation as the main aim, this philosophy, in fact, “withdrew” personality from the material existence, leaving it only the spiritual sphere as the territory of application of its forces. This position was not much different from Berdyaev’s statements.

French personalism experienced ups and downs in a relatively short time of its existence. In the second half of the 20th century it underwent some transformations. Issues of moral education and artistic creativity became actualised within it. There were attempts to connect personalist ideas with the ideology of reformism. Much attention was paid to the analysis of a man’s place in the industrial and post-industrial society. Principles and patterns of consumer’s attitudes to material and spiritual values were greatly criticised. At the turn of the previous and the current century, the following issues became urgent: socio-oriented economy, guarantees for the protection of civil rights of the individual, maintenance of social justice and fairness. From time to time voices are heard speaking of the need to revive the “true” personalism which is as relevant as possible to the ideas of its creators. Much attention is paid to the theoretical and practical activities aimed at promoting personalist ideas in society and introducing them into the consciousness of people. Concerning this, an important role is played by personalists’ journalist as well as their creative activity.

After Mounier’s death, one of his colleagues from the personalistic “guild,” a renowned expert on phenomenology and hermeneutics, P. Ricoeur appreciated the philosophical credo of this outstanding personality with one concise sentence, “it is an influence on history with militant thinking.”¹⁸ It is manifested through thought, spirit, mind, but not through sensual or practical transformation of the world. In my view, this phrase can also be used to assess the nature and impact of both the French personalist

¹⁸ Quotation from: Ж. Лакруа, *Персонализм: истоки – основания – актуальность*, p. 157.

philosophy and personalism as a social phenomenon as a whole on society in Europe and other regions of the world.

Transl. by Marina Savel'eva

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Nadezhda Ilyushenko

National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Minsk, Belarus)

The reception of Berdyaev's philosophical ideas in Mounier's personalism

In the research devoted to the interaction and mutual influence between Western and Russian philosophical traditions a lot of attention is usually paid to the legacy of the European intellectuals and their role in the development of the issues of Russian philosophy. The influence exerted by the Eastern neighbours' theories and the ways Western philosophers interpret these has been studied to a much less degree. Although there is a number of reasons, one of which is the lack of translations and representation of Russian philosophy in the European language discourse, there is no denying that in some cases Russian thinkers' ideas have a direct effect on the philosophers in the West.

The investigation of the reception of Berdyaev's philosophical ideas in Mounier's personalism seems relevant, because it is impossible to comprehend the fundamental principles and ideas of the French thinker's philosophy without such a comparative study. The significance of such an analysis is related to the role of Mounier as one of the founders of a number of branches in social theology: theology of work, personal theology, theology of revolution, liberation theology; and also to the fact that his version of Christianity helped to reorient the modern doctrine of Catholicism and contributed to John Paul II's worldview. His approach to Christianity had a great influence on the transformation of the doctrine.

It is known that personalist *ideas came to be* shaped in a specific historical context. Among the factors that influenced its formation one should first of all mention the necessity to rethink the results of the First World War, the economic crisis of 1929–1932, social life instability caused by the revolutions in Russia, Germany and Hungary, as well as by the spread of totalitarian and fascist regimes in Europe. Such an unfavourable social environment posed a number of *worldview* questions, revealing the

problematical character of being for an individual, as well as for humanity in general.

Modern society of the 21st century is also facing a turning point in its development. The current state of culture is characterised by the destruction of conventional social roles, the disorganisation of large communities and institutions, the growth of cultural fragmentation and, as a consequence, an identity crisis. And it is for this reason that it is important to investigate the legacy of thinkers of the last century, which might help to find the ways to overcome the current crisis tendencies.

The objective of this work is not a simple comparative study of the theoretical systems of the two philosophers. It is a detection of the specific logic Mounier follows to rethink some of the key propositions of Berdyaev's personalism, which in its turn affects the transformation of the propositions of the modern Catholic doctrine.

Special attention will be paid to the following issues:

- French philosopher's rethinking of the concept of personality;
- determination of its special status in the structure of reality;
- interpretation of the relationship between the individual and social nature of the human;
- innovation in understanding of the mechanisms and dynamics of personalistic revolution and its meaning;
- the analysis of the prospects which, according to the philosopher, the development of the personalistic world-view may and must lead to;
- the influence of personalistic ideas on modern Catholicism (in the reception of John Paul II).

Let us start with the analysis of the key ideas of Berdyaev's philosophy.

The characteristic feature of the Russian thinker's works is the tendency to combine things that many other philosophers consider incompatible. Berdyaev's aim is to find the happy medium between the extremes of idealism and materialism, social and personal values, as well as between active and contemplative attitude to life. For this reason, the ideas of existentialism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, and phenomenology with the fundamental tenets of the Christian doctrine are deeply intertwined in his philosophy. Such a mix is based on the philosopher's goal: the necessity to understand the human personality in all its aspects.

The development of this new doctrine of personality, according to Berdyaev, should help to overcome the crisis of the contemporary culture. This crisis, according to the philosopher, consists in the fact that no further

than in the last century the modern European man lost the faith that had supported him. The modern man no longer believes either in God or in any other supreme values: progress, humanism, scientific rationality, the realizability of democracy. He realises the fallaciousness of the capitalist system and is disillusioned with the possibility of creating perfect social order, considering all the projects on creating a welfare society utopian. Berdyaev speaks of cultural scepticism as a special feature of the European culture, which overthrows all the values. The philosopher also sees a feature of crisis in Christianity itself: he notices the loss of faith in man, his creativity, his mission in the world. To overcome this crisis Berdyaev appeals to the serious investigation of the problem of personality, because it is impossible to harmonise the social life of mankind without finding the solution to it. That is why Berdyaev writes: "The main problem today is, above all, the problem of man."¹

The philosopher solves the problem by referring to the fundamental positions of Christian doctrine. The philosopher understands personality as the individual "I" of the person, as a special ontological principle. In the origin of this interpretation of personality there is the dogma of the divine-human nature of Christ, projected onto every separate individual. According to the philosopher a personality cannot exist without God. God is the one supreme reality that creates and maintains a person's existence. "Only in Christ can the image of man be saved"² writes the philosopher. The cause of modern culture problems is concealed in the situation of a person's "falling away from Christianity."³

But Berdyaev notes that it is impossible to solve the problem of humanity just by means of Christian theology. Man is not only a divine and transcending being, but also an earthly, worldly one. The essence of man is social as much as divine. Man cannot live without God, and at the same time he cannot exist outside society. Although the personality is rooted in God, only in social life can it fully realise its potential. The personality's need to be included in social life, according to Berdyaev, is an ontological attribute of being human. No individual is able to stay alone for a long time, and is always trying to find a way to avoid loneliness. For man there are two possible ways out of loneliness: through transcendence and through objectification. Transcendence involves aspiration to God, a dialogue with

¹ Н.А. Бердяев, *Духовное состояние современного мира*, in idem, *Философия творчества, культуры и искусства*, vol. 1, Москва 1994, p. 499.

² Ibidem.

³ Ibidem, p. 486.

the Absolute. Objectification is an immersion of the individual in social existence and search for relations with other people; in other words, it is a path of social dialogue. Both of these methods to overcome loneliness are important.

Berdyayev's description of modern culture consists in the fact that man has lost his connection with God, being fully immersed in the social life. Having lost touch with sacred reality, and ignoring it, personality has lost its essential powers and fallen into a kind of slavery, and become wholly dependent on the society that has begun to exploit it. The society which is not rooted in Christian values turns into a society of exploiters and exploitee. And it is typical to the same extent both of the bourgeois social order and of the communist society. The Russian thinker says: "Only in the spirit of Christianity can the society and culture that don't destroy man be created."⁴

Thus, the goal of personalism consists in the liberation of man from the described social slavery, the restoration of his lost virtues, first of all through the rehabilitation of the importance of Christian values in his consciousness. Such a revival of Christian values Berdyayev calls personalist revolution. This revolution is not a social revolution. It should be understood as a spiritual revolution.

The personalist revolution differs from the social, as it does not involve external social transformation and forcible change of a social order. Its essence lies in the inner change that takes place in people's hearts, and as a natural consequence causes the transformation of social being. The result of the personalist revolution is a personalist community, a special state of collectivity. This community represents a new world, where former proprietary and objectified social relations are withdrawn. Berdyayev describes a new community as an enlightened City of Man, similar to the City of God.

This is a brief description of the main ideas of Berdyayev's personalism.

The views of the Russian philosopher were surprisingly in tune with the worldview of a French thinker Mounier.

It should be noted that the common characteristic of both Mounier's and Berdyayev's philosophy was the distinctive openness and eclectic character of their views. On this subject Mounier wrote that the personalistic research that the "Esprit" magazine initiated in 1932, was under a constant influence

⁴ Ibidem, p. 499.

of existentialism and Marxism. The first requires reference to the problems of identity: freedom, inner peace, communication, a sense of history. The second helps the modern mind to free itself from idealistic mystifications, proceed from the actual situation and connect philosophical problems with the problems of modern society. He understood that the project of the connection of existentialism and Marxism, and eventually – of idealism and materialism – was unrealisable, and saw the task of his philosophy in being above their differences, in integrity. The heart of this integrity was a certain balance between the opposites of materialistic and idealistic explanations of the human nature, achieved by Christian treatment.

It is important to note that Mounier also considered the need to overcome the crisis of modern civilization as the starting point of his work. Overcoming it, in his opinion, could be accomplished only through the development of an adequate conception of personality and personal existence. He believed that personalism could be the method to find a way out of the crisis of humanity.

For the French philosopher a personality is a fundamental category. Just like Berdyaev, Mounier keeps to the ontological interpretation of a personality, which is understood as a manifestation of being, where volitional activity is combined with the continuity of individual existence. Personality, taken in the completeness of its life, is the only reality and has the status of the highest spiritual value. However, the origins of personality are rooted not in itself, but in God, who is the beginning and the guarantor of all existence.

Just as Berdyaev, Mounier believes that, despite the personality being initially rooted in God initially, man cannot exist without the active participation in the life of society. Personality, in the French philosopher's definition, "is the living activity of self-creativity, self-creation, of communication and of attachment, that grasps and knows itself, in the act."⁵ So, the thinker also stands for the unconditional recognition of the value of social existence, and the involvement of the individual in the interaction with other members of society.

Speaking of the balance between the sacred and profane, Mounier insists that there is no radical opposition between the City of God and the City of Man. He characterises the spiritual order not as a certain metaphysical principle that separates man from his earthly existence, but understands it as a driving force, aimed at the development of all humanity. The City of

⁵ E. Mounier, *Personalism*, transl. by Ph. Mairet, London 1952, p. x.

God and the City of Man are inherently equal in their essence. They differ only in orientation.

Calling for an active stand in life for every person, insisting on its inclusion in the common work for the benefit of community, Mounier interprets the whole society as some kind of collective personality. In this interpretation, the philosopher goes beyond Berdyaev, and says that personalistic community is a personality of personalities.⁶

According to Mounier the mission of society as a collective personality consists in the embodiment of Christian values in the world. Just like the Russian thinker, he believes that the realisation of this goal can be achieved only through revolutionary changes. Revolution by Mounier is also a spiritual rebirth rather than social transformation. Any changes that are initiated from “above,” especially by force, will not lead to welfare society. At best, they will provoke only a different redistribution of wealth in society. According to Mounier, the revolution must be both spiritual and economic; “(...) a spiritual revolution will be economic or there will be no revolution. The economic revolution will be spiritual or it will not be a revolution.”⁷

In this context, we understand his criticism towards both bourgeois and capitalist society. Both types of society are characterised by alienation and depersonalization of human existence. That is why the philosopher considers them as different manifestations of an entity. Mentioning the imperfections of those social orders, Mounier called for construction of a new type of collectivity, based on the primacy of the personality principle, which would be based on Christian ideas. We should beware of calling the philosopher a conservative, insisting on the restoration of Christianity in its initial form. The French thinker is far from these utopias.

These are the views of the French thinker Mounier. Although it's obvious that his ideas are connected with the philosophy of Berdyaev, his own philosophy should be considered highly original. On many matters he goes further than Berdyaev, clarifying, deepening and supplementing his theory.

Finally, it's important to answer the question about the influence of the reception of Berdyaev's philosophical ideas in Mounier's personalism on the transformation of the modern Catholic doctrine. This part of the paper

⁶ Э. Мунье, *Персоналистская и общностная революция*, in idem, *Манифест персонализма*, pp. 64-88.

⁷ Э. Мунье, *Что такое персонализм?*, transl. by И.С. Вдовина, Москва 1994, p. 15.

will examine the views of John Paul II, because his role in bringing creative, innovative spirit to the Catholic doctrine is unquestionable.

John Paul II called the modern state of Western culture a time of “particular temptation of man.” The Catholic Church has many a time characterised modern society as a society in deep crisis. This crisis, according to John Paul II, has two sides. The first side consists in the fact that the Western civilization has lost its Christian roots. The second aspect of this crisis lies in man’s loss of God. At the level of individual existence that loss turns into a loss of the meaning of life and the uncertainty of life priorities. At the level of a collective being, it turns into a lack of guidelines for development, and eventually leads to social chaos.

The characteristics of modern society are disappointment in former ideals, among which there have always been motherland, family, independence, social and scientific progress. The new values such as democracy, justice and peace have lost their significance due to excessive manipulation.

The crisis of modern culture could be overcome only through the creation of a new culture, a new system of values and a new way of thinking. As a result of such reconsideration a new society should be built. Raising the question of principles a new social order can be based on, John Paul II speaks about Christian values which include love for the neighbor, the idea of social justice, freedom, etc.

In one of his most famous works, the Encyclical “*Evangelicum vitae*” (1995) John Paul II states that the possibility of building the new society will open to humanity only as a result of a comprehensive rethinking of the value of personality. He reveals his interpretation of it, which is similar to personalists’ understanding, in *Personality and Deed* (1961). In this paper personality is considered as the integrity of all man’s attributes.

John Paul II describes the person, first of all, as a complex phenomenon, as “internal, immaterial space,” where “you can identify different levels of ‘depth.’”⁸ At the same time, he writes about the active nature of the personality. He notes that an individual becomes a person only when he gets “integration in the action.” John Paul II uses such terminology to draw the attention to the fact that without an active social position, without involvement in the life of society, one cannot consider himself able to fulfill his mission. By the word “action” he implies not a one-time act of

⁸ Иоанн Павел II, *Личность и поступок*, transl. by Е.С. Твердислова, in idem, *Сочинения: В 2 т.*, Москва 2003, vol. 1, p. 104.

the subject's activity. It is the task, "the implementation of which covers all the person's life."⁹

John Paul II also criticises capitalism and socialism. He calls for the search of "the golden mean" between these equally imperfect forms of social order violating human individuality. He names dialogue a method for the construction of a new type of society. He distinguishes "true" and "false" dialogues. The true dialogue is a multi-stage one. It's based on Christian values and it is a dialogue of human beings and, as a result, cultures. The new society must be based on the "dialogue from below," involving millions of people from all over the world. It is this kind of dialogue that he calls true, authentic and genuine. And this dialogue will stimulate the establishment of just society based on humanistic values.

Such are the ideological views of John Paul II. Thus, it is obvious that his ideas originate in the personalism of Emmanuel Mounier, who in his turn was inspired by the philosophy of the Russian religious thinker Nikolai Berdyaev.

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⁹ Ibidem, p. 403.

Kirill Voytsel

Copernicus Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (Cracow, Poland – Russia)

Comparison of the Ontology of the “Humanity of God” in Nikolai Berdyaev’s and Karl Barth’s Thought

A question of the reception of one thinker’s thought by another is not an issue of similarity or adoption. For example, the Polish Christmas *Bóg się rodzi* (*God is Being Born*) carol by Franciszek Karpiński (1792), with its dialectical paradoxicality¹ agrees completely with the incarnational theology of Barth and Berdyaev’s philosophy. Yet, it is impossible to say that here we have any sort of reception of Karpiński’s thought. Instead, we would be talking here about a source common to all Christianity, the Patristics. Similarly, in my book on Barth I demonstrate a number of parallels between the Trinitarian theologies of Barth and St Andrew Rublev.² In this case as well, it is impossible to speak about any reception of Rublev’s theology by Barth. Here too one might look for some common source in Patrology, the Scripture, the event of the revelation itself (which is most probable in this case), but not for an adoption of one’s thought by another.

On the other hand, reception amounts to more than adoption. In reception there is a new acceptance, an approval on another level, a creative re-creation of another’s thought. Historical succession and creative novelty are both crucially important for the reception in question.

¹ Bóg się rodzi, moc truchleje
Pan niebiosów obnażony
Ogień krzepnie, blask ciemnieje
Ma granice – Nieskończony.
Wzgardzony – okryty chwałą
Śmiertelny król nad wiekami
A Słowo Ciałem się stało
I mieszkało między nami.

² Cf. K. Voytsel, *Menschlichkeit Gottes. Proludzki charakter bytu i działania Boga w interpretacji Karla Bartha*, Świdnica 2013, pp. 158-159, 161, 248-249, 312-313, 335, 350.

The first aspect of reception, historical succession, is clearly present in the case of Berdyaev and Barth, as they knew each other personally. They made acquaintance at the beginning of 1930s. As a professor at the University of Bonn, Barth attended Berdyaev's lecture. After the lecture Barth asked him the most significant question of all: "Where do you know all this from?"³ We will later return to the differences between the two thinkers regarding the theory of knowledge. Indeed, how can we know the truth about reality in itself?

Barth and Berdyaev did not engage in active correspondence. Only one letter to Berdyaev remains in Karl Barth's archive. On May 7th, 1936 Barth thanked Berdyaev for a book the latter had sent to him which Barth was yet to read at that time.⁴ Most probably, it was the German translation of Berdyaev's work on ethics, *The Destiny of Man*, published in Russian in 1931 and translated into German in 1935. Barth quotes this book in Part 4 of the third volume of *Church Dogmatics* (1951);⁵ we are not interested here what the occasion for this quotation was.⁶ As regards addressing Barth's reception of Berdyaev the important thing is the mere fact of the Swiss theologian's acquaintance with the Russian philosopher. We are interested in the rather uncommon thoughts regarding the humanity of God, thoughts that both thinkers expressed.

It is not easy to compare Berdyaev and Barth: their thought developed in differentgnoseological spheres. The former of them was more of a religious philosopher, while the latter was a theologian. For Berdyaev, the source of knowledge is mystical intuition.⁷ He cognizes the described reality from the inside, in himself, in his own mystical experience, which he identifies with an ecclesial experience. He fights against the objectification that takes place in the process of cognition.⁸ The cognized reality for him is "my Thou." In contrast, Barth cognizes from the outside, hearing

³ See O. Волкогонова, *Бердяев*, Москва 2010, <<http://territa.ru/load/28-1-0-5319>>, accessed: 10.01.2013.

⁴ Karl Barth Archiv, 9236 0129.

⁵ See K. Barth, *Church Dogmatic*, III/4, p. 159 ff. (farther – CD, vol. 1-4, transl. by G.W. Bromiley, G.T. Thomson, H. Knight, T.H. L. Parker, W.B. Johnston, J.L. M. Haire, J.C. Campbell, I. Wilson, J. Strathearn McNab, R.A. Stewart, J.W. Ewards, O. Bussey, J.K.S. Reid, R.H. Fuller, R.J. Ehrlich, H.A. Kennedy, J. Marks, Edinburgh 1956–1969).

⁶ Barth was arguing against Berdyaev's conception of androgynous humanity.

⁷ Cf. Н. Бердяев, *Смысл творчества. Опыт оправдания человека*, Париж 1985.

⁸ Cf. e.g. Н. Бердяев, *Философия свободы*, Москва 2005; idem, *Смысл творчества*, p. 92; idem, *О назначении человека*, Москва 1993, pp. 26-31 and others.

the Word of the complete Other, and proceeds from revelation.⁹ What can a mystic say about self-knowledge to somebody who hears not a mystic word but the Word that objectified itself in the incarnation? As rhetorical as this question sounds, he can say something and be heard. Barth recognises that if the Word is to be a meaningful word and not just noise, it must be perceived, it must actualise its subjectivity in the subject of its recipient.¹⁰ This pre-supposes some sort of spiritual experience in the inner world of the human being. This opens up the possibility for comparing the individual experiences of Berdyaev and Barth.

The second obstacle is the heterogeneity of both thinkers. Berdyaev's philosophy evolved from one book of his to book. Yet as a rule, no reflection on these changes accompanies his progress. Only in *Dream and Reality: An Essay in Autobiography* did Berdyaev try to reconstruct his creative development. It is interesting to note that his description is evolutionary in character, even though the notion of spiritual evolution was something he went against with all his philosophy: Berdyaev considered evolution to be opposed to creativity. The works of Barth are no monolith either. If one reads his *Epistle to Romans* (1922) and some part of the fourth volume of *Church Dogmatics* (1953–1967), one might have an impression that these books were written by two different authors. In 1956 in his lecture “Menschlichkeit Gottes” Barth said that thirty or forty years before he had been right to strongly oppose the “humanity of God.” He argued that it had been impossible to speak in any other way, because the “humanisation” of God and the deification of the human in the liberal anthropocentric theology had led only to the deification of the process of human culture and history. In the most vividly inhuman way this trend demonstrated itself in the movement of “German Christians” who generally approved of Nazism. They saw in the Nazi a “restoration of Germany,” the act and the word of God Himself.

Nevertheless, in the midst of the Second World War Barth decided to accept the danger of formulating the humanity of God as the free mercy of God in which he doesn't want to be and really is not any other than the God

⁹ Cf. e.g. K. Barth, *Das Wort Gottes als Aufgabe der Theologie*, Gesamtausgabe III, 19 (*Vorträge und kleinere Arbeiten 1922–1925*), Zürich 1990, pp. 144–175; idem, *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion. I: Prolegomena*, Gesamtausgabe II, 17, Zürich 1985, pp. 3–27; idem CD I/1, pp. 3–24. See also C. Schwöbel, *Theology*, in J. Webster (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, Cambridge 2000, pp. 17–36.

¹⁰ Cf. K. Barth, *Unterricht I*, pp. 207–244; idem, CD I/2, pp. 203–279.

of man.¹¹ It is possible that here we are witnessing Berdyaev's influence, as Barth was aware of the latter's thoughts on the subject. In this article I want to compare the thinking on the humanity of God as it appears in Berdyaev's and Barth's works, their ontological presuppositions and the consequences to which their thinking leads.

There is no reason to trace Barth's thinking to Berdyaev's ideas, and there is no basis to conclude that it is based upon them. The thought about the humanity of God is present, at least in outline, in the early, critical period of Barth's theology.¹² The crisis is not an unequivocal *No* for the human. The negation always appears together with the affirmation: the relationship of *Yes* and *No* in the crisis is not symmetrical. The superiority of the *Yes* is clear:

– transcendently, affirmation of the human is the primordial and ultimate condition of negation, the *Yes* creates an infinitely wide context for the *No*;

– cognitively, the *No* always contains a positive moment: it exists only in its relation to the *Yes*, and is only a hermeneutical key to the *Yes*. The *No* also indicates the positive character of God's addressing the human (the human does not become "nothing" in negation, but an addressed-by-God-being). In addition, negation is not an aim in itself, but serves the affirmation and justification of the human.

Moreover, the crisis embraces the whole event of God in relation to the human: revelation, God's being, and action of God. God becomes engaged in the fate of the judged human through the crisis of revelation in Jesus Christ. From here, it follows, that the crisis is a relative concept and in a certain sense it concerns not only the human, but God as well – at least in the form of the ultimate *Yes*. In the court of God's justice, the Judge, having the justification of the human as His goal, makes the accused Himself, and justifies Himself by the human, by confronting evil and death Himself.¹³

¹¹ "Die Menschlichkeit Gottes (...). Gottes Beziehung und Zuwendung zum Menschen – Gott, der mit dem Menschen redet in Verheißung und Gebot – Gottes Sein, Eintreten und Tun für ihn – die Gemeinschaft, die Gott mit ihm hält – Gottes freie Gnade, in der er nicht anders denn als Gott des Menschen Gott sein will und ist." K. Barth, *Die Menschlichkeit Gottes. Vortrag, gehalten an den Tagung des Schweiz. Ref. Pfarrvereins in Aarau am 25. September 1956*, Zürich 1956, p. 3.

¹² Cf. K. Войцель, *Кризис человека и человечность Бога кризиса в раннем богословии Карла Барта*, "Страницы," vol. 15, 1 (2011), pp. 17-43.

¹³ "Die Theodicee in Betreff des Übels und seine Beseitigung ist schon gegeben durch das Wort, durch das Gott sich selbst rechtfertigt, den Glaubenden als gerecht erklärt und zum Erben seines Reiches einsetzt." K. Barth, *Der Römerbrief*, Zürich 1940, p. 131.

The most uncommon of Barth's thoughts which has its parallels in Berdyaev's philosophy concerns the God for whom the who, the how and the what of His being is the who, the how and the what of His appearance. If God reveals what He is in Himself, and at the same time He is in Himself somebody who, how, and what he is, then He reveals Himself (*ergo is*) as the God of the human; thus, He is the God of the human. What does it all mean? Does it mean that the human nature and even human existence determine God's being? Barth reflected on these issues seriously. His thoughts in this area came to their fullest realisation in some places of the fourth volume of *Church Dogmatics*.¹⁴ And yet according to Barth these thoughts do not reflect the real state of affairs. God as an un-sublatable subject (*unaufhebbaren Subjektivität*)¹⁵ of His own life elects Himself in Himself as the being of human's God.¹⁶ This thought is not foreign to Barth. It is rooted in many theological decisions made in the course of choosing the theological way.¹⁷

Such a vision of God presupposes a determinate ontology of some sort of intimacy between the God and the human. What is the source of this ontology? It is not to be found in the *Epistle to Romans* and even in the *Göttingen dogmatics*. Yet, a strikingly similar ontology was proposed by Berdyaev under the name of the "humanity of God," and in the latter Barth as "*Menschlichkeit Gottes*." In what follows I just want to discuss the reasons for the deep and creative affinity between Berdyaev and Barth. There is a great merit in such discussion: Barth's creative reception of Berdyaev's philosophical intuitions supplemented them with a much-needed and thorough analysis as well as with thinking-through their necessary consequences.

¹⁴ Cf. K. Voytsel, *Menschlichkeit Gottes*, pp. 331-332.

¹⁵ Cf. K. Barth, *Unterricht I*, pp. 116, 166, 196 and other.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. "Gott wäre nicht Gott ohne den zur Rechten des Vaters sitzenden Sohn. Aber eben dieser Sohn ist nicht nur wahrer Gott, sondern er heißt Jesus von Nazareth; er ist auch wahrer Mensch und als solcher der Vertreter des Menschenvolkes, das in ihm und durch ihn ebenso mit Gott vereinigt, ebenso Gegenstand der göttlichen Zuwendung ist wie er selber. (...) Gott ohne diesen Menschen und ohne dieses Volk wäre ein anderer, ein fremder Gott; er wäre nach christlicher Erkenntnis gar nicht Gott" (K. Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, vol. II/2, Zürich 1980, p. 6).

¹⁷ Cf. K. Voytsel, *Menschlichkeit Gottes*, pp. 82-83, 164-166.

1. The Question of the Humanity of Cognition

Many modern philosophers of science are excited by the possibility of describing the world – physically, biologically, psychologically, culturally, and even morally – by using the language of mathematics.¹⁸ Reality seems to be particularly suitable to be known – an astonishing quality indeed. It demonstrates itself as a text yearning to be read, or rather appears to pure reason as information, an ordered structure which is open to rational cognition. This pertains not only to the physical world and hence not only to natural sciences. Culture, arts, mental behavior – all these can be described in the structured terms of the information theory. Yet, the world known and described in such a way is merely a hollow form. Even ethics can be presented in a quasi-mathematical language (*more geometrico*) – see, for example, attempts by Spinoza and Kant. But such a world couldn't be named authentically human. The light in such a world doesn't shine through crevices and it doesn't burst into dark chambers; it spreads as streams of photons or waves with varying intensity and frequency. There is no place for anything new in this world. It is a world where harmony is checked by algebra (Pushkin, *Mozart and Salieri*). In such a world the purity of truth, the light of good and beauty, the suffering of Job do not touch anybody's heart. And even if they do, psychology will explain the mechanism and the causes in the same mathematical language. The subject of cognition that is pre-supposed by the world reduced to information theory of analysis is not a concrete man in his existence, but an abstract pure reason, some sort of an "active intellect," somebody who knows abstractly, based on a concrete content of the reality. This sort of transcendental subject is an addressee of this great Logos of mathematics.

If such a world has any creator, this creator would not be a human God. It would be an absolute object, the reason itself and rationality of this world. It might be the Demiurge from Plato's *Timaeus*, the prime principle, Aristotle's "unmoved mover," the reason of the form. May be he is identical to his subject, and it is precisely to himself. The invariable Logos of the logical world. If such a creator knows about the individuality of existence, he knows it as a *principle* of individuality. In any case, he does not know the experience of a concrete human being. Mathematics cannot become a concrete number, or logic – specific judgment.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. M. Heller, *Czy świat jest matematyczny?*, "Zagadnienia Filozoficzne w Nauce" 22 (1998), pp. 3-14.

Let us imagine that you are on a train, all alone in a compartment. You are in a sad mood. And then suddenly a rainbow appears in the sky, and then one more is above. And both of them have a background of thick and dark clouds. Everything is like an “ah! you see!” And joy fills your heart. So you run to the next compartment where three people are travelling. You say to them: “Look!” And look they do, first at you, then through the window, then again at you, and then one of them says: “OK, there is a rainbow out there.” They probably think “Is this the first time this guy has encountered a rainbow?” The process of perceiving and analysing light waves in the atmosphere with the high saturation of H₂O is the same for everybody. Even the emotional processes that are involved here can be analysed and described mathematically. And yet one can encounter a rainbow that has revealed itself to her and to her only, of thousands of people who observe it. And this would be a human event.

What does the formal Logos lack, why does it fail to capture the human world? What makes the creation and its God human? Berdyaev and Barth answered this question in somewhat different ways. We will return to their propositions later; at this stage it is important to emphasise that the human reality takes place first of all in an individual, contingent content of existence. Our life is not only and not even so much as a mathematical form as it is individual uniqueness, full of the novelty of meeting with others: people, animals, sunsets, works of art, thoughts (not general ideas but rather a process of the discovery of these ideas and their instantiations). This eternally new and amazing life happens, it is always a happening, an event – funny or sad, joyful or terrifying, abrupt or gentle. In these forever-new creative meetings the humanity of the human life is contained. The truth, the good and the beautiful in them become concrete, incarnated – as well as the false, the evil and the ugly. Here, in the sphere of living a human life, decisions take place – moral, existential, intellectual, other. No decision can be made by a transcendental subject. The human God is the concrete God who has the power to decide and to love, who knows in His own self the fate of a unique human person. He is *somebody*, not an unnecessary being, but rather a Person in a dialogue.

There is no question about what the word really is. The form belongs to the matter. But we can address the following question to Berdyaev and Barth: what of this “world” is worth knowing from the human point of view? For both the prospect of seeing some sort of artificial intellect that generates coherent synthetic judgments as a Logos seems to be an absurd idea. Equally absurd would be seeking a sufficient quantity of linguistically

correct sentences to fulfill a widening informational space of humankind. On the contrary, honest human thinking and cognition do not come down to a generator of synthetic judgments that could be falsified by the general intellect; neither do they confine themselves to subjective knowledge that cannot be verified or falsified at all. Both Berdyaev and Barth favour the cognition of the “world” as the uniquely-human meeting of I and Thou.

2. The idea of the humanity of God in Berdyaev's and Barth's thought

Berdyaev is known first and foremost as a philosopher of freedom and creativity. We will concentrate on these two aspects to explain his concept of the humanity of God.

Discussing freedom, Berdyaev constantly refers to the concept of *Ungrund* of Jakob Böhme (1575–1624). To understand what this “groundless one” means, one should begin a few steps earlier. Böhme's thought is characterised by a dynamic vision of God's becoming-birth. The whole world is a battlefield of different principles. The main principles are wrath and meekness,¹⁹ which reflect the principles of evil and goodness. The wrathful principle, or the absence of harmony, is the source of movement; it is the origin of the course of history. Referring to the myth of the fall of Diablo, Böhme names this principle of wrath and disharmony, which leads to the complete reticence on itself, Lucifer.²⁰ One can say that wrath calls forth a domination of the “astringent” quality in a human being, the principle of drawing up of the being, the principle of identity, and leads to the impossibility of the being itself.²¹ The Luciferian world is too egoistic to exist. Incidentally, Böhme sees both love and wrath as being potentially related to the divine reality, because both of them are kinds of birth of being or nothing. But love speaks of God in a proper sense, while wrath speaks of God in an improper, alienated sense. The divinity in itself is non-existing. God in a proper sense in His birth knows just Himself, and He does not know anything beyond Himself. Besides God, there is only Lucifer. God does not know Lucifer, or evil. The divinity in itself is an *Ungrund*, the

¹⁹ J. Böhme, *Aurora, that is the Day-Spring*, transl. by J. Sparrow, <<http://meuser.awardspace.com/Boehme/Jacob-Boehme-Aurora-electronic-text.pdf>>, II, 3, accessed: 11.12.2012.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, IV, 11.

²¹ *Ibidem*, XIII, 116.

groundless, an uncaused dark depth.²² Both God and Lucifer can be born from such darkness. This dark depth has no quality, and is neither good nor evil. In this darkness of nothing one cognizes that if “God” acted as Lucifer, He would be Lucifer.²³ So the necessary being is not the triune God of love, which exists in the being as a principle of being, but the ungrounded Nothing itself, the dark without-qualitative Divinity. God thus is “the Nothing that wished to be Something.”²⁴

Such an impersonal principle of being that opposes the principle of non-being and destruction is not yet the human God, of course. However, thinking about *Ungrund* became for Berdyaev a starting point for reflecting on the ungrounded *meonic freedom*.²⁵ This reflection in connection with Vladimir Solovyov’s idea of the eternal God-human being of the inner life of God led Berdyaev to define an ontology of a human God. Berdyaev sees the ungrounded reality as a solution for the problem of theodicy. Non-differentiated freedom, a mix of sorts of formal and material freedom, the *liberum arbitrium* and the freedom of creativity, the freedom to be or not to be, the objective and subjective freedom, can be briefly defined as the freedom that involves everything in general and nothing *in concreto*. Such freedom becomes the foundation both for God and for the human. God is born from such freedom, so He does not dominate the freedom of the human and of the world. Their freedom appears from the same source, which is also the source of God’s existence. This freedom is the principal possibility of everything and of everybody; it is the source of every novelty, of everything which is yet to come into being: this freedom is principally something non-existing, the Nothing, something that has not hitherto happened and at the same time is the plenitude of all possibilities. God, whatever He is, is not determined by His nature, essence, or being; He is determined only by the infinite freedom to be in such a way that He is, and not to be in such a way that He is not. God is already the concrete self-determination of the Nothing, of the ungrounded freedom. If for the traditional Augustinian theodicy God is the source of the freedom of the creation, for Berdyaev the freedom is the source both of God-Creator and of the creative human being.²⁶

²² Ibidem, XXVI, 54.

²³ Ibidem, XXII-XXIII.

²⁴ Н. Бердяев, *Из этюдов о Я. Беме. Этюд I. Учение об Ungrund*, “Путь” 20 (1930), p. 65.

²⁵ “Me-on” is Plato’s term. This is a “nothing” that has a creative potential to be. On the contrary, “ouk-on” is something that cannot be, the total not-being, the impossible.

²⁶ Н. Бердяев, *О назначении человека*, pp. 37-47.

Yet, what is this self-determination of Nothing in God? How does Berdyaev see the concrete God who is born from the meon? The idea of the God-humanity is what is of importance to Berdyaev. The Creator is born – again and again – from the dark abyss of all possibilities and impossibilities of the being and non-being. This Creator is determined by the will to give birth in himself to the Human who has full access to the meon. In other words, God in the proper sense is somebody who creates something that was not, not Himself; He allows the created other to be free, and thus really other, to be himself, to be the creator of his own being which was not there earlier. So one can say that the “human” born in God and the “human” who is God’s self-determination, and at the same time – the infinite creative meonic freedom. Even God does not have power over it. But this human who is given birth by God is not a concrete human being, it is just an idea and a possibility for the reality of freedom. Creating a human, God does not give him freedom, but rather *leaves* him free.

The differentiation between birth and creation in Berdyaev’s thought is dialectical.²⁷ Birth is a redistribution of the already-existing being. On the contrary, creation makes something that did not exist before, *creation ex nihilo*.²⁸ The bottomless freedom cannot create, it gives birth to God who in turn begets the God-human who becomes the Creator leaving the freedom for his creation. At the same time, freedom as everything is the only source of anything new, anything that hitherto has not existed; it is a possibility of creation.

There is one question to which Berdyaev does not have an answer: if freedom always includes the totality of all possible values, things and products, then why would creativity not amount to no more than an unfolding of something that exists necessarily? Here lies the main difference of Berdyaev’s philosophy from Böhme’s *Ungrund* – in the *personality* of God and the human. When God elects His own being and His nature, He decides to be what He is and gives birth to the Human in Himself; He also creates human beings and leaves them free. The “nothing” does not make decisions. It can have a will, a desire, but not a capacity to decide which ontologically presupposes responsibility.²⁹ Here Berdyaev wants to distance himself from the “necessity of freedom” and escape into spiritual life. The creative spirit is both born from the deepest freedom and created by God, and it becomes a person; in its creativity it draws from the infinite possibilities

²⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 45.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 62-67.

of freedom and creates an elevated sort of being, a super-being, something that was not contained in the pure primordial freedom. God who was born from freedom and who gives this freedom to His creations is more than just God who gives birth to the God-human in Himself. One infinity plus another infinity does not result in the same infinity quantitatively but rather increases, gives new quality to freedom. When the creature comes through the history of the freedom, it leads to a new form and a new content of the being. The freedom after creativity is more than the freedom before creativity. The freedom before the triune personal God-Creator is less than the freedom after Him. God after the history of creation is more than God before it.³⁰ Now one can speak about the potentiality of God; before the completion of the act of creation God is not actual being.³¹

But the contradiction remains. If Berdyaev were to look for the source of the freedom in the Nothing, he would necessarily have come to the conclusion that creativity which makes something that was not in the being achieves just something that was already in the Nothing. It seems that this is the essence of the paradox of the meon which includes in itself all the creative potentiality of the non-being. It also seems to be the main cause of Berdyaev's distrust of history.³² On the one hand, Berdyaev views history similarly to Böhme: as evil, death, something perishable. On the other hand, it is a guarantee of the uniqueness of being, the "eachness" of the creative event. But Berdyaev consciously decides to go for the conception of eternity which is engaged in a dialogue with history. According to Berdyaev, the increase in being is conditioned by God's election of the human, by the election of Godself as determinate toward being in a way of the God-man who determines himself by the progression of history. God's eternity "before" the creation and the redemption is less than His eschatological eternity in the future which has come through the time of the incarnation and the salvation of all. Nevertheless, the creativity is rooted in the Nothing, *eo ipso* in an abstract metaphysical eternity of the identity of the past and the future. So, in spite of the "increase" in the being in history, it does not find any ultimate ontological foundation. Because of the Nothing, the eternity is embraced by everything as its super-possibility. Graphically, it could be expressed in the following way: the "Trinity" of Rublyov³³

³⁰ Cf. Н. Бердяев, *Смысл творчества*.

³¹ Cf. Н. Бердяев, *О назначении человека*, p. 41.

³² Cf. Н. Бердяев, *Философия свободы*.

³³ This picture is often interpreted as an icon of Personal God (One Face) in his self-election to be the God of the human. Cf. И. Языкова, *Со-творение образа. Богословие иконы*, Москва 2012, pp. 123-130.

inscribed in the “Black Square” of Malevich as a mathematical point. The electing person who is eternally placed in relation to his history and born from the infinite freedom, sinks into the infinite Nothing.

To summarise, Berdyaev’s approach to the humanity of God sees God as sharing the fate of the created human world.³⁴ God is born from Nothing as somebody who begets the idea of God-humanity in himself. Through this birth He becomes the Creator of the concrete human being and waits for him to provide a creative response to God’s creative act. God as the Person, as a unique possibility of the ungrounded freedom wants freedom for humans, and does not want to lord it over this freedom. He wants free meonic creativity of realisation in the creation of God’s decision regarding being. The creative realisation of this choice is the Kingdom of Spirit. So God, choosing Himself in eternity, decides to come through the history of humans. In this decision, He becomes and appears as the triune One – as the God, as the God-man (who decided to be a human) and the Spirit (who leaves freedom for the free human). At the same time, God – as He is – shares the fate of being with the human. This is because God Himself is the child of the dark freedom which threatens humans with evil, death and pain.³⁵ God is not just open to the tragedy of being and non-being; He participates in this tragedy, He is one of the subjects of the being of the Nothing. In short, according to Berdyaev, God is the co-human in human’s tragic opposition to the Nothing.

Barth as a theologian approached the task of defining the humanity of God from a different side, viz. from God’s revelation in the fact of the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ, the revelation accepted by faith and obedience, testified for in the Scripture and proclaimed in the community.³⁶ The starting point for his reflection was not the idea of the humanity of God, but rather the tangible and carnal historical reality interpreted in the light of the biblical-ecclesiastical faith. He does not proceed from the general idea of Divinity or from the mystical experience of the God-humanity even if any such experience were expressed in Jesus of Nazareth, but from Jesus of Nazareth Himself as the God-man. No abstract being of God has incarnated here is a concrete human, but rather this concrete human *is* the incarnated God. If it is so, the questions of the who, the how and the what pertaining to God and the human beg for an answer. The being of God in Himself cannot have a primacy over the being of God in His Word, which

³⁴ Н. Бердяев, *О назначении человека*, p. 43.

³⁵ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 37-54.

³⁶ Cf. K. Barth, CD I/1, pp. 88-124.

was pronounced and heard in history, in Christ and in the Church. God is the who, the how and the what of His act, in His addressing the human, in His revelation.³⁷ He would not have been God without this eternal process of addressing, the process that is expressed in the carnal, circumstantial, concrete and free form and reality. God is an event. He is not a hard pre-emptive action towards the other being; God *takes place* in the relation to the other, to the human. God does not want to be without the human, and He is not. We have already mentioned this very important aspect of Barth's theology of the humanity of God – God is the who, the how and the what; He is in His incarnation. Does it mean that He is absent beyond this “fact?” Of course not! It means that beyond the fact, beyond the event of the incarnation God simply does not exist. There is no other God but only that who became the human. The cognition of God beyond Christ can bring us closer to authentic cognition or distance us from it. But God is eternal – before, now and after – somebody who He is in Jesus Christ.

Barth also deduces the doctrine of God's attributes from the incarnation. It is impossible to discuss the “qualities” of God beyond His Word. If God is the subject,³⁸ He cannot be turned into an object, and thus we cannot speak about Him as if He never expressed Himself in the Word as a flesh-and-blood human. Barth's reinterpretation of the attributes of God's freedom is especially interesting.³⁹ These are attributes of unity, omnipresence, constancy (rather than immutability), omnipotence, eternity, and glory. The unity of God he expresses as the abundance of diversity, the constancy as constancy in the movement, the eternity as the relation to time, the omnipresence as spatiality, the omnipotence as kenosis, the glory as the human joy at beauty.⁴⁰ His transcendence is the transcendence in radical immanence.⁴¹ He is “above” in His maximal solidarity with the other, with the creation, with the human; in this solidarity He even becomes identical – something which nobody else is ontologically capable of.

One of the most critical moments in Barth's thought is his elaboration of the doctrine of God's self-election in “double predestination.”⁴² By

³⁷ Cf. K. Barth, CD II/1, pp. 257-272.

³⁸ Cf. K. Barth, *Unterricht I*, pp. 53, 73-74, 105-115, 120-122, 147, 165-169, 189, 196, 375; *Unterricht II*, pp. 11-15, 21-22, 33, 60, 87; *Unterricht III*, pp. 19, 73, 103, 183, 203-205, 232, 450, 489.

³⁹ Cf. K. Barth, CD II/1, pp. 440-677.

⁴⁰ Cf. K. Voytsel, *Menschlichkeit Gottes*, pp. 207-238.

⁴¹ Cf. K. Barth, CD II/1, pp. 263-264, 309-321.

⁴² Cf. B.L. McCormack, *Grace and Being. The Role of God's Gracious Election in Karl Barth's Theological Ontology*, in J. Webster (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Karl*

choosing humans and the community of humans in Christ for grace, God chooses Himself in this concrete historical Human and in these concrete people. In this election, God decides to be. God chooses Himself as the God in Himself and in relation to men and women by the choice of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus Christ as the God-man, is the subject (as God) and the object (as a man) of the divine decision to be the human's God. In this decision, God takes on Himself the whole of damnation for other possibilities, because the divine election in Jesus Christ is the first and ultimate decision of God to be God in relation to the human. The divine reprobation, the divine *No* to the human, the eternal damnation which was revealed in Jesus Christ is accepted by the Subject of this eternal decision of God. In Jesus Christ God mercifully takes upon Himself the sum total of the condemnation of existence, the eternal wrath which belongs to human history according to justice, to history which consists in a vicious fight of individuals against each other. In the same Jesus God gives to the object of election (the human) the glory which does not belong to him according to justice. In Jesus Christ God accepts the human, rejecting Himself as an abstract God *absconditus*. In other words, it is precisely by choosing the real carnal hell for Himself that God transforms the carnal history of human fight into the paradise as a place where God-companion is present, a place where love is not only possible, but really exists in actuality. Accepting the human's responsibility, his fate and his world, God gives the entirety of His *No* to Himself and the entirety of His *Yes* to the human. Thus, He chooses the human being as God with us, for us and in us. Exactly by this act God rejects all other possibilities of being a different sort of god. These rejected "impossible possibilities" are Nothingness (*das Nichtige*), the evil which exists in a way other than the elected being, other than God and His creation.⁴³ Nothingness exists by the force of the divine omnipotent rejection of evil. Nothingness exists as non-God, as something that rejects the human, as a pure judgment for the human which sentences us to certain hell. It is pure damnation, an abstract omnipotence, a self-satisfied absolute. The unequivocal divine *No* refers to a god who is in himself an unequivocal *No* to the human. The self-determination of God consists in this negation of the negation of the human, in the death of the human death. He also admits this negation in accepting the responsibility for evil, even if God is not a source of evil. In this acceptance of the responsibility the highest transcendent immanence of God is realised.

Barth, pp. 92-110. For the doctrine of predestination see CD II/2, pp. 3-506.

⁴³ For the theology and ontology of Nothingness see K. Barth, CD III/3, pp. 289-368.

This line of thinking is in many ways similar to Berdyaev's. God is not a necessary being, He is a choice in relation to the human. But the difference between Berdyaev and Barth here is cardinal. Barth does not speak about an idea of man, nor about some abstract freedom as a human being, but about a concrete human-in-the-flesh who is lost and confused in his own existence, pain and fault. According to Barth, God does not choose Himself in relation to abstract freedom, but in relation to a unique carnal human, *hic et nunc*, with all the accompanying existential, historical, moral and other limitations. Barth does not know God-humanity in general, he knows the God-man only. The humanity of God for him is not a principle but a Person. For Barth, freedom as such has no primacy, only the personal freedom facing the Other, the I in relation to the Thou, the I who lives together with and for Thou. It is not the dark freedom that determines the person, but the bright person is the one who determines the shades of freedom. There is no freedom beyond God, who does not want to be and is not any other God but the God of the human. To return to our graphical example, in Barth's thought "Trinity" is not inside the "Black Square;" rather, the "Black Square" is somewhere on the outer boundaries of the picture, as rejected reality.

3. Ontological Implications and Explications of the humanity of God: An Experience of Comparing Berdyaev's and Barth's Thought

One might conclude that even if Berdyaev's ontology argues for the primacy of spirit's specifics, his ontology does not accept the ultimate historicity, actuality and carnality of being.⁴⁴ For him, the being is less of a meeting and more about the realisation of possibilities:

⁴⁴ Cf. M. Judanin, *Merciless Justice: the Dialectic of the Universal and the Particular in Ethics and the Example of Computer Games*, "Страницы," vol. 16, 1 (2013), pp. 104-119. Judanin looks for the foundations of the authentically human morality and finds it in the human flesh, in the body and its physiology. He notices that morality is traditionally understood as comprised of two components: justice and mercy. Ethical theories that see one of these factors as the basis for morality attempt to explain the second factor as well. Kantian ethics provides an example of this approach. After formulating his universal theory of ethics in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and further developing it in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant attempts to use it in order to establish the morality of mercy in the *Metaphysics of Morals*. Yet, can universal morality of justice necessitate particular ethics of mercy? Judanin uses the example of computer games to demonstrate the

The whole volume of stars
Is, from Alpha to Omega,
Just a trace of His cloak.⁴⁵

Berdyaev could have said this not about God, as Marina Tsvetaeva, but about Nothing. According to Berdyaev, God is loosed in the abyss of being and non-being together with us.

On the contrary, for Barth eternity is in mutual relation with the historical, carnal reality to which we also have direct relation. Such self-determination of eternity takes place in history. It is flesh that is God's self-determination, not the idea of freedom.

Berdyaev wants to "open" the metaphysical sense of the idea behind the dogma of incarnation. He points to the philosophical *sine qua non* of the incarnational idea, and thus aspires to open the ontological premises of the dogma, its metaphysical *a priori*.

Barth, on the other hand, is radically *a posteriori*. He is less interested in the dogmatic formula and its conditions. Instead, he is absorbed by the consequences of the fact of incarnation for our cognition of being. For Barth, the dogma in itself is just the testimony of the fact of unity of God and man in Jesus Christ.

For Berdyaev "being" unites God and the human: God shares being with the human. The metaphysical and ethical gap between the good and the evil, the personal and the objectivized, the free and creative and the slavish and idle – this chasm passes across the whole being including God's being as well. The *Ungrund* for him a non-differentiated deity as a presupposition of actual God's being, as the moment of His freedom to be. "To be with the human" for God means to be tragically split in His own existence in solidarity with the human fate. It means to seek this unity together with the human – in culture, ethics, creativity. It means that the split, the empty space, gap of the freedom engages God's being. God for Berdyaev is first of all the co-existent, compassionate personal principle of creativity which

relations between the ethics of justice and that of mercy, and shows that the former does not lead to the latter. Moreover, he notes that the universality of the rules of moral behavior can serve as a form of blatant brutality. He further analyses the characteristics of particular morality and concludes that physical humanity of the moral object, perceived as such by the subject, is a required condition for mercy. The removal of object's humanity is a necessary step towards an ethical system that allows cruelty – a system that can still be based on universal moral rules.

⁴⁵ M. Tsvetaeva, *God*, transl. by P. Graves ("Ибо звездная книжица / Вся от Аз и до Ижицы / След плаща Его лишь").

is not a necessary being but rather a product of free self-determination of the impersonal Godhood.

For Barth too, God is not a necessary being. God's being is free, it is being realised in the continuous process of God's personal decision to be and to act with and for the human. Barth also sees the split in the being of God and the human world; he supposes the empty place as the condition of the freedom of God and the human. But for him the condition of free God who wants to be and is with the human, and moreover – for the human, is God being above the human. The gap of freedom does not appear inside the mixed God-human “being,” but between the Creator and the creation. If God is not “above,” His existence “with” the human cannot be “for” the human. According to Barth, the variety of being (God, created being, the rejected evil being, nothingness) is the divine premise of His humanity, the condition of the acceptance of plurality, of the reception of the human as the Other one.

Yet, for Berdyaev the humanity of God presupposes His total solidarity with the human and with the tragedy of the human world. Berdyaev seems to reject any plurality of being. The being involves both the human as God and the divinity. If God wants to be united with the human, He *must* share the fate of the creation in its tragedy of the schism between the person and the object, between the evil and the good.

Another ontological difference between Berdyaev's and Barth's thought lies in their position on the relations between the past, the present and the future. For Berdyaev, the place of freedom (for God and for the human) is the future, which stands in opposition to the “factuality” built upon the past and the present. The real divine-human reality does not exist yet; it is becoming, being created through some sort of synergy. On the contrary, Barth strongly draws on the factuality of God's revelation. He does not look for the revelation of reality anywhere but in eternity (past, contemporaneous and future) which (or, better, *who*) was revealed in the past, historical past. According to Barth, God has said His Word in the historical event of Jesus Christ, and this event (which is in our past) determines the eternal “plusquamperfectum,” our (God's and man's) presence and our (the divine and the human) eschatological future. This is His eternal decision which was made once for all times and for all men. From here, where could we find the real human freedom: in the fact of the God-human communion or in the future eschatology?

Berdyaev's ontology does not suggest any sort of primacy of God as a human God. It does not see the being of humans as being with each other

and for each other.⁴⁶ Ultimately, God is not free to be with the human and for him, because the solidarity in the fate is the consequence of the will of Nothing to be something. It seems that the thought about the “contingency” of God’s being, about its non-necessity was not followed by Berdyaev to its necessary consequences. For him, God appears as a necessary consequence of freedom. Barth, on the other hand, arrives at the conclusion which is consistent with his framework, the conclusion that it is the divine Subject, His Person who is the source of freedom; creativity itself is the ultimate Creator. How is it possible to avoid the actualistic ontology, the conception of being as an event of an historical meeting in flesh and space and time, if one postulates a human God? It seems that Berdyaev badly fails to cope with this problem in his attempt to escape the idea of absolute freedom, the idea of the person as an absolute creator, as a pure spirit. The result is that instead of the necessary God he proposes the necessary freedom – an oxymoron which in Berdyaev’s philosophy becomes an absolute tyrant of arbitrariness and caprice.

So where does the truth lie? We have analysed the reception of some original aspects of Berdyaev’s philosophy and theology of God self-election in Barth’s thought about the human. But if God really exists, what does His humanity amount to? Does it sink into non-being together with the human or does it save the human from nothingness?

It seems that this question finds its resolution in the sphere of responsibility. Both thinkers spoke about the decision of the will in the choice of being – God’s decision in relation to us and our decision in relation to God. But the “worlds” of both are radically different. Yet, what is a world? Must we wander in the sphere of mythological enigmas, or will we come out to face reality? One of the most important criteria of verification here could be the phenomenon of responsibility. Roman Ingarden contributed a lot to defining the ontological presupposition of the world where responsibility can appear.⁴⁷ He fully describes the reality where humans can make responsible decisions. But what if God exists? It seems that nobody has yet described metaphysically a world where God exists and at the same time a responsible human choice is admitted. This question goes beyond asking in what sort of “human” world we live (It is clear that in such a world some “God” exists too). And it is not only a question about the way in which responsibility can come to being, or about the conditions for the possibility

⁴⁶ Cf. on the contrary K. Barth, *Mensch und Mitmensch. Die Grundform der Menschlichkeit*, Göttingen 1958.

⁴⁷ R. Ingarden, *Über die Verantwortung. Ihre ontischen Fundamente*, Stuttgart 1970.

of God in such a world. It is also a question about the world that we create, the question about the origin and coming-about of values. Can we create our own world within the framework of our common world? It seems that in answering the first question (“what is the world where we live?”) the priority belongs to Barth. But as for the second question about the creation of values the primacy is Berdyaev's, as he opens for being the possibilities for creativity that embrace the infinite future.

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Dmitriy Gusev
Oryol State University (Oryol, Russia)

Ideas of Active-Creative Eschatology in the Dialogue between Russian and European Philosophical Thoughts of the 20th Century: Nikolai Berdyaev and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Reception of scientific thought occurs in various forms. Beginning with the simplest – the immediate influence coming from an idea that has been put forward by a person before his adherents or before those who view the problem from a different angle – and ending with the more varied processes taking place when thinkers influence each other in a dialogue or interaction of ideas. The way Nikolai Berdyaev has influenced European philosophical thought may be considered an example of such reception. My goal is to draw the reader's attention to the fruitful interaction between the ideas originating in Russia and Europe which Berdyaev conveyed in his works following Vladimir Solovyov. In Berdyaev's works dating from different years of his life the dialogue between the ideas belonging to the Russian and European philosophical thoughts has become a multifaceted philosophical synthesis, whose original theoretical and methodological points still have not been studied well enough. The object of my research is to find the most productive correlations between Berdyaev's active-creative eschatology conception and Teilhard de Chardin's ideas which I consider an example of similar European philosophical thought experience. The problem cannot be solved without a detailed specification of what the reception of Russian philosophical thought as a whole, and especially Berdyaev's heritage, was like in Europe.

There is an objective correlation between Berdyaev's ideas and the existential-anthropological schools of the European philosophical thought which were not firmly established and hadn't become known all over the world by then. Berdyaev objectively took part in creating new paradigms

of the European philosophy (similar thoughts were expressed by N. Motroshilova concerning Vladimir Solovyov¹). A number of trends in Berdyaev's philosophy turned out to be surprisingly up-to-date and in tune with European philosophical thinking. I believe that Berdyaev's active-creative eschatology conception is very significant along with personalism which is often considered as Berdyaev's main contribution to the development of philosophy in Europe. A particular similarity to Berdyaev's mentioned ideas can be traced in Teilhard de Chardin's heritage. Both of the two thinkers have referred to themselves as significant yet still not fully comprehended representatives of the corresponding intellectual cultures of the 20th century. The correlation between Berdyaev's and Teilhard de Chardin's ideas, being useful for discussion of the most important philosophical and religious problems of our time, is possible due to the common basis of their world outlook – existential-anthropological interpretation of the Christian heritage, common for the whole European culture. As George Pattison says, Berdyaev's works represent an obvious and existentially directed interpretation of Christianity. He further states that freedom itself with which Berdyaev interprets the Christian tradition is possible only for a person who has accepted it as a decisive factor in his life and thinking.² Forenco Reati, analyzing Teilhard de Chardin's heritage in the context of the dialogue between his ideas and the works of Russian religious philosophers, considers him a prophet of the more mature Christianity who is able to be at the summit of the new knowledge.³ In my opinion, Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin are the two thinkers who supplement each other in many ways. The similarity between their views helps to reveal significant traits in the reception of Russian philosophical ideas by the European mentality. It is topical for the current situation in philosophy, religion and culture as a whole.

Berdyaev is often considered to be the most famous Russian philosopher in Europe. On the one hand, such an estimation is due to the historical factor of his forcible emigration and personal involvement in the immediate context of the European philosophical culture. On the other, it is due to his existential-anthropological ideas being in tune with the ideas

¹ See Н.В. Мотрошилова, *Мыслители России и философия Запада (В. Соловьев. Н. Бердяев. С. Франк. Л. Шестов)*, Москва 2007, p. 15.

² See Дж. Пэттисон, *Эсхатология и онтология: Хайдеггер и Бердяев*, in В. Порус (ed), *Н.А. Бердяев и единство европейского духа*, Москва 2007, pp. 180-181.

³ Ф. Реати, *Павел Флоренский. Пьер Тейяр де Шарден*, in А.А. Гриб (ed), *Наука и вера в диалоге. II. Тейяр де Шарден и П. Флоренский*, Санкт-Петербург 2007, p. 9.

of the contemporary European schools of thought. V. Porus points out that “Berdyaeв’s thought has touched the nerves of the European culture so hard that the pain caused hasn’t eased – it is becoming more and more severe with time. And the differences in the appraisals are an ambiguous and prolonged reaction to this pain.”⁴

Nevertheless, the attitude to Berdyaeв in Europe, as a Russian philosopher, was dual in character. On the one hand, the reception of Berdyaeв’s works in Europe was immediately bound with the way his natural context, that is Russian philosophy, was perceived. A similar idea was expressed concerning Vladimir Solovyov by M. V. Maksimov, one of the most reputable Russian researchers of Solovyov’s works. In Europe Berdyaeв is considered “the face” of Russian philosophy as a whole (in Russia there has not been such an attitude to Berdyaeв either previously or at present). On the other hand, as Maksimov points out, Europeans perceived Berdyaeв out of the national intellectual context of Russian philosophical culture.⁵ The same can be said about the way the Europeans perceived M. Bakhtin whose works, as M. Holquist observes, “have become a public event of the present time.”⁶

In Russia itself the attitude to Berdyaeв has always been and still remains ambiguous, despite researchers’ considerable interest and the fact that almost all his works have been published. Today Berdyaeв’s works are accessible to Russian readers. A lot of research has been done on various aspects of his heritage both in Russia and abroad. Most notably, among the works by European researchers of Berdyaeв’s heritage published after his death I would single out A. Savitskiy’s and R. Zwahlen’s studies. Berdyaeв’s works have given rise to the most contradictory appraisals ranging from enthusiastic to negative both in Russia and Europe. As George Pettison writes, Berdyaeв as a representative of non-academic intellectualism (“a brilliant amateur prophet”) is on a par with such thinkers as Carlyle, Emerson and Nietzsche.⁷ I believe that Teilhard de Chardin’s way of thinking is also closer to this type of philosophical culture than to the traditions of academic intellectualism. Representatives of the latter in philosophy

⁴ В.Н. Порус, *От редактора*, in idem (ed), *Н.А. Бердяев и единство европейского духа*, p. vii.

⁵ М.В. Максимов, *Владимир Соловьёв и Запад: Невидимый континент*, Москва 1998, p. 9.

⁶ M. Holquist, *Dialogeism: Bakhtin and his World*, London – New York 1990, p. XII.

⁷ Дж. Пэттисон, *Эсхатология и онтология: Хайдеггер и Бердяев*, pp. 179-194.

and in theology as well often tend to similarly view Berdyaev's and Teilhard de Chardin's works as "essayistics." To my mind, prophetism and non-academic nature of their philosophising is caused not by "flaws and incorrectness of conceptualization" but by principal inability to express the ideas which Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin considered to be the most important in any other form. As V. V. Bychkov points out, representatives of logicistic philosophy find Berdyaev's works interesting because of the prophetic language, and theologians – because of the unorthodox ideas.⁸

An interesting appraisal of Berdyaev was given by Jacques Maritain: "This is an augural philosopher, or, to be more precise, for him philosophy suggested by faith is naturally concluded by a prophecy. (...) But even when you carry on polemics with him, you always get the salutary stimulus that comes from the absolute sincerity of his mind which is aspiring to seek existence."⁹

Even more than just in the form of expressing their philosophical positions, Berdyaev's and Teilhard de Chardin's thoughts are similar in their profound and inexpugible rejection of the Enlightenment ideology in its rationalistic-progressive version, which is very authoritative both in the Russian and European cultural tradition. In my opinion, the reason for the current pronounced rejection of Russian religious philosophy itself by a considerable part of today's Russian philosophical community, and by far not only by the adherents of Marxism-Leninism, is its being at discord with the epistemological directives of classical rationalism prevailing in academical philosophy. But along with the trends of progressive rationalism, there is also another, existential-anthropological vector of intellectual evolution in European philosophical thought of the 20th century, which is open for reception of original ideas of Russian religious philosophy to a greater extent.

Both Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin had an immense "communicative capital," which is why the two philosophers of different nationalities were so close to each other in their way of thinking when dealing with existential-anthropological problems. It is quite evident that Berdyaev was a mediator between Russian and European philosophical traditions. His contribution to the popularization of Russian philosophy in Europe was significant. In this regard his personal traits are very important. Berdyaev received a European education and was able to read contemporary

⁸ В.В. Бычков, *Русская теургическая эстетика*, Москва 2007, p. 727.

⁹ Ж. Маритен, *От Бергсона к Фоме Аквинскому: очерки метафизики и этики*, transl. by В.П. Гайдамак, Москва 2006, p. 77.

philosophical works in the original, not waiting for the Russian translations to be made. The philosopher had French and Polish roots. Absolute openness, sincerity and empathic ability were among his characteristic traits. Berdyaev's immediate involvement in the European context of philosophising (though it was inevitable as a consequence of his emigration for political reasons) and his links with the most notable representatives of the leading European schools of thought were also very significant in this connection. One of the factors conditioning Berdyaev's openness to the dialogue with the European thought was Vladimir Solovyov's impact on his thinking. As Professor E. Van Der Zweerde observed, Solovyov's philosophy "built a bridge" over the gulf separating the Russian and European philosophical thoughts.¹⁰ According to Helmut Daam, one of the most reputable German specialists in the field of history of Russian philosophy, "Russian philosophy has received international acknowledgment beginning with Vladimir Solovyov and thanks to his adherents."¹¹ In his Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, published on September 14, 1998, John Paul II calls Vladimir Solovyov one of those teachers of religious thought coming from Eastern culture, who is able to teach the Catholic West lots of things. The continuity between Solovyov's philosophical sets and Berdyaev's ideas of active-creative eschatology is evident.

Teilhard de Chardin in his turn is also "a dialogue type." In his article devoted to Teilhard de Chardin's works, Lodovico Galleni puts emphasis on the unique communicative potential of the thinker's heritage and states that "his scientific, philosophical and theological thoughts are very consistent and some of them are in dialogue not only with the modern world (the appeal for a dialogue was mentioned in one of the most significant places of his diary), but also with other Christian denominations, other religions and cultures. The whole lot of his brilliant ideas is open for a dialogue. Here it is only reasonable to draw the reader's attention to the associations between Teilhard de Chardin's way of thinking and the world of Russian culture."¹² The attitude to Teilhard de Chardin's heritage in Europe has undergone a significant evolution (another parallel may be drawn between this and the fate of Berdyaev's philosophy in Russia). At first, his philosophical and theological ideas were not accepted. Then some of his

¹⁰ See *Интервью с Э. ван дер Зверде*, "Вопросы философии" 2 (1998), p. 125.

¹¹ H. Dahm, *Russian Philosophy: Traditional and contemporary account*, "Studies in Soviet Thought," vol. 22, 3 (1981), p. 165.

¹² Л. Галлени, *Труды Тейяра де Шардена как инструмент диалога*, in А.А. Гриб (ed), *Наука и вера в диалоге*, p. 111.

ideas were found interesting by representatives of the noospheric movement. Ultimately, attention was drawn to his anthropological ideas. In contrast to the 1970–80s when for censorial and ideological reasons Russian readers didn't have access to Teilhard de Chardin's key works in which he expressed his view on the problems concerned with religion (though, *The Phenomenon of Man* was published in the USSR three years prior to the Italian publication), today many of his works have already been translated into Russian. One of the most fundamental studies dedicated to the philosopher's heritage is the book written by Svetlana Semyonova.¹³ And one of the key topics of her research was the dialogue between Teilhard de Chardin's ideas and the ideas of Russian religious philosophers of the 19–20th centuries. A number of international scientific conferences in Russia and abroad were also dedicated to the associations between Teilhard de Chardin's thoughts and Russian religious philosophy.

The interest in Berdyaev's philosophy and Teilhard de Chardin's heritage hasn't waned because their ideas are topical and acute against the background of such problems as consumer society dehumanization ("the anthropological catastrophe" of the modern civilization), a mounting threat of natural and anthropogenic disasters, a considerable increase in the pace of life, political, economical, social and ecological instability. The current threat of personality's mental world collapse and cultural degradation resembles the situation at the turn of the 20th century, when these problems became a tenor for the thinkers of the Russian "Silver Age" and for many European thinkers as well. That is why the most important line in Berdyaev's and Teilhard de Chardin's works was the struggle against the acutely perceived threat of degradation in culture, society and personality. Again and again the thinkers address themselves to the topics of dehumanization, ontological disintegration in the nature of human personality, destructive nature of its objectification process, transformation of integral personality into a lifelessgnoseological abstraction of a subject in the system of scientific philosophy. Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin have predicted many causes of our modern civilization's approaching an anthropological catastrophe. V. Porus writes that in some respect Berdyaev is "more like our contemporary than a person belonging to his epoch."¹⁴ I believe that this statement applies to Teilhard de Chardin in equally fair measure.

¹³ See С.Г. Семёнова, *Паломник в будущее. Пьер Тейяр де Шарден*, Санкт-Петербург 2009.

¹⁴ В.Н. Порус, *От редактора*, p. vii.

Both philosophers are notable for their close attention to the topic of eschatology in its various aspects (ontological, socio-historical, existential-anthropological). The eschatology theme is prominent in Berdyaev's philosophy. To some extent this topic is touched upon in almost all his works. The philosopher uses the eschatologism principle as a basis for dealing with the key problems of personality, freedom, creativity and historical destinies of Russia. Such attention to eschatology characterizes Berdyaev as an evident successor of the general line in development of Russian philosophy which had been suggested by V.I. Solovyov. According to M. V. Maksimov, eschatologism provided one of the bases for Solovyov's world outlook.¹⁵ Likewise, the eschatology principle comprises Berdyaev's paradigm of philosophical creativity. It left a mark on the thinker's personality and his world outlook. In this regard it is worth noticing that Berdyaev took a great interest in the ideas of Polish national messianism and especially August Cieszkowski's works.

Berdyaev viewed eschatology from the active-creative point of view. For him the eschatological world outlook was a catalyst for spiritual growth of personality and fulfillment of its creative potential. Such anthropological interpretation of eschatology was also shared by other Russian religious philosophers such as S. Bulgakov, P. Florensky, G. Fedotov. But in contrast to them Berdyaev was more consistent in carrying out modernization of the eschatological discourse giving it a pronounced anthropological interpretation. In my opinion, such a radical Christian heritage interpretation also suggests certain commonality between Berdyaev's philosophy and Teilhard de Chardin's way of thinking. Another important thing is the sharp borderline between eschatology as an anthropological mental outlook of personality and the topic of the apocalyptic catastrophe. Berdyaev thought that the assertion of conditional character of apocalyptic prophecies was one of the most valuable ideas of N. Fyodorov, and this idea serves as a key to understanding eschatology as ontological transfiguration of existence, as expectation of its integrity restoration. It is also notable that in modern theology there is a shift of accents in eschatology interpretation from its literal reading in the repressive-pedagogical context towards anthropological understanding.

The acute eschatological world outlook which is characteristic of the way Berdyaev understood the problems of culture and personality is tightly connected with the critical nature of the historical epoch and the

¹⁵ M.V. Максимов, *Владимир Соловьёв и Запад: Невидимый континент*, p. 141.

foreboding of the tragic and catastrophic events. The sharp eschatological mood of the epoch manifested itself in philosophical poetry of the “junior symbolists.”¹⁶ In his autobiography Berdyaev stated the following: “For me eschatologism has always been connected with the feeling that everything is fragile, that everybody is under a threat of death, that everything in history is transient and hanging over an abyss. I’ve been used to waiting for catastrophes in my personal life, let alone in the historical life of nations. And I started predicting historical catastrophes long ago... I clearly saw that the world was undergoing not only the process of dechristianization but also dehumahization. The human image has been shaken... Everything seemed to be not transient but final. This is a very deep personal feeling of mine. To me history appears in its eschatological perspective. The way of my philosophising has always suggested that the end of the world is drawing near and there is no time perspective. This makes me a truly Russian thinker, an heir to Dostoyevsky.”¹⁷

For Berdyaev eschatology mainly deals with the aspiration to express his thoughts about personality, its essence and destiny, while reflecting on the ultimate questions of human and world existence. In his work *The Beginning and The End* Berdyaev wrote that “all philosophy, theory of knowledge, ethics, philosophy of history should be constructed with an eschatological outlook, but, as we shall see, by no means eschatological in the sense in which the word is usually understood.”¹⁸ His interpretation of eschatology a) deviates from the traditional theological doctrine based on interpretation of apocalyptic texts, b) is based on the existential experience of personality and c) introduces culture and creativity into the sphere of eschatological discourse. Berdyaev makes gnosiological and metaphysical interpretation of eschatology his main goal. It links the problem of apocalypse with the idea of objectification – his main philosophical idea.¹⁹

Passive expectation of apocalypse contradicts human freedom and dignity. Berdyaev considered the traditional eschatological doctrine used in

¹⁶ See Д.В. Гусев, *Антропологические аспекты эсхатологии в философской поэзии Вл. Соловьёва и А. Белого*, “Соловьёвские исследования” 1 (2012), pp. 57-69; idem, *Человек и эсхатология в философской поэзии А. Белого и А. Блока*, in Т. Obolovitch (ed), *Metafizyka a literatura w kulturze rosyjskiej. Метафизика и литература в русской культуре*, Kraków 2012, pp. 327-336.

¹⁷ Н.А. Бердяев, *Самопознание. (Опыт философской автобиографии)*, Москва 1991, pp. 299-300.

¹⁸ N. Berdyaev, *The Beginning and The End*, transl. by R.M. French, <http://krotov.info/library/02_b/berdyaev/1941_038_1_eng.htm>.

¹⁹ Cf. *ibidem*.

academic theology and a number of philosophical systems (such as Solovyov's eschatology) an example of such "passive eschatology." "But active eschatology is also possible. Such self-consciousness which goes along with dignity of a human being as a free spirit must intensify human activity and creativity during the Eschaton. The end should be understood not in passive-negative, but in creative-positive sense. I have already mentioned that every human act of creativity is eschatological in its nature and brings the world to its end."²⁰ In *The Beginning and The End* Berdyaev makes clear the essence of his position: "The end of the world is a divine-human enterprise, the activity and the creative work of man also enters into it. Man not only endures the end, he also prepares the way for it. The end is not merely the destruction of the world, and judgment, it is also the illumination and transformation of the world, the continuation, as it were, of creation, the entry upon a new *aeon*. The creative act of man is needed for the coming of the Kingdom of God, God is in need of and awaits it. (...) The eschatological idea both can and should be active and creative."²¹ Berdyaev himself pointed out the proximity of his position to N. Fyodorov's ideas for whom the eschatological outcome depends on human activity.

Berdyaev wrote about the active-creative approach to the eschatological "horizons" of human existence when he is witness to historical tragedies, face to face with the inevitability of his own existence finiteness, in the state of mystical inspiration or an act of creativity. Assertion of eschatological nature of any genuine act of creativity is the philosopher's main idea. Any creative act which is really ethical, spiritual and creative is eschatological by nature because it results in the world's transfiguration and its destiny's fulfillment. At the same time, eschatological world outlook demands an utmost strain of creative efforts from a person. This makes eschatology more like personality's eschatological position, existential feeling of the world's and human's fragility. It changes the whole human lifeworld, asserting that there is the last and final aim in human life and in the world's existence. This broadens personality's spiritual horizons and changes the perspective of human life at the root. Furthermore, there is a fundamental difference between such anthropological interpretation of eschatologism and utopian consciousness. According to Berdyaev, eschatologism doesn't allow of

²⁰ Н.А. Бердяев, *Дух и реальность*, in idem, *Дух и реальность*, Москва 2005, p. 356.

²¹ N. Berdyaev, *The Beginning and The End*, <http://krotov.info/library/02_b/berdyaev/1941_038_4_eng.htm>.

a straightforward transition of transcendental content into socio-historical practice as a certain program. It remains a part of personality's spiritual world, and its existential position. In the contemporary research literature the antinomy of eschatologism and utopianism is also regarded as a basis for studying apocalyptic motifs in Russian philosophy and culture.²² Developing V. Solovyov's train of thought, Berdyaev links his eschatology conception with the all-unity theme. Active-creative eschatology serves as a basis for synthesis, for restoration of integrity between the uncoordinated spheres of personality's life and asserts the high value of its social and cultural activity.

Berdyaev's ideas have found reflection in the works of many European philosophers: Rickert, Scheler, Hartmann, Heidegger, Jaspers, Bergson, Sartre, Barth, Tillich, etc. Teilhard de Chardin's views are especially close to Berdyaev's philosopho-anthropological ideas of active-creative eschatology. The links between the two philosophers' lines of thought are especially vivid in their attitude to the problems of eschatological significance of creativity. Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin view the eschatological orientation of creativity as its indispensable prerequisite. In his book *The Divine Milieu* Teilhard de Chardin wrote about creativity's value in the context of eschatology. He stated that: "no one lifts his little finger to do the smallest task unless moved, however obscurely, by the conviction that he is contributing infinitesimally (at least indirectly) to the building of something definitive – that is to say, to your work, my God..."²³ Teilhard de Chardin's eschatology presupposes inclusion of personal creativity into the world's evolution, into the integrated eschatological perspective of the world. On the one hand, realisation of personality's creative potential is viewed as a necessary condition of the world's evolution in its eschatological sense. On the other hand, human creativity is eschatologically substantiated. The following maxim is a tenor for Teilhard de Chardin's way of thinking: human activity receives existential value only in the eternity's perspective, as a "forever" creation, a final work. Refusal to believe in the eschatological value of the results of man's effort produces an irreparable negative effect on his ability to act.²⁴ The supreme value of human creativity is the theme which is further developed in Teilhard de Chardin's reflections on death. In

²² See В.П. Шестаков, *Эсхатология и утопия (очерки русской философии и культуры)*, Москва 1995, p. 208.

²³ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu. An Essay on the Interior Life*, transl. by W. Collins, New York 1960, p. 56.

²⁴ Cf. *ibidem*.

his work *Human Energy* Teilhard de Chardin writes that it is impossible to reconcile humankind's conscious activity and thought with the perspective of its total destruction, demise. They meet in the stream of evolution and it causes a fundamental conflict. This idea is in tune with Berdyaev's philosophical thought. Following Fyodorov the philosopher also wrote about fundamental incompatibility of creativity and death in the eschatological context.

Just like Berdyaev, Teilhard de Chardin interprets eschatology from an active-creative position, which is beyond the traditional narrow understanding of apocalypse. The purpose of life and the role of man in the completion of Creation are the topics which come to the foreground in his works. Teilhard de Chardin wrote: "Thus every man, in the course of his life, must not only show himself obedient and docile. By his fidelity he must *build* – starting with the most natural territory of his own self – a work, an *opus*, into which something enters from all the elements of the earth. *He makes his own soul* throughout all his earthly days; and at the same time he collaborates in another work, in another opus, which infinitely transcends, while at the same time it narrowly determines, the perspectives of his individual achievement: the completing of the world."²⁵ The human world itself in the structure of the Universe, according to Teilhard de Chardin, represents an area of continuous spiritual transfiguration²⁶. Individual efforts of a personality make up a process of final spiritualization of the world. Teilhard de Chardin accentuates the moment of involvement of personal creativity in the world's evolution. Man's creative activity reaches a cosmic level and becomes a basis for creating interpersonal communities, human unities. In his work *The Phenomenon of Man* Teilhard de Chardin wrote: "The outcome of the world, the gates of the future, the entry into the super-human – these are not thrown open to a few of the privileged nor to one chosen people to the exclusion of all others. They will open only to an advance of all together, in a direction in which *all together* can join and find completion in a spiritual renovation of the earth."²⁷ However, "in order to be united, you must first of all *be* – be yourself as completely as possible. And so you must develop yourself and take possession of the world *in order to be*."²⁸ According to this, man can fulfill his role in the world

²⁵ Ibidem, pp. 60-61.

²⁶ Cf. ibidem, p. 144.

²⁷ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, transl. by B. Wall, New York 1975, pp. 244-245.

²⁸ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*, pp. 95-96.

only through full self-actualization. Overcoming disunity in the society and disconnectedness between man and nature, complete involvement of one person in a dialogue with another person is possible only on the condition of individual self-actualization.

Another of Teilhard de Chardin's thoughts reinforces and enriches Berdyaev's idea of eschatological nature of any genuine creativity. Teilhard de Chardin gives a definitely positive answer to Berdyaev's question: "Will the creative acts of man have an honourable place in eternal life? Will they enter into the Kingdom of God?"²⁹ According to Teilhard de Chardin, any conscious human activity is eschatological by nature, because it leads to the ultimate goal – completion of the world. Eschatology is the ultimate, underlying meaning of any activity: just as for Berdyaev, likewise for Teilhard de Chardin the Kingdom of God is created from all the spheres of human life.³⁰ That is why the work object itself in any sphere of human life becomes a means to opening the gate to the genuine individual self-actualization. This asserts the existential value of work, which is in discord with the world outlook of the consumer society. Following Berdyaev, who accentuated the special role of personality and individual creativity in the fulfillment of final destinies of the whole world, Teilhard de Chardin develops the idea of personal responsibility for one's life and its content. This responsibility means the necessity of utmost strain of spiritual efforts which leads to individual self-actualization. The thinkers emphasise that one can fulfill his role in the world only through full individual self-actualization. Self-actualization is possible only in the situation of maximum spiritual effort. That is why eschatology takes place in personality and through personality. The meaning of human life becomes apparent at the limit of personality's strength. This limit has eschatological perspective that allows focusing the spiritual strength of man. Teilhard de Chardin endlessly emphasises how necessary it is to maximally exert one's efforts: "I can only unite myself to the will of God (as endured passively) when all my strength is spent, at the point where my activity, fully extended and straining towards betterment (understood in ordinary human terms), finds itself continually counter-weighted by forces tending to halt me or overwhelm me. Unless I do everything I can to advance or resist, I shall not find myself at the *required point*."³¹

²⁹ N. Berdyaev, *The Beginning and The End*, <http://krotov.info/library/02_b/berdyaev/1941_038_4_eng.htm>.

³⁰ Cf. P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*, pp. 51, 67.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 92.

Developing Fyodorov's idea of conditional character of apocalyptic prophecies, Berdyaev rejects the idea of an inevitable eschatological final as a total catastrophe. The assertion of the symbolic nature of eschatological catastrophism makes Berdyaev's eschatology unique in its own way. This idea hasn't been shared by the majority of other Russian religious philosophers. The main reason for such a position is Berdyaev's understanding of the role of individual personality and its creativity is the eschatological perspective. Teilhard de Chardin, just like Berdyaev, amplifies the eschatology's positive component, the motifs of the world's transfiguration expectation. It seems that according to the thinker the statement that "the kingdom of God can only be established in mourning, and by thwarting and going against the current of man's aspirations and energies,"³² is mistaken. And at the same time he doesn't completely deny eschatological catastrophism. The publisher of the French issue of *The Divine Milieu* cites the following lines from Teilhard de Chardin's letter to his friend Auguste Valancene: "I agree, fundamentally, that the completion of the world is only consummated through a death, a 'night,' a reversal, an ex-centration, and a quasi-depersonalisation..."³³ But first of all Teilhard de Chardin sees the eschatological final as a manifestation of existence's true properties and the completion of the Divine Milieu. Eschatology for Teilhard de Chardin means completion and gives existence the potential of meaning. It is no use trying to predict the time and nature of the eschatological final, but it is necessary to wait for it: "Expectation – anxious, collective and operative expectation of an end of the world, that is to say of an issue for the world – that is perhaps the supreme Christian function and the most distinctive characteristic of our religion."³⁴ Teilhard de Chardin also said that: "And then in an increase of the interest, discovered by our thought, in the preparation and consummation of the Parousia."³⁵ In this way eschatology points at the existence of the world's transcendental dimension.

The eschatological goal, according to Teilhard de Chardin, is the Omega Point which summarizes "in its flower and its integrity – the hoard of consciousness liberated little by little on earth by noogenesis."³⁶ Its characteristic properties are "autonomy, actuality, irreversibility, and thus finally

³² Ibidem, p. 102.

³³ Ibidem, p. 93.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 151.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 152.

³⁶ P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, p. 261.

transcendence.”³⁷ The movement towards it represents the transition of life from the state of relative irreversibility into the state of absolute irreversibility. This is the completion and the final phase of the phenomenon of man. The end of the world is inconceivable but, according to Teilhard de Chardin, we are able to foresee the meaning and to outline the form of the eschatological final. We should base our foresight on indispensability of personality in the process of the world’s transfiguration. Approximation of the eschatological final manifests itself in growing pressure on the future of the noosphere which is becoming stronger. According to Teilhard de Chardin “The end of the world: the wholesale internal introversion upon itself of the noosphere, which has simultaneously reached the uttermost limit of its complexity and its centrality. The end of the world: the overthrow of equilibrium, detaching the mind, fumed at last, from its material matrix.”³⁸

Teilhard de Chardin also expresses two assumptions about the state of the world when approaching its final. The first assumption (the idealistic hope for a “peaceful,” non-catastrophic eschatological scenario) consists in the minimization of evil and peaceful nature of the final convergence. Another of Teilhard de Chardin’s assumptions is opposite to the optimistic scenario: as the end point is drawing near, the evil in the world grows and by the end reaches its peak level. There happens the “final division” of the noosphere into two zones: the zone of thought and the zone of love. The latter is characterised by readiness to “take a step” beyond itself, into otherness. According to Teilhard de Chardin, three curves simultaneously rise into the future: 1) the inevitable decrease in the organic sources of the Earth; 2) the intrinsic split of consciousness which gets more and more separated towards the two opposite ideals of evolution; 3) the positive attraction by the centre of centres of those hearts, which will turn to it. The Earth’s demise will happen at the intersection of these 3 curves which will have reached their limit: “The death of the materially exhausted planet; the split of the noosphere, divided on the form to be given to its unity; and simultaneously (endowing the event with all its significance and with all in value) the liberation of that percentage of the universe which, across time, space and evil, will have succeeded in laboriously synthesising itself to the very end.”³⁹ To the idea of eternal progress Teilhard de Chardin opposes the idea of the eschatological final. As S. Semyonova puts it, this final will

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 271.

³⁸ Ibidem, pp. 287-288.

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 289.

be preceded by the final metamorphosis of the noosphere, by accumulation of the noospheric power at the point of the end.⁴⁰

The eschatological world outlook is the main tone in the works of Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin. There is a whole set of topics which have been considered by the thinkers analogically or in a similar way: 1) substantiation of an individual personality's significance for the final destiny of existence; 2) assertion of the value of individual creativity for the world's evolution; 3) justification of man and the results of his efforts in the eschatological perspective; 4) responsibility of man as the creator of culture. The originality of the way Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin considered these problems is demonstrated by the Eastern Christian patristic heritage interpretation in the new socio-cultural context. According to K. Isupov "Russian culture is pointedly Christocentric."⁴¹ Christocentrism is the basic principle of Teilhard de Chardin's eschatological system and his design of evolutionary growth towards Omega on a scale of the whole humankind. Christ is the centre of centres and the unitive basis of Pleroma (fullness of existence). Teilhard de Chardin regarded Pleroma not as a point of convergence of the existence development lines but as "a centre of radiation for the energies."⁴² Eventually these energies penetrate all the spheres of existence. This is another significant point which is common for Teilhard de Chardin and the Russian religious philosophy. The principle of energetics is very significant in the works of Russian philosophers, which is conditioned by the influence of Hesychasm, a mystico-ascetic teaching of Eastern Christianity.

Is Berdyaev's and Teilhard de Chardin's eschatology topical today? The apocalypse theme has become an informational product of mass culture. Many people interpret it outside of the scientific discourse. There is an opinion that the interest in eschatology in modern philosophy just as in modern theology is on the decrease. I am sure that today the ideas of active-creative eschatology developed by Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin are especially topical and essential. After all, the paradox is that eschatological consciousness can assume two opposite forms. On the one hand, a loss of meaning of existence, when it is doomed to total destruction, leads to escape from reality and refusal to take part in socio-cultural activity. On the other hand, nonexistence can be opposed only by human creativity

⁴⁰ See С.Г. Семёнова, *Паломник в будущее. Пьер Тейяр де Шарден*, p. 432.

⁴¹ К.Г. Исупов, *О русском тейяризме*, in А.А. Гриб (ed), *Наука и вера в диалоге*, p. 27.

⁴² P. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*, p. 123.

and efforts. “It is only when under a threat of nonexistence that existence takes place. It is only when under a threat of nonexistence that existence begins.”⁴³ The threat of nonexistence demands from a person an utmost strain of spiritual efforts, exceedance of his inner world’s limits and participation in reformation and spiritualization of reality. The existence of personality and culture becomes especially valuable in the perspective of its loss. Such eschatology gives meaning not only to the historical process of the world but also to all the elements of its process, however insignificant they might be. These elements also make their meaningful contribution to the final meaning of history and its results. And such outcome depends on human personality to a great extent. That is why the thinkers consider creative responsibility of a person to be so huge on a scale of the whole world. The philosophy of Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin doesn’t lead to escape from social life and individual creativity in the sphere of culture – it exonerates and justifies them. The two thinkers’ philosophical interpretation of eschatology allows approaching the problem exactly from a philosophical point of view. In this regard Berdyaev and Teilhard de Chardin are ideological successors of V. Solovyov, who has brought eschatological teaching into Russian religious philosophy. On the other hand, the thinkers’ ideas help not only to develop and concretise the eschatological conception itself, but also to discern the fundamentally important problems of personal existence which deserve the most careful attention even today.

Transl. by Vasily Krivoshein

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⁴³ Ф.М. Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений*, Москва, 1971–1990, vol. 24, p. 240.

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Anatoliy Saliy

Ukrainian Medical Stomatological Academy (Poltava, Ukraine)

Lev Shestov's philosophic solitude and his influence on the European philosophy of the 20th century

Lev Shestov (1866–1938) is one of those few thinkers whose views do not fit any existing philosophic systems. Generally, he objected to any system: when he criticized and dissociated himself from Solovyov's theory of religious philosophy, then he dramatically departed from D. Merezhkovsky school, criticized philosophic positions of N. Berdyaev, disagreed with E. Husserl, argued with M. Buber. Shestov's paradoxical speeches as though don't get at all to the course of the Russian philosophical tradition, and seem a voice of an entity which can't be conformable to any chorus – neither Slavophiles, nor Westernizers, nor metaphysicists, nor gnoseologists, nor theologians. The Russian thinker was deeply convinced that any system in itself kills free creativity, forcing it within a tight framework, prepared in advance.

Shestov's idea about the individual truth acquired in absolute solitude was one of the basic moments of the "polyphonic" aesthetics which played an important role in the development of Western art of the 20th century. In *Sola fide* Shestov finally separates the internal human life alien to any norms, from the truth announced by it. Shestov insists on the view that the person is incapable of transferring to "others" the truth learnt without noticeable losses. The truth itself is lost in the course of transfer. Therefore, solitude, which is deeper than anything underground or at the sea bottom, is the beginning and main condition of approach to the ultimate secret, the ultimate truth born in the deepest solitude.

In this context the Russian thinker's idea of resolute breaking off with "others," and immersion into solitude as the only true environment for the research of essence and way leading to rescue has become the fatal step from our point of view. And, as the real wanderer, the truth hunter, in his ascension to the summits of knowledge, Shestov was alone. He did not need

any fellow travelers as “after all they won’t help, they will only slow down the business.” As a result, “the tragedy philosophy” alienates Shestov from real problems of contemporary cultures, and leads him to direct confrontation with it. But for such a person as Shestov it is even better. “Because mountain paths, as any Alpine guide will tell you, are only for those who aren’t prone to dizziness: *nur für Schwindelfreie*.”

Shestov’s works reveal actual criticism of classical metaphysics, but no metaphysicist in the traditional sense recognizes Shestov’s oeuvre as, at least to a small degree, well-founded metaphysics.

Entering deeply into the world of the European metaphysical thought, Shestov, in fact, is not built into it. He transforms its energy and matter into existential energy, and creates his own genre of philosophising. In the context of his works any quote acquires special, often far-from-initial sense. And in the context of the philosophising genre Shestov also stays in a condition of deep solitude, as it is rather difficult to define it unambiguously. Can Shestov’s philosophy be regarded as a genre of existential philosophy? He can sometimes agree with such a definition. However, in none of Shestov’s works can we find any “categories” or “existentials,” any tendency towards any support of concepts such as “will,” “existence,” “consciousness,” “life” – nothing interrupts his never-ending inquiring.

Is it probably religious philosophy then? But then there is an absolutely reasonable question of what confession his reflections are connected with? Of course, we can agree with the thought of Fyodorov, who in this context spoke about “the Judeo-reformatory line of Christianity,”¹ even though then Tertullian, Augustine as well as Pascal will have to be involved here, which can be rather difficult.² Actually, with religious thinkers Shestov only shared general, so-called “presentiments,” common enthusiasm for ultimate questions, but their ways regarding sense and contents were different as far as philosophy was concerned.

As from the 1930s Lev Shestov’s philosophical ideas finally entered the context of philosophical culture. Creative and friendly relations connected Shestov not only with Russian thinkers who shared with him emigration adversity. He was also closely connected with philosophers already known in Europe such as Husserl, Buber, Heidegger, Barth. Shestov’s ideas came to be reflected in French existentialism.

¹ Г.П. Федоров, *Л. Шестов. На весах Иова*, “Числа” 2-3 (1930), p. 259.

² Cf. А.В. Ахутин, *О втором измерении мышления: Лев Шестов и философия*, in *idem, Поворотные времена, Санкт-Петербург* 2005, pp. 484-485.

Shestov's book *Kierkegaard and the Existential Philosophy*, published in Paris after author's death in 1939, authorizes the definition of his philosophising style as existential.³ His philosophy is generally adopted in this environment. The young then **Albert Camus** (1913–1960) resolutely ranks Shestov among such thinkers as Kierkegaard, Scheler, Heidegger and Jaspers. Working on *The myth of Sisyphus*, Camus regards Shestov's views as an indicative example. He pays attention to the fact that even the most closed system, the most closed universal rationalism can always stumble about the irrationality of human thinking. All this evidence and the most negligible contradictions depreciating intelligence do not escape him. Both in the history of the human heart and in the history of Camus's spirit he recognizes in Shestov only a prevalence of the person's riot against inevitability. He refuses sense to the grounds, he won't get moving unless he is in the middle of the faded desert with fossilized authenticities.⁴

Reflecting on Shestov's ideas, Camus focuses attention on the fact that when Shestov opposes absurdity to ordinary morality and reason, he calls it truth and expiation.⁵

For Camus Lev Shestov is a contradictory figure. He agrees with his conclusions about the reason's vanity, noting that the laws of nature are significant within known limits, and when they go beyond, they turn against themselves and generate absurdity. In the descriptive plan, despite the assessment of the truth as explanations, they also are quite lawful. Shestov sacrifices all this to irrationalism.⁶

But Camus does not accept that main way which Shestov and the teacher of youth Dostoevsky offered. Appealing to God, seriously promising the Kingdom of Heaven and immortality of soul, Shestov artificially removes that tension he had so skillfully erected. And then it becomes clear that it is not the absurd writer in front of us, but the person who puts an absurdity problem in his works.

It is necessary to point to that fact that Shestov initially occupied the foreground of the French philosophical environment. It happened so generally thanks to the fact that his works were published in three most important French magazines "La Nouvelle Revue Française," "Le Mercure de

³ Cf. А.В. Ахутин, *Одинокий мыслитель*, in Л. Шестов, *Сочинения в 2-х томах*, Москва 1993, p. 13.

⁴ Cf. А. Камю, *Миф о Сизифе*, transl. by Попурри, in idem, *Бунтующий человек*, Москва 1990, pp. 36-37.

⁵ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 42.

⁶ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 43.

France” and “La Revue Philosophique.” Besides, Shestov had a deep and close friendship with Lévy-Bruhl, who supported and published Shestov’s articles up to the Russian thinker’s death.

In the West Shestov’s activity as an emigrant comprises three concurrent directions:

- He suggests that foreigners become acquainted with the oeuvre of Russian writers and thinkers more closely;
- Goes in for criticism of philosophical systems of the past and the present;
- Thanks to this, Shestov offers philosophical community his own views which are very spiritually modern.⁷

Many French thinkers of the first half of the 20th century refer to Shestov’s creative heritage. Each of them finds something personal in Shestov’s works. Rakhil Bepalova was a friend of the Shestovs family for a long time and often called herself his apprentice; she analyses Shestov’s views in the essay *Chemins et Carrefours* (*Ways and intersections*). She notes only one train of philosophising in Shestov, the one which occupies most of the philosopher’s never-ending fight against the so-called scientific philosophy based on *a priori* concepts. In general, imposing on Shestov, Bepalova comes to the conclusion that he, as a type of a philosopher, gradually gravitates to transformation into the executioner of cognition.⁸ In her essay Bepalova compares Shestov with Nietzsche, considering that this comparison should be agreeable for the Russian philosopher. But after detailed acquaintance with the manuscript, Shestov remained dissatisfied with the work.

Shestov strongly influences Yves Bonnefoy’s oeuvre (1923); he as though joins the essence of the range of problems affected by Shestov. He continues Shestov in his own way, when he says that the real tragedy of the person is that he doesn’t believe that faith can move mountains and therefore the person has to lean on the ghosts of the mind all the time.⁹

Shestov was considered to be the teacher and the instructor also for the known playwright **Eugène Ionesco** (1909–1994), the representative of the

⁷ Cf. Ж.-К. Маркадэ, *Проникновение русской мысли во французскую среду*. Н.А. Бердяев и Л.И. Шестов, in Н.П. Полторацкий (ed), *Русская религиозно-философская мысль XX века*, Питтсбург 1975, p. 157.

⁸ Cf. R. Bepaloff, *Chemins et Carrefours*, Paris 1938, p. 191.

⁹ Cf. Ж.-К. Маркадэ, *Проникновение русской мысли во французскую среду*, p. 152.

French "Theatre of the Absurd." Ionesco as well as Camus finds echoes of the subject of absurdity in Shestov. He considers that Shestov is the very person who can help society to find the lost centre again, can help to face tragic revelations, the problem of our final and unsolved purposes as well as the problem of our metaphysical position.¹⁰

It is impossible to ignore the subject which is actively investigated nowadays in France, concerning the influence of Shestov's ideas on the formation of the French philosopher **Georges Bataille** (1897–1962). From 1923 till 1925 Shestov served as a kind of instructor for the young, budding writer G. Bataille, and helped him to master philosophical literature, thereby influencing his formation as an uncommon thinker. The results of this communication can be traced in Bataille, and after they parted their ways, following the Frenchman's excessive enthusiasm for the Marxism theory.

Bataille is the successor to Shestov's line of reasoning to a certain extent, though Bataille did not completely realize the influence of Shestov's ideas on him. So, for example, Bataille did not mention Shestov's surname either in the list of references to his *Theory of Religion*, or in the list of the authors who affected the author's position formation. Still, we can identify some general aspects. It concerns the development of the morality and mind concept which is opposed to the divine and belongs to the profane order in Bataille as well as Shestov. Though sacred for Bataille, God for Shestov is beyond reason and ethics. And Shestov points to the mercilessness of God due to his jealousy and capriciousness.

The motif of "double sight" was common for both thinkers; Shestov connected it with the appearance of a certain literary gift which is notable for clear consciousness of life associativity with constant feeling of death. This motif unites two writers both on psychological and thematic levels. There is no doubt that Bataille was familiar with Shestov's work *Revelations of Death*, where the parable about the death angel with his body entirely covered with eyes is stated. It will be absolutely really to suggest that these motifs were a basis of Bataille's *Story of the Eye* published in 1928.¹¹

Coming back to the point of Shestov's life and works in emigration in France, it should be noted that he had no direct followers despite popularity. His influence on the formation philosophical basis of the whole

¹⁰ Cf. E. Ionesco, *Chestov nous ramene à l'essentiel*, "Le Monde," 18.05.1967.

¹¹ Cf. C. Morando, *Chestov et Bataille: l'assentiment à la philosophie de la tragedie*, in R. Fotiade (ed), *The Tragic Discourse L'Expérience du tragique Shestov and Fondane's Existential Thought*, Bern 2006.

generation of French intellectuals of the mid-20th century is indisputable, but this influence nevertheless was diffused.¹²

However, it is impossible to limit the authority of Shestov's thought to the French intellectual environment exclusively. And in the context of the designated subject it is necessary to pay more attention to some important points. First of all, it is important to define possible receptive factors in the German philosophical environment of the mid-20th century as well.

Firstly, it seems to concern the views of the German thinker **Martin Heidegger** (1889–1976). They became acquainted at Edmund Husserl's home in 1928. Though they regarded many subjects differently, it isn't surprising. They developed the same of Kierkegaard's ideas in different ways. Shestov agreed with the Danish thinker that the reason for "God abandonment" of the person was the fear of Nothing; however, he considered that the person was capable of overcoming such fear, having been released from Nothing, of becoming free through unification with God. Heidegger paid much attention to the feeling of despair in Kierkegaard. And when he found out that horror was the ground of despair, he believed that Nothing was capable to be revealed in it while the fear was "superficial" and integrally regarded the matter alone. Shestov and Heidegger's conversations always proceeded in the debatable course. Later on, Shestov spoke about one of such meetings to G. Lovtskiy: "(...) it would be good to read to you, as he (M. Heidegger –author's comment) declares, as if carrying out what I predicted to him at our meeting, that 'logic is dissolved in the whirlpool of initial inquiring,' and that the power of logic comes to its end in philosophy and the firmness of counteraction exists along with conceiving denial and more profound."¹³ It is also possible to suggest that communication with Shestov pushed the German philosopher to special comprehension of the concept of "nothing" in his work *What is metaphysics?*, a fortiori it was just that period in Heidegger's life when he set free the "nothing" language. And perhaps it was Shestov who cast an image of Ivan Ilyich by Tolstoy, who appears on the pages of *Being and Time*.¹⁴ Anyway, R. Bepalova indirectly points to it in her letter to Shestov: "The more I become concerned with Kierkegaard, the more I ask myself: what would remain in Heidegger if one subtracted everything that he owed to Kierkegaard

¹² Cf. Ж.-К. Маркадэ, *Проникновение русской мысли во французскую среду*, p. 160.

¹³ Н. Баранова-Шестова, *Жизнь Льва Шестова. По переписке и воспоминаниям современников: в 2-х томах*, Париж 1983, vol. 2, pp. 21-22.

¹⁴ Cf. M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen 1963, p. 254.

and Husserl. Its asset is sharply narrowed, there are only subjects of Welt (world) and Welter des Welt (the worlds of the world), and its magnificent technique. I admit you are right here as well.”¹⁵

As we can see nowadays, the twenty-year period of Shestov's life in emigration was quite fruitful. Although initially his works weren't known to the European reader, he didn't become adapted to European philosophical and literary standards of that time. He always tried to be himself.

The publications of the first works in French were accepted rather critically, but brought undoubted recognition of Shestov's talent, and the originality of his philosophical approach. Over time Lev Shestov's works were estimated at their true worth by the European philosophical community. His ideas were involved in the development of philosophical process of the 20th century. And it occurred not only during the thinker's lifetime, but after his death too. Today Shestov's philosophical works are published in many countries of Europe, and continue to influence the development of the Person's inquisitive mind.

He was a philosophizing anti-philosopher, a sincere out-of-faith believer, a constant wanderer and a loner, Russian Jewish inhabitant of Kiev – Lev SHESTOV (Judah Leyb Schwarzmann).

Transl. by Nataliya Demchenko

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¹⁵ Н. Баранова-Шестова, *Жизнь Льва Шестова*, vol. 2, p. 120.

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Dialogue Between Russia and Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries

Olga Popova

Belgorod State University (Belgorod, Russia)

Two parts of the one whole: a problem of interaction between the Russian and German cultures in the first half of the 20th century¹

Russia and Germany... the tragic experience of the 20th century was reflected in their history in its entirety. The generality of the two countries' destinies makes us search again and again for the points of intersection in their cultures. For a long time there was a high degree of confident relations between Russia and Germany. We can cite numerous examples of scientific, art and cultural exchange, beginning with Russian communities in Germany, through German ones in Russia, and ending with the extensive list of cultural and art workers whose lives proceeded in the indivisible space of two countries. So, at the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries Russian artists actively participated in the international exhibitions in Berlin, Dresden, Düsseldorf and Munich. The works of I. Levitan, V. Serov, L. Pasternak, A. Benua, K. Somov and M. Nesterov caused a great interest of the German public at the Secessions in 1896, 1898 and at the International Exhibition in 1897. The success of Russian masters was repeated in 1898 (at the joint exhibition of Russian and Finnish artists in Munich, and then in Berlin, Cologne and Düsseldorf), and in 1903 (at the Secessions). Quite a stir was caused by the exhibition of Russian Art of the 18th – the early 20th centuries, organised by Sergey Diaghilev in Berlin in 1906. As A. Tolstoy remarks, the comfortable feeling of Russian artists in Germany was promoted by the fact that the international art group “Phalanx,” whose leader was Wassily Kandinsky, and then in 1911 the society “The Blue Rider” created with the active participation of Kandinsky himself, Verevkina

¹ This article was written as a part of item 1.5 of the Federal Targeted Program “Scientific and Scientific-Pedagogical Cadre in Innovation-Driven Russia” for 2009–2013, State Contract No. 14.A18.21.0268.

and Jawlensky, at first arose just in Munich. The activity of these associations reverberated throughout Europe, having made Munich the largest art centre of Europe.²

This network of interrelations was carefully developed by a number of generations, but it was destroyed in a short period of time; the Russian revolutions and the First World War were the reasons.

With the beginning of historical shocks, the once uniform cultural space becomes fragmented and fragmentary. Russia begins to be perceived by Germans ambivalently – on the one hand, Russian socialism's construction was perceived as a progressive social project. On the other hand, the events in Russia of these years cause fear in a part of the German society. During the crisis Russia starts to be perceived as significant Another, peering into which German intellectuals not so much try to understand the real state of affairs in Russia, as the problems of Germany. During this period of time Russian literature is particularly valued, mainly Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy's and Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky's oeuvre, which serve as the basic source of information on the life, customs and culture of Russia.

In 1920s Russia involves German intellectuals again – writers, architects, directors, also engineers and even workers. Soviet Russia is perceived as a country of an embodied utopia which is a powerful impulse towards creative search. The hopes and grandiose plans are projected on it. German architects come to be interested in the projects of the socialist city. A romantic spirit, belief in their own social responsibility, comprehension of a social organising role led to the fact that German architects (e.g. "Rot Front" group), fascinated by the idea of the construction of the socialist city, visited construction sites in the USSR. "New, absolutely 'recrystallised' forms of a human society should create the architectural image corresponding to the classless state. This revolution, sweeping away the remnants of the past, has captured the whole city, beginning with a primary element of dwelling and ending with the city as a whole, as an obvious expression of new cultural will...",³ Ernst May wrote.

Cultural influence extends with the inflow of Russian representatives of the creative elite to Berlin and other cities of Germany, compelled to emigrate from the Soviet Union. Almost all the trends in German art in the early 1920s were realised with the participation of masters from Russia. During this period the best art forces of Russia and Germany continued to

² А. Толстой, *Художники русской эмиграции*, Москва 2005, p. 81.

³ Quotation from Е. Коньшева, *Европейские архитекторы на стройках первых пятилеток*, <www.archvuz.ru>.

carry on an active dialogue, forming a uniform field of international avant-garde. Jean Pougny and Sergey Sharshun, who had emigrated from the USSR, worked in Germany; Kandinsky continued to create. The activity of the last one was connected with the Bauhaus in those years; there along with the teaching activity, he returned to his theoretical works. In them he also raised the issues of development of the “new figurativeness,” which are so actual for Bauhaus.

The new art language, new literature, music, theatre – Germany is captivated by the trends going from Russia. But at the same time, despite the general themes and common language, a part of the German society projects onto Russia grandiose pictures of horror during that period of time – the World War experience, when soldiers of the two countries appeared on the opposite sides of the front, and the destruction of the familiar and stable world ensued. Looking back to Russia, Germany simultaneously peered into its own future, which appeared equally tragic for these two countries in the middle of the 20th century.

It is impossible to describe the nature of these interactions in a single article. So we would like to focus on one aspect of this interaction – the reception of the ideas and attitudes of the Russian avant-garde in the 1920s in the works of art by German artists. This topic is very interesting for two reasons: due to the lack of research and because of the fact that the interaction between the Russian and German avant-garde artists is not confined to borrowing or rethinking of some creative methods and techniques, but deals with the transformation of the entire system of art, which took place in the early twentieth century. And above all we are talking about representational practices.

Avant-garde artists change art representation and artistic practice in general. For a long time, works of art were created to be represented in any particular art space (exhibitions, interiors, art shop’s showcases, etc.). Fine art representation formats could be different, but in order for the artwork to emerge as a dialogue between the artist and the viewer, it has to be shown. And it does not matter whether it is a work by the Wanderers, Kazimir Malevich’s “Supremo,” Marcel Duchamp’s ready-mades – all of them are intended for public display. Even such art forms as happenings and installations, while setting new opportunities for the representation mechanism, did not cancel it at all.

It might seem that the resistance of representation is impossible, and in Soviet art some of its types were produced. Thus, as the researcher E. Lazareva showed, the deficiency of representation arose in the late Soviet

period (conceptualism, actionism, non-speculating art, practices associated with the “aesthetics of interaction”), when the work of art wasn’t provided to the viewer as such, one had the opportunity to get to know it only through archival documents (e.g. photographs).⁴ A peculiar type of resistance to representation was developed by the so-called “Left vanguard,” which was closely associated with the ideas of life-building. Life-building (the utopian idea of restructuring reality through art) contained a possibility of overcoming the boundaries between art and life (though in many ways hypothetically), and hence the possibility of lifting representation. The Russian avant-garde creates not just art, but its new type – a combination of utilitarian objects with an artistic idea.

Another feature of the “Left vanguard” is the desire to design the world, which would be far from actually existing in its structure. In fact, each outstanding representative of the Russian avant-garde built his own model of myth-making, understanding the complexity of the problem and the limit of his capabilities. Avant-garde artists created the world that had no direct relation to the real and even more – that ever really existed. Their images were secondary reality or perfect reality. The utopian potential of constructivism, fully realised in the work of V. Tatlin (works such as *Letatlin*, *The Monument to the Third International*, etc.), was first seen in the West in the work of the German Dadaists.

In 1920–1923 the interest in Russian art became actualized in Germany. Political radicalism in circles of the German public resulted in Germans’ special attention in the newest avant-garde currents in Russia. The exhibition “Dadamesse,” which has taken place in Berlin in 1920, raised the topic of Russian art for the first time. It was largely provoked by Konstantin Umansky’s book *New Art in Russia. 1914–1919*. As Tolstoy notes, “thanks to this composition, the most radical Berlin artists, and in particular Dadaists, were particularly fond of Tatlin’s so-called ‘machine art.’ ‘Dadamesse’ used the slogan ‘Art has died. Long live machine art of Tatlin!’” Therefore, the development path for Berlin Dadaists, the most known of whom was George Grosz, had been planned – they traced the searches of Russian constructivists.

We can see the “front desk” of ideas of Russian Constructivism in the works of Berlin Dadaists for several reasons. First, there is the context of the political situation in Germany. In 1918, the country began the removal

⁴ Е. Лазарева, *Авангард vs. Репрезентация*, “Художественный журнал” 73/74 (2009), <xz.gif.ru/numbers/73-74/lazareva/>.

of the Kaiser's regime, experiencing a revolution and a counter-revolution. This triggered, on the one hand, the utopian expectations of radical political change, and on the other, the need to create art for a new society. In general, the hopes of transformation of life were similar in Russia and Germany, with the only difference that the Russian avant-garde artists were able to work with the new government and, as a result, they created an illusion of the feasibility of the dream of a new art for a new society. The experience of the real transfiguration of the Russian avant-garde reality attracted the Berlin Dadaists. In addition, we think that German artists managed to extremely sensitively capture the Russian anti-representative strategy of the "left guard." If the French Dadaists represented their works (a striking example is the artistic practice of Marcel Duchamp), the Berlin Dadaists, declaring their orientation to Tatlin's "machine art," partly avoided such representations. An example is the Model of I. Baader's World Church.

But perhaps the main point of contact between the Russian and German avant-garde was the idea of life-building. The reconstruction of reality through art is a problem which was solved in Russia on the basis of VHUTEMAS and in Germany at the Bauhaus. In fact, the activities of these two unique schools led to the formation of a new synthetic form of art – design. There are many publications which compare the works of VHUTEMAS and Bauhaus. A settlement of this question is not possible in a single article; however, we note that in our opinion the concept of the two schools implied that the product turned rather into a socially useful product created through art and on its territory.

Oeuvre was seen as a useful and functional part of the social structure, and the artist was seen as a creative subject, integrated into production and social process on a par with the scientist, engineer, or a documentalist. The desire to transform the world, while remaining an artist is peculiar to both Russian and German avant-garde representatives.

The interest in Russian, the so-called "Tatlin's" Constructivism of the Berlin Dadaists is remarkable in the fact that they were much less interested in the activities of the German Bauhaus, within whose walls similar problems of forming the subject-space environment were solved. Perhaps the reason is that German artists understood the whole art of Constructivism rather superficially, mixing it with Cubo and Futurism, and so it is associated more with the Russian avant-garde.

The impact of the Russian Constructivists' artworks, especially the Tatlin's ones, on the Berlin Dadaists can be viewed through the prism of reception of individual author myth. In some sense, all the major avant-garde

artists are the creators of copyright myth systems, each of which reproduces the image of his own universe. Not aiming at a detailed reconstruction of Tatlin's individual creative myth, we note that the essence of his world was a game – an expression of utility and pragmatism, as the active participation in a practical construction of a new life had a game character. After all, it was from the beginning obvious that his “tower” could not be built, and “Letatlin,” designed by him, could not fly. His designs are a quest for new morphogenesis, supporting a new symbolic value and exempting from the restrictions of traditional language forms. Dadaists took up the impulse of Tatlin's game creation; the very figure of the artist became their object of myth-making. In the circle of the Berlin Artists a myth of Tatlin was created, represented in Hausmann's work *Tatlin at home*. In this collage Tatlin is depicted as an artist in whose head a complex machine, allowing him to create new artistic images, operates. A machine genius, the artist of the new generation – that was the way the German Dadaists interpreted the image of Tatlin...

But at the same time the Berlin Dada contained, paradoxically as it seems, the opposite setting. On the one hand, German artists imaginatively recreated the myth of the special status and significance of the avant-garde artist; on the other hand, they neutralised to some extent the same image of the artist. In our opinion, this is due to the aesthetics of European Dada. Being one of the recent trends of the “classic” European avant-garde, Dada decided not only and not so much about the problem of understanding the tragic kinks of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, as it sought to understand the new situation of the industrial formation of civilisation, with an abundance of industrial facilities which replaced the “manual” artwork. Therefore, the Dada artists developed principles that were different from the principles of classical aesthetics.

Dadaism aimed to isolate the space between the artwork and industrial sites in an effort to make futility gain some function. As a result, the role of the artist is partly “desacralised;” the professionalism of his activity is questioned, and as a result, his prestige in the society reduced. The logical development of this facility eventually leads to Marcel Duchamp's readymades: anyone can become an artist; anything can become a work of art, for which they just need to find its audience.⁵

Berlin Dada, on the one hand, actively develops the principles of a new aesthetic, declaring that sometimes the lack of virtuosity, and defective

⁵ See M. Lazzarato, *Art, work and politics in disciplinary societies and societies of security*, “Radical Philosophy” 149 (2008), pp. 26-32.

materials is a “democratic” technique to neutralise the authority of tradition, author and oeuvre gravitating over the audience. On the other hand, they perceived the Russian Constructivism as the cult of the artist-genius, and a creator of a new world. Realising that “art in the aesthetic mode” may end, the art as a specific activity, which breaks familiar communication and the space-time coordinates of the sensory experience, the Berlin Dadaists sought to find new art in an attempt at utopian life-building. This impulse, coming from Russia, was close to them because of the similar historical and cultural situations, due to the fact that Russia and Germany had really been in the common cultural continuum.

On the other hand, the European Dada was at the same attempting to “erase” the boundaries between art and life on completely different – more pragmatic – grounds. We are not talking here about a complex dialectical transition from the prosaic world to the world of art; nor are we talking about finding and overcoming the boundaries between art and non-art. This boundary is levelled, when an industrial object of the manufactory or factory production moved simply into the area of aesthetic (the classic example is *Fountain* by Marcel Duchamp). A completely empty area of simulacra arises. In the “creative act” the artist begins to be interested not in the very artwork, but in the subjective mechanism, creating a work of art. The artist begins to explore how art is formed in the process of social production. Emptiness, freedom, amnesia begin to be perceived as a way of cleansing the stereotypical perception of the principles, habits and prejudices that are rooted in the tastes and words. Ultimate examples of such oeuvre are the works of Marcel Duchamp, perhaps the most typical representative of the European Dadaism. The gap between discourse and communication, as well as the neutralisation of language practices serve the artist as a way to a new manner of understanding life. He tries to transform life into art. As for Berlin Dadaists, they sought to turn art into life.

Berlin Dadaism did not overstep the simulation edge, remaining sincere in their efforts to transform art. In this respect, it is closer to the Russian avant-garde with its utopia than to the French Dadaism.

The link between Russian Constructivism and Berlin Dada is more multi-faceted of course than it has been shown in our article. We have not touched on the question of direct or indirect borrowing of artistic ideas and techniques of Russian avant-gardists by their German colleagues. However, we wanted to show that the transformation of ideas about the representation strategies of artworks, designated for the first time in Russian Constructivism was developed in the works of German Dadaists and in

the practice of the Bauhaus. And this is surely only one aspect of the interaction between the Russian and German artistic worlds of the first three decades of the 20th century.

Constructivism and Dadaism, VHUTEMAS and Bauhaus, Kandinsky... The first three decades of the 20th century art in Germany was marked by the Russian avant-garde. But the relations between the Russian and German art of this period were much deeper. It was exactly at that time that into existence came such a phenomenon as the “Russian Berlin” – a common cultural space of Russia and Germany, in which a significant role, on the one hand, was played by the works of Russian immigrant artists, and on the other, by those artistic processes and developments that were taking place in Soviet Russia.

As of the second half of the 1930s this cultural space was again violently destroyed by the establishment of the totalitarian regimes both in Germany and the USSR.

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Tatyana Suchodub

Centre of Humanities, National Academy of Science in Ukraine (Kiev, Ukraine)

“Logos” as a European Project of Development of Philosophy of Culture

The history of the 20th century demonstrated a surprising “fragility” of the culture, its inability to keep a human in the humanity regime – the main value measurement of being: “That this could happen in the midst of the traditions of philosophy, of art, and of the enlightening sciences says more than that these traditions and their spirit lacked the power to take hold of men and work a change in them. (...) All post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage. In restoring itself after the things that happened without resistance in its own countryside, culture has turned entirely into the ideology (...)”¹ A historical advance of the latter existing only by means of duress to follow the alleged universal “truth” was noticed even then by Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky, fighting with all his oeuvre for inadmissibility of replacement of humans by ideas. He understood that domination of abstractions over the multicolouredness of the human existence can provoke only violence, he knew that the social history needed the dialogue bearing the right of humans to self and coexistence with Others, creation of various things that are prior to them individually, rather than the “monologue” of ideas establishing “new” rules of life. The difference is fundamental: the monologue culture is contentious, oriented towards potential violence, while the dialogue culture is characterised by solidarity.

However, the social being ideologising tendency becomes only stronger changing its forms and means of influence. The reason for it is simple: we live in the age of technology, and the “technologically” developing societies extend their capabilities of working with the human consciousness: cars enslave the human ability to resist and cultivate a proper uniqueness

¹ Th.W. Adorno, *Negative dialectics*, transl. by E.B. Ashton, New York – London 1973, pp. 366-367.

as a cultural value. The overall “capitalisation” of the world with its market relations, total alienation, domination of the “atomic” forms of being and standardisation of needs becomes ubiquitous. The political sphere, dominant in the social being, is all the time moving away from culture and it does not take the latter for its measure, the criterion determining the political activity standards. Culture requires more political focus on the human as a separate “unit” of being, and it is traditionally “hard” in politics to work with an individual. It is more common to focus on the community, the way of controlling of which was elaborated in the history of the 20th century – advancement of an idea made interesting for the collective consciousness and its implantation in the human consciousness.

In other words, the traditional “concern” of “man’s highest goods”² is lost for culture. In the “new” world, the human is an object of manipulation, a “toy” programmed by political myths, rather than a purpose of social institutions’ activity focused on the human’s cultural needs. So culture acquires the “changed” form, with its destructive influence, leaving almost no place for the human to hide. And the problem is not that “consciousness is actually shaped,” but that such shaping is performed “(...) not by means of truths, including universal ones, but with the help of images, symbols, ideas, which, in fact, pretend to be universal, i.e. to be true, but they are actually ideological notions in the strict sense.”³ Accordingly, culture as the service, selfless devotion, creativity, as the being of humanism, culture as the value personality self-determination, as a rational activity regarding development of the world not alien to the human; culture verified by conscience seems to be dissolving. It is replaced by the culture needed only for its one quality – “service” (primarily, to political interests), needed as the entertainment sphere for the masses that are quite “broad” in terms of their domination in the social being.

It is not that in the 21st century the “mass human” as a dominating human type of the previous century is gone. We hold the view that another mass human kind takes roots in all social being spheres – the “obedient human” with the “mimic mind,” and uncritical, even half-frightened mentality, with average interests and standard needs, with an “I-don’t-care” attitude as a life principle, feeling no responsibility for any actions, easily adapted to any opinion prevailing at the moment. This human type can be

² M. Heidegger, *The Age of the World Picture*, in idem, *Off the Beaten Track*, transl. by J. Young and K. Haynes, Cambridge 2002, p. 57.

³ М.К. Мамардашвили, *Очерк современной европейской философии*, Москва 2010, p. 58.

easily recognised in the description of a modern man by Jacques Sémelin: “Considering himself to be independent, a man actually gets into a trap: he turns out to be in the absolute subjection to the state that ‘holds’ the individual by blackmailing him with his social status, work place, home, family.”⁴

On the other hand, the cultural crisis is revealed by the human spirit disorderliness. Culture ceased to be the way of an individual search of the meaning related to awareness of the importance of a personality’s self-realization, of one’s mission, vocation and obligation. The meaning remaining a gnoseological problem ceased to be perceived by a human as a life task, the most important means of putting knowledge into practice. A human carrying out some activity prefers to work with meanings bearing solely the information about the human interest objects and not pretending to be found within one’s lifespan and to be socially confirmed. In other words, a human ceased to be in the culture seen as a search of meanings. It became unimportant for a human to bother with the problem of the conscious, *meaningful* being in the culture. Hence, culture itself lost its status of the necessary condition of the human spiritual growth, intellectual perfection and moral elevation over oneself. Such an “independent” existence of a human and culture affected both the human and culture conditions: “A modern man (...) is weak, confused, as if pressed by life complexity of our era, as a matter of fact, a human being is beneath the modern culture.”⁵

No doubt such a cultural “self-determination” shall be treated as “obedience” becoming a lifestyle of the modern human being on the one hand, and as a spiritual unsettled state, a personal crisis, an identity tension on the other hand. Such a self-determination does not contribute to a person’s ability to comply with “time challenges,” but allows to fasten the “administrative barbarism of the apparatchiks,” as Theodor W. Adorno conveniently characterises them. The thing is not only that aiming to determine the essence of human existence, culture did not manage to address this issue by means of either predominating the history’s utopian ideas or raising individual consciousness on the basis of the ideological “universal.” The main problem, mirroring the state of culture in the contemporary society most likely lies in the above-mentioned supremacy of the functionaries. Their activity is primarily “beyond” culture, because it positions itself as

⁴ Ж. Семлен, *Выход из насилия*, transl. by В.Л. Кальков, in Л.И. Василенко, В.Е. Ермолаева (eds), *Глобальные проблемы и общечеловеческие ценности*, Москва 1990, p. 76.

⁵ В.В. Зеньковский, *Наша эпоха*, Париж 1952, p. 7.

a culture and its un-essence as precious cultural heritage.⁶ Namely, culture (philosophy, science, literature, fine arts, education, language and so on) appears to be a burdensome “supplement” to politics. Not being at a premium either in social or existential senses, culture loses itself in the political reality.

Within this aspect we may also consider the “postmodern” culture with its strategy of refusal of the axiological hierarchy and the constituent orientation of “universal” reason, its indifference to criticism and demands of the decentralized and pluralistic world, orientation at manifoldness of the life senses, etc, as a philosophy of antagonism, rather than “new culture.” Marginal self-dependence of the individual reasoning, vividly expressed in postmodern world outlook, is viewed as supposition for creation of new cultural forms, claim for the right of the culture to occupy a principally new place in *socium*, first of all cancelling the dominant position of the political sphere.

The specified tendencies of the modern sociological and cultural development are witnessing the next “breaking point” in the culture’s development, which, from our point of view, constitutes a “repeating” of problematic situations, already existing within the boundary of 19th–20th centuries, allowing to some extent witnessing the tendency of social and cultural development in the 20th century. It may render only one meaning – the current state of culture needs a critical look from the past. The statement may seem strange, but contemporaneity is the subject matter of a bygone philosophy, which managed to foretell the following problems of human cultural development.

We are referring, to use modern semantics, to the “project,” a European project initiated at the beginning of the 20th century by Russian philosophers. The international journal “Logos” (1910–1913 – Moscow, 1914 – St Petersburg) was published due to efforts of N. Bubnov, S. Hessen, E. Methner, F. Stepun, V. Vernadsky, I. Greus, F. Zelinsky, B. Kistyakovsky, A. Lappo-Danilyevsky, N. Lossky, E. Radlov, P. Struve, S. Frank, B. Yakovenko. The publishing idea was in fact initiated by the “Russian Kantians,” that is why the project as a whole is viewed within the context of Russian Kantians’ and neo-Kantians’ movement. And it is correct. However, the idea and implementation of the annals “Logos” also reflect the opposite direction – from Russia to Europe – that is frequently overlooked by researchers. The journal was put into life as an international project

⁶ Cf. Th.W. Adorno, *Negative dialectics*, p. 367.

pursuing to overcome the crisis of culture, to search new principles and forms of philosophy and culture development – through involving a vast European background of humanities. Not coincidentally, the idea of German “Logos” was supported by M. Weber, W. Windelband, E. Husserl, G. Simmel, H. Rickert, E. Troeltsch.

The culture crisis was mentioned by both West European and Russian thinkers, defining culture and interpreting its place in society as a problem. The overall pessimism created a clearly realised need to critically analyse all the settled philosophical and cultural traditions and to “resettle” them. Thus, Heinrich Rickert in his thoughts on life and culture relationships emphasised the insufficiency of philosophy of “life only.” Life appears to be defective beyond penetration of and existence of culture in it. Hence, as the philosopher considers, “only those able to suppress life movements in themselves can be called cultured humans, and the objective cultural goods are only there where they are, in a sense, the opposite of life truthfulness.”⁷ Stefan Zieliński, analysing the culture succession issues, showed not only the basis for transition of a tradition to another tradition, of an era to another era, stating, in particular, that “things outlined by Sophocles were finished many centuries later by Christianity,”⁸ but he also considered the question of memory as an invariable condition for the existence of culture. Memory in this aspect is the most powerful spiritual force acting in history – memory creates the modern world as the world that exists through time, i.e. the meanings formulated by the previous culture extend the life experience of the forthcoming generations as well, constituting a basis for their spiritual growth, creation in a human of that aesthetic, i.e. sensually not indifferent, basis, without which there is no personality. Georg Simmel understands the “idea of culture” in this context as well. He thinks that “all individual expressions should appear only as a multitude of ways by which spiritual life comes to itself.”⁹ This way is possible only in the case of contact of two elements: the “subjective soul” and “objective spiritual product,” with none of them containing culture coming into existence when “the spirit creates an independent objectivity by which the development of the intended.”¹⁰

⁷ Г. Риккерт, *Философия жизни*, transl. by А. Юдин, Минск – Москва 2000, p. 194.

⁸ Ф.Ф. Зелинский, *Харита. Идея Благодати в античной религии*, in С.Я. Левит (ed), *Лики культуры: Альманах*, vol. 1, Москва 1995, p. 407.

⁹ G. Simmel, *The Concept and Tragedy of Culture*, in idem, *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Others Essays*, transl. by K.P. Etzkorn, New York 1968, p. 28.

¹⁰ Ibidem, pp. 43-44.

As we can see, Stefan Zieliński and Georg Simmel both see culture through the prism of such its elements as memory and personality. Emphasising the individuality of culture and its social basis at the same time, Georg Simmel states: “I understand the culture as the perfection of a soul that it reaches (...) through foundations of the spiritual-historical activity of the kind: the way of the subjective spirit to culture leads through science and life forms, through art and state, profession and knowledge of the world.”¹¹ In Stefan Zieliński’s interpretation, it is culture as memory, i.e. means of spiritual resistance to oblivion, that brings morality into human relationships: “The value of a human, according to human assessment, is determined by the totality of the physical or spiritual strength making a man useful for the surrounding people. This purely biological definition is significantly corrected by the moral culture of those surrounding a human (...) let it be that a human does not possess such strength anymore – but if there was such strength, people who benefitted from it would remember its value forever...”¹² But there are some nuances as well. The social reality is always the result of rather complex relations between many elements, beyond which life of both a human and the society seems problematic. Thus, ignoring “equivalence” of the individual and social fundamentals provokes social destruction, despotic forms of rule, totalitarian political regimes, “bloom” of the archaic (mythologised) type of world outlook.

Hence, “the societary life as such is posited upon the presupposition of a fundamental harmony between the individual and the social whole, little as this hinders the crass dissonances of the ethical and eudemonistic life.”¹³ If a man wants to preserve himself, overcome the external uncomfortableness of the social ambience, it is necessary for him to target the inner sociality related to the spiritual culture. And a human, as history demonstrates, builds on the external – institutional – sociality. Harmonisation of the socio-cultural and proper social basis is possible only by way of the connection of life and culture. That is why “every society has moral tasks of making its members clearly aware of its spiritual content and organising, according to this content, the whole order of its external life”¹⁴ – B. V. Yakovenko wrote as far back as in 1916.

¹¹ Г. Зиммель, *Кризис культуры*, transl. by М.И. Левина, in idem, *Избранное*, vol. 1: *Философия культуры*, Москва 1996, p. 489.

¹² Ф.Ф. Зелинский, *Харита. Идея Благодати в античной религии*, p. 366.

¹³ G. Simmel, *How is Society possible?*, transl. by К.Н. Wolff, “American Journal of Sociology” 16 (1910–1911), p. 390.

¹⁴ Б. Яковенко, *Мощь философии*, Санкт-Петербург 2000, pp. 663–664.

As we can see, the circle of philosophers united to some extent by the idea of the culture philosophy development, reflection of the intellectual search in this direction, primarily in the “international yearbook,” in their conceptual approaches to the culture proceeded from the problems of the spiritual and socio-cultural being of humans. Have these problems gone? Their transformation in the new social and historical conditions is more easily observed. It is easy to make sure that they are persistent; all you need to do is to refer to the program editorial article “Logos” written by F. A. Stepun, or to the views of separate philosophers united only by the understanding that the “new” route of culture is impossible without creating a “new” culture philosophy, and the search and philosophical rationality of the essentially different type.

It is worth mentioning that not only is it impossible to imagine the philosophical rationality history beyond the historical change of the culture fundamentals, but it is also impossible to understand the culture beyond the type of rationality prevailing in a certain historical period. In this aspect, fundamental changes are seen in a proper cultural sphere: alternation of the ethical and legal norms, mental characteristics, ways of personal self-expression, change of values and social ideals – the way the sense interpretation of the term *ratio* changes from “measure,” “measurability,” “commensurability,” “reason,” “reasonableness” to the interpretation of rationality through the prism of notions such as “communicativeness,” “intersubjectivity,” “human-sizedness.” On the other hand, the culture resting on scientific, artistic, practical types of rationality demonstrates susceptibility to the historically changing types of the philological rationality: classical – modern, monological – dialogical (communicative), which is revealed in the change of principles of the morality and law, art and religion, politics and science. In this relation we can assume that the change of the rational component of culture is certainly determined by many factors: transformation of the varied human experience, alternation of the socio-cultural contexts of human existence, change of the way of life and value priorities of a generation – nevertheless, the resultant of all these reasons is a condition of culture, primarily, a condition of the thinking culture.

It has been clearly understood by the philosophers of the intellectual circle “Logos,” linking the issues of culture, philosophy, culture of philosophical thinking into one link. In Ernst Troeltsch’s interpretation, whose cited article was for the first time published in the second edition of “Logos,” this issue is perceived in the following manner: “Any philosophy puts forward two main tasks: first of all, (...) perception by the conscience and

reasoning of oneself (...); second of all – generalisation of all the vital content of the present epoch, as well as development of world view, i.e. metaphysics and philosophy of culture.”¹⁵ It is no coincidence that the article published in the first issue of “Logos,” the reason for search is specified as search for a new variant of philosophical universalism, joining ideas of synthesis and systems of “modern cultural disintegration,” lack of prospective direction of the search, ability to find existence of any possibilities of philosophical knowledge development. But this problematic situation, maximally permissible from the viewpoint of critical assessments and internal sensation of the epoch by persons of keen intellect (as it was stated, we witness not only common cultural, but also a philosophical disintegration, in the West as well as in Russia), which allows hoping for better result. On the one hand, the analysis of the state of philosophy allows making a conclusion that “Complaining of epigonous nature of modern philosophy, Alexandrian mood of desperation and longing for the new, strong, yearning for an outburst are changed by skepticism, disappointment in philosophy as in absolute, rational knowledge, doubt in possibility of synthesis and the system. To an ever increasing degree, spreading utilitarianism becomes the philosophical expression of this mood of disappointment and doubt in the power of rational thinking.”¹⁶ But on the other hand, it shall be emphasised, that in this situation of spiritual chaos, cultivation of psychological experience, and relativisation of values, there is a real fight for philosophy, aimed at synthesis, systemic knowledge and universal approach. There is a distinct aim to direct philosophy on new social and historical conditions “along the powerful and broad outlet of world culture. Philosophy, as rational knowledge, leading to scientifically available unity, may and shall play an important role in this respect.”¹⁷

It is also important to note that understanding the “cultural” and “releasing” meaning of philosophy in the cultural history of mankind, in the new epoch is equally important as pre-perception of the danger included, using modern terminology, in “the culture of modern” philosophy of universalism. In such a way the article published in “Logos” says: “Our time is repeatedly concerned with longing for synthesis. It is our great hope,

¹⁵ Э. Трельн, *О возможностях христианства в будущем*, in С.Я. Левит (ed), *Лики культуры: Альманах*, vol. 1, p. 408.

¹⁶ *От редакции*, “Логос. Международный ежегодник по философии культуры,” vol. 1 (1910), p. 7.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

but this is also our hazard.”¹⁸ It is important to note a principal difference in comprehension of this hazard in the philosophy of the beginning and end of the 20th century. In such a way, the modern “post-modernistic” philosophy, emphasising the possibility of enslavement of life and culture in general, followed the path of existentialisation of the truth, abandoning any universalism, comprehending the world solely through the prism of human presence, thus transforming Kantian issues into questions of the “how?” nature (how does man comprehend, how does he act, how does he hope, how does he believe, experience, etc.). The philosophers of “Logos,” honouring Kant and actualising texts of Neo-Kantian traditions, paid attention to something else, namely the impossibility of rejecting the category of the unanimous, universal, permanently emphasising that for philosophy it is usual to experience “longing for full synthesis.” “Philosophy is universal in its historical existence – says B. V. Yakovenko – as it is universal in the systematic outline of its essence. Furthermore! That is the reason philosophy tolerates a systematically unique mission, having a universal historical incarnation from century to century.”¹⁹ That is why it is not acceptable in the historical being of the philosophy; “change of leading directions [which] could always mean only constant slavery provided permanent change of slaves and masters...”²⁰

Philosophy was set another task – a synthetic generalisation of the historical experience of philosophism on the basis of a critical analysis of “ambiguous, multiform philosophical thought,” according to Yakovenko. S. I. Hessen supports the view that this task can be performed through successive means of the philosophical development oriented towards the absolute values (those of objective and universal character) of historically reachable, relative things. The philosopher stated that tendency of metaphysical development is seen as something opposite: “(...) overall absolute exclusion of all subjective elements (rationalism as it is), or absolute rejection of any form of objectiveness (successive or skeptic empiricism).”²¹ Neither of them is acceptable. Neither culture nor philosophy is divided into parts which during some definite historical moments become unique, acquiring top-priority status. The “Logos” group sophists had another point of view, and perception of the essence of individual being and philosophically-cultural development: “(...) the constant tide and fall of the hostile

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ Б. Яковенко, *Мощь философии*, р. 91.

²⁰ *От редакции*, р. 5.

²¹ С.И. Гессен, *Избранные сочинения*, Москва 1998, р. 33.

and fighting forces are to be opposed by the ideal based upon the bilateral recognition of culture's completeness. It is to be understood that a culturally-biased state cannot exist apart from the internal freedom of its citizens, as well as a true philosophical synthesis should evoke all separate motives' development building all together a face of a noon-fake culture."²²

So, "Logos" made philosophy choose a cultural synthesis way, but from the point of view of Kant's philosophy every value-targeted orientation is seen as imperative, always disposing a "gap" between reality and ideas. Such a position excluded obsessive worldview utopianism demonstrating its ideas' separation from the life world giving them a wide berth. Explaining the nature of such an ideological phenomenon as utopianism, S. I. Hessen emphasised that it took its roots not from the ideas but from the attitude to them, originating from a weak intellectual culture development equalling an individual world-outlook of a person and reality, life and idea. Logic of this "equalling" is simple: "Comprehending everything absolute within the same existence dimension as everything relative, every kind of utopianism means the end of everything absolute, acquiring occasional features from the sphere of temporal existence."²³ According to Hessen such an explanation of the absolute results in the rejection of individual people's freedom as well as the autonomy of some culture spheres. Nevertheless, regardless of such a mistakable explanation of the absolute, the tradition does not reject it, orienting towards the absolute as a value measurement of our existence. In this context Yakovenko says: "The sum of the absolute evaluations and norms builds a normal or overall consciousness, being a very ideal border targeted by every empiristic-individual consciousness."²⁴

So, the tradition philosophers are united by the position that philosophy is to reach and face new rationalism, non-unified and non-repressive universality according to which the statements of all range can function not as obligatory rules (being the fundament of utopianism), but also as norms under an autonomous individual regulation. The main principle of Kant's philosophy was also considered – a right of a person for autonomy and consciousness freedom, giving a basis for personal responsibility growth for the actions taken. But Kant's famous advice on "brevity of personal mind use" during the definite historical period turned to be a tragedy – mankind was brave enough to stick to some definite ideas, but lacked

²² *От редакции*, p. 6.

²³ С.И. Гессен, *Избранные сочинения*, p. 621.

²⁴ Б. Яковенко, *Вильгельм Виндельбанд*, in В. Виндельбанд, *Избранное: Дух и история*, Москва 1995, p. 663.

multilateral, mature “mind,” which appeared in Kant’s theory and being a hope for the human intellect. Therefore, the major problem of philosophy becomes the formation of definite tasks targeted at philosophical culture, which developed in Russia on the basis of Kant’s ideas together with the philosophical studies of H. Cohen, H. Rickert – the representatives of the neo-Kantian Baden and Marburg Schools. A. Belyi, A. Vvedenski, P. Linitski, P. Novgorodtsev, G. Chelpanov also took an interest in tradition.

It is clear that ways of forming philosophical culture differed a lot. In such a manner Semyon Lyudvigovich Frank emphasises the conceptualisation of the dialogue as a value of human’s life, on the basis of such categories as “I,” “thou,” “he.” As non-self, “thou” may not be correlated to “he,” present in relations with me in the quality of possible rival or enemy, exist as “my prey,” “my slave,” “instrument” or in the quality of something subject to destruction, but even in this case of close-mindedness to another, within the living environment of a human being, where the correlation of “I – thou” remains. Another form of relation “I – thou” reveals the variant of “I” and “thou” existing as something “similar,” “analogous,” “close.” Here, in “thou” the personality finds “its own native place, i.e. reality beyond oneself, internally analogous to it. “Encountering this type “thou” – writes Frank – I find myself not alone, not lonely...”²⁵ The philosopher views the correlation of “I – thou” antagonistically, i.e. as a special, primary form of existence, emphasising that in the contemporary philosophical discourse this subject matter is in fact left non-actualised. The exceptions in the persons of Max Scheler, Martin Buber, Georg Simmel only sharpens the notion of its significance.

The context of the epoch contemporary to a range of philosophers interesting for us, was clearly caught by Fyodor Stepun, who wrote of the anxieties and tragic sense of life of A. Bely: “Catastrophe of the industrial culture, death of humanistic personality, death of ‘selfness’ and birth of new collective body – it is all gone now, theoretically understood and artistically recreated by Bely with the only depth and power.”²⁶ But against this historical background of social catastrophes, the Russian thought tries to solve the problem of dialectics related to the individual and the universal, combine the partial and the whole, solitary and multiple. In this relation it is first of all worth mentioning the concept of “transcendental pluralism” or “transcendental and ontologicistic criticism” by B. V. Yakovenko. Seeing the

²⁵ С.Л. Франк, *Непостижимое*, in idem, *Сочинения*, Москва 1990, p. 366.

²⁶ Ф.А. Степун, *Памяти Андрея Белого*, in idem, *Встречи*, Москва 1998, p. 178.

subject of philosophy in Things existent (in its entirety), represented first of all by life, the primary philosophical category, he believes that pluralism is the primary philosophical principle, as perceiving the Things existent, philosophy deals with plurality, leading to pluralism rather than unitism. In such a way the philosopher writes: “The plurality is unital, as it is ‘it,’ namely plurality is plural; not due to any law or principle or internal substantial force, implied onto it or expressing itself through it, but with its plurality plural...”²⁷

On the whole, it may be stated that the philosophers united by “Logos” are sure that the idea of a special position of philosophy within the system of cultural values, from the cultural point of view shall gain a footing in the post-Kantian period. The main essence of such an idea lies in full freedom of development. Only by following this condition, philosophy can constitute an independent factor of culture. As it was emphasised in the program article, “Philosophy, first of all preaches that synthesis shall be a destination, rather than a starting point of philosophical search. Primary unity of the irrational experience turns it into the idea of an integrated scientific system. It differentiates manifold spheres of culture, puts boundaries to their needs and demands, states its special place...”²⁸

In such a way, best practices of the considered range of speculators from the view point of principled foundations of philosophical knowledge predetermining the modern quest within the sphere of philosophical rationality. For sure, the ideas of universal, transcendent, absolute, plural, dialogue-oriented, axiological, critical character as the basis of philosophical knowledge gain new conceptualisations²⁹, nonetheless retaining the value and theoretical approaches of the philosophers united around “Logos.” As it was primarily stated, “Logos” is “antidogmatic,” but it does not constitute an “adherer to some definite philosophical direction. The consolidating moment of its activity was [*italics* – T. C.] the general mood expressing itself in the understanding of the tasks of modern philosophy and ways leading to their fulfilment.”³⁰

²⁷ Б. Яковенко, *Мощь философии*, p. 240.

²⁸ *От редакции*, pp. 5-6.

²⁹ As an example we may name the development of transcendent methodology of Karl-Otto Apel, viewing the “transcendent (ideal) communication” in the quality of regulatory idea in the Kantian meaning of happiness; “objectiveness of existence shall always be completed with communicative measurement” (К.-О. Апелъ, *Киевские лекции*, transl. by М.Д. Култаева, Киев 2001, p. 17). No doubt such a “dialogic” universal approach preserves the transcendent view on the world as some integrity and a system.

³⁰ *От редакции*, p. 10.

From our point of view, modern culture, inclusive of the philosophical one, needs a realisation of this interrupted “project,” initiated by the Russian followers of German philosophy. The quest for a new type of philosophical rationality retains its topicality, since it is aimed at not only overcoming life chaos, psychologism, irrationalism, “journalism” of philosophy, influence of science, religion, art, government, but also at maintaining the principles of “transcendental objectivity,” the Absolute as “an all-meaning” (F. A. Stegun) criticism, “the highest scientific character” and “the highest spontaneity,” “transcendental pluralism” (B. V. Yakovenko). All these principles create a new ontological system of the Essence, which, according to Russian thinkers, will make it possible to overcome “the cultural decay” of the recent period of history. The latter symptomatically reveals a contemporary lack of perception of the autonomous value of philosophical knowledge.

Transl. by Anastasiia Roschepii

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Vladimir Belov

Saratov State University (Saratov, Russia)

Russian Neo-Kantianism and Europe: apprenticeship or cooperation?¹

One of the reasons for relatively weak attention to Russian Neo-Kantianism on the part of Russian researchers is the stable prejudice linked to dependence and dogmatism of the Russian followers of the German Neo-Kantian schools. It seems that this sort of prejudice is fully justified by a number of facts such as receiving philosophical education at German universities, attending lectures and seminars of the world-renowned German professors (Hermann Cohen, Paul Natorp, Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich Rickert), going through a relatively short period of philosophical development after learning, and, finally, forced immigration and searching for a job in order to make a living. All these life landmarks are typical of biographies of almost all Russian Neo-Kantian philosophers, and they have not been contributing to the ripening of a serious philosophical system and development of a deep and independent philosophical school of thought.

Therefore, when talking about the Russian Neo-Kantianism, we are drawing our attention to the phenomenon of history of the Russian social thought, to the general philosophical background in Russia, which serves as the foundation for Russian religious philosophy.

I would like to challenge such an approach by means of the aspect which is unconventional for Russian Neo-Kantianism researchers, i.e. the influence of the representatives of the Russian Neo-Kantianism on western philosophical and social thought. Thus, we sort of state that if the traces of influence of the Russian Neo-Kantians on western philosophy and culture are obvious, then, in this case, the statements about their philosophical

¹ This article was written as a part of the project item RGNF N 13-03-00042a “Этическое учение И. Канта и его развитие в работах Г. Когена и В. Соловьева: компаративистский анализ.”

fruitlessness and total dependence on their western teachers and colleagues cannot be fair.

Several levels of cooperation between Russian Neo-Kantians and their western partners can be singled out:

(1) Level one, the elementary level. Cooperation with the German teachers was not “a one-way street” case; it was not conducted according to the popular scheme “active teachers – passive students.” One of the direct participants of the legendary meeting at Heinrich Rickert’s (that marked the beginning of concrete steps leading to the publishing of the international journal called “Logos”), who was a close friend of Dmitry Merezhkovsky and Zinaida Gippius, wrote in the year 1909: “(...) as strange as it may seem, Russian students do not only take from their German teachers, they also give them something. It is no coincidence that German professors (e.g. Rickert) have such a good attitude to Russians. The crux of the matter is that Germans tend to turn philosophy into an extremely complicated science, which is totally inaccessible for ordinary people. This science lives in the world of distractions, it does not come into contact with real life... Russians live thinking about the future; they believe that the present can be radically changed. They do not recognize anything as self-important. (...) Russian students do not ask their German professors what to think, they ask them what to do. They do not ask them what reality is, they ask them what the truth is. They do not want to know what is, they want to know what has to be. The most essential question for them is the question of values. It tells on their barbarity, which is quite opposite to the distressed eclectic West. They demonstrate this side of their psyche in the course of communication with their German teachers and bring in the young life’s demands into their dusty classrooms.”²

Even if we take into consideration the author’s voluntary sharpness of opposition between the abstraction of German teachers’ philosophy and the living pragmatics of their Russian students’ questions, one can still be sure that this type of intellectual and psychological exchange took place, it was recorded in the memoirs of several Russian students who attended the courses of philosophy taught by the German Neo-Kantians.

Thus, F. Stepun describes one of the seminars of professor Wilhelm Windelband in his famous memoirs *The past and the unrealized*. He describes an argument between “a typical German professor of his epoch” and

² Д.В. Философов, *О Фрайбурге и журнале “Логос,”* in P. Кронер et al., *О мессии. Эссе по философии культуры*, Санкт-Петербург 2010, pp. 79-80.

his Russian student who came to Europe in order to “solve the mysteries of the world and life.” Explanations of the experienced German philosopher concerning free will in the Neo-Kantian manner of abstract theorization did not satisfy the Russian scientist. With excessive impetuosity (as he writes in his memoirs), which is not acceptable at German universities, he tried to obtain a concrete clear answer about the theoretical, ethical, and religious foundations of free will by means of asking about them radically. Although he did not manage to get any answer, Stepun’s fervour “made Windelband interested and happy.”³

Even though we discover many different portraits of German teachers with various traits of character in the memoirs of the Russian thinker, there is one specific German trait that he singles out. It is deliberateness about everything, closeness of their inner world from the others. It is not typical of Russians, and therefore (as we can continue his train of thought) the interaction between the Germans and the Russians could be mutually interesting.

It is also well known that Hermann Cohen used to treat his Russian students, especially the Jewish ones, with fatherliness. In the book *Laissez-passer* Boris Pasternak remembers his sincere conversation with Hermann Cohen during an unexpected meeting with his mentor and a walk that they took along one of Marburg’s avenues. During this walk the great German philosopher tried to describe the bright prospects of his philosophical career and an opportunity to find a job in the West for his Russian student.⁴ Unfortunately for philosophy and fortunately for poetry, not long before this meeting took place, Pasternak had made a final decision to put an end to his serious philosophical studies. In the opposite case, if the great Russian thinker had followed the advice of the Marburg, there is no doubt, that Cohen would have done everything possible to find a job in the West for Pasternak. He did just that for his Jewish student from Russia, M. I. Kagan. First, he got him out of prison where he had been kept since the time Germany had entered the war, then he offered him a job in Kiel that was connected with studying Russian economics.⁵

All in all, Cohen and Jewry or Judaism is a separate topic, where Cohen and Russian Jews should become one of its major components. It would be

³ See Ф.А. Степун, *Бывшее и несбывшееся*, Санкт-Петербург 1994, pp. 80-81.

⁴ See Б.Л. Пастернак, *Охранная грамота*, in idem, *Охранная грамота. Шопен*, Москва 1989, pp. 45-46.

⁵ М.И. Каган, *Автобиографические заметки*, in idem, *О ходе истории*, Москва 2004, pp. 26-27.

very interesting to carry out a comprehensive analysis and to view the relation between the founder of the Marburg school of Neo-Kantianism and his Jewish students from Russia. Within the framework of the present article it will be appropriate to point out the role of these relations for the decision of the Marburg philosopher Hermann Cohen to visit Russia in April and May 1914 (with a reference to one of the famous researchers of his work – H. Wiedebach). The philosopher was preoccupied with the thought that many of his Russian-Jewish students were quickly moving towards radical nihilism in their spiritual development, and it was happening after they had left their native world of faith and moved to Europe.⁶

Another founder of the Marburg school and one of its main representatives, Paul Natorp carefully followed the success of the Russian students. In particular, he included articles of four of his Russian students in the collection of works dedicated to Hermann Cohen's 70th anniversary. They were O. Buk, D. Gavronsky, B. Vysheslavtsev and V. Sesemann. The fact that the German philosopher was interested not only in philosophical achievements of his Russian students, but also in their non-scientific life is proved by the text of his letter about Dmitry Gavronsky – one of the lesser-known Russian thinkers, who had become a close friend of another Marburg mentor – Ernst Cassirer. The point is that apart from philosophical studies in Marburg, Gavronsky actively participated in the socialist-revolutionary movement in Russia. Natorp described him as a gifted but completely unreliable person in terms of philosophical commitment, but, nevertheless, he had put a great deal of trust in this man.⁷

Paul Natorp was interested in life and progress of the Russian students in Marburg, as well as the Russian culture, which is proved by the fact that he wrote about Dostoyevsky. It is in his great art that the German philosopher discovered certain thoughts that sounded similar to his worries about the future of the western culture. Starting from the first pages of his work about Dostoyevsky, Natorp explains that he does not speak any Russian and is familiar with his works through translations, nevertheless he familiarized himself with quite a number of Dostoyevsky's works and analyzed them thoroughly. The German philosopher emphasises that he is interested in more than just Dostoyevsky the writer, or in Dostoyevsky the writer and the psychologist. Natorp is interested in Dostoyevsky the thinker and

⁶ H. Wiedebach, *Hermann Cohen, gesehen aus zwei verschiedenen Blickwinkeln*, "Bulletin des Leo Baeck Instituts," vol. 84 (1989), p. 23.

⁷ *Natorp an Görland*, in H. Holzhey, *Cohen und Natorp*, vol. 2, Basel – Stuttgart 1986, p. 340.

his ability to express the depth of the idea of the human being, which he managed to do better than anyone else. Dostoyevsky's human being is individual; he/she is alive, but not self-contained. His human being distinctly experiences a system of attitudes to God, to another human being. This system simultaneously contains finitude and infinity, time and eternity, life and death. Dostoyevsky's human being is living through these moments every second of his/her life, as they are interconnected; he/she is willing to bring them into harmony, and through this harmony the true property of the real ordinary life is demonstrated. Another, even more important idea of the great Russian writer's works, which contain the same idea that is reflected with amazing strength and which Natorp sees only in Goethe's late works is the idea of life. This life contains the fullness of every separate moment of everyday life's existence, where there is no "before" and "after," where the fullness of "now" and essential happiness matter. If only people lived through this fullness and depth of every moment, their life would finally open the infinite in the finite and the permanent in the temporary. As Kagan rightly observes, Natorp does not see the crisis of culture in the crisis of the idea connected with finitude: "The modern culture crisis is not the crisis of the finitude idea, the Faustian idea of Spengler. It is a crisis due to the lack of sufficient action and realization of the idea of infinity. The present day crisis is the crisis of finitude, rather than one of infinity."⁸

For our research purposes it is not only the original analysis of Dostoyevsky's works by Natorp that matters, but rather the specific trait of the Russian thinking, Russian soul and Russian character that the German philosopher discovered through them as well as works of other Russian writers (he also mentions Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky), which he could not ignore in his Russian students. By way of a "significant national difference between the Russians and other peoples" Natorp pointed out a differently-directed reasoning logic of a European and a Russian towards the link between the national and generally European. When a European person "suggests that being French, English or German, he simultaneously serves humankind, only a Russian person knows that he would be Russian in the highest degree only when he was European in the highest degree."⁹ This kind of logic, which is paradoxical for a European person, according to Natorp, relies on the Russian belief that Europeans live for themselves, while "only Russia lives for the sake of the idea, it has been living only

⁸ М.И. Каган, *Пауль Наторп и кризис культуры*, in idem, *О ходе истории*, p. 97.

⁹ P. Natorp, *Fjedor Dostojewskis Bedeutung für die gegenwärtige Kulturkrise*, Jena 1923, p. 13.

for its sake for a thousand years.”¹⁰ Following Russian writers, Natorp believes that another important national peculiarity of the Russian soul is its breadth, which means that the Russian person “in his soul has enough room for the lowest and for the highest; in the hot feeling of life it goes up and down between the rough rises and falls, between the downfall of desperation and the convulsion of extreme enthusiasm.”¹¹

(2) I would define the next level of cooperation as the interaction between the Russian Neo-Kantians with the students of their German teachers. The most significant example of fruitfulness of this interaction is, of course, preparation and publishing of the international journal “Logos” by Richard Kroner and George Melies, under the spiritual supervision of Heinrich Rickert. The fact that in 1909 participants of the commonwealth of the Russian and German students published the collection of essays *About Messiah*, which preceded the publishing of “Logos,” is less known. The authors of the essays in this collection were the future editors and active participants in the Russian and German “Logos.” They were N. N. Bubnov, S. I. Hessen, R. Kroner, G. Melies and F. A. Stegun. The title of this collection symbolically expresses the essence of the program of the young Russian and German philosophers, which was aimed at a unification of European philosophical efforts for the cause of overcoming the culture crisis based on the rational and humanitarian issues. “When referring to a mission – as the authors of the collection state – we mean any type of prophetic hope, which expects changes in human matters and circumstances in the spirit of general cultural progress.”¹²

The long-standing friendship of the two natives of Russia, the students of Cohen and Natorp – Nikolai Hartmann and Vasily Sesemann should be mentioned. Nikolai Hartmann relatively early realised the necessity of creating his own philosophical concept, which to a great extent confronts Neo-Kantianism. Vasily Sesemann was true to his Marburg teachers until the end; he developed their teaching and tried to promote the synthesis of Neo-Kantianism and phenomenology. Hartmann’s critique in *Kant-Studien*, which was published in 1933, is quite demonstrative of it. It was dedicated to *The Logic Laws and Being (Die logische Gesetze und das Sein, 1932)*, one of the publications of his friend and colleague. In his critique Hartmann points out that his article is the direct continuation of the two

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 14.

¹¹ Ibidem, pp. 29-30.

¹² Предисловие, in P. Kroner et al., *О Мессии. Эссе по философии культуры*, p. 8.

articles that appeared earlier, namely *About objective and non-objective knowledge* (*Über gegenständliches und ungegenständliches Wissen*, 1927) and *Rational and irrational* (*Rationales und Irrationales*, 1927): “One should terribly regret the fact that these three parts did not come out as one single work.”¹³

Hartmann defines Sesemann’s study as an ontological, rather than a logical one, which basically corresponds with the nature of the “ontological turn” that the western philosophy was going through in the first half of the 20th century. But the author of the critique immediately points out the beneficial difference of the work that he is reviewing, saying that it does not contain any expatiation concerning the prehistory of the issue and does not contain an introduction; the author of the work immediately starts with the essence of the issue he is discussing and speaks about the content of ontological problems. Hartmann supposes that Sesemann’s research is divided into two parts according to the differentiation of the logical structures and the ontological structures on behalf of the subject and on behalf of the object: “In the first part he discusses the relation between the laws of logic and ‘things concerning the subject and the mental existence;’ in the second part he discusses the ontological-autonomous existence.”¹⁴ In both parts, according to the reviewer, we can see the professional analysis of both consecutive stages of suchlike research and the main categories of learning and existence. The author’s merit, according to Hartmann, is the openness of the positioning and discussion of the main problems which cannot be finally resolved. “I would like to evaluate this research – he concludes – as a role model for pure problem research, unlike all sorts of speculative, constructive or ideologically linked procedures.”¹⁵

(3) One more interesting level of cooperation between Russian Neo-Kantians and western philosophers is supported by the friendly links, which gave rise to fruitful creative cooperation.

Thus, during the Dresden period of their work Fyodor Stepun and Paul Johannes Tillich start forming a friendship which did not prevent the Russian thinker from criticizing certain theological and philosophical ideas of his German colleague.¹⁶

¹³ N. Hartmann, *Zu Wilhelm Sesemann. 1933*, in idem, *Kleinere Schriften*, vol. III: *Vom Neukantianismus zur Ontologie*, Berlin 1958, p. 368.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 369.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 373.

¹⁶ See В.К. Кантор, *Переживая немецкую катастрофу. Степун и Тиллих (с приложением переписки)*, “Вопросы философии” 11 (2012), pp. 114-120.

B. Yakovenko gained quite a number of acquaintances and friends from among his colleagues in Europe, while he was living in various European countries, i.e. France, Italy, and the Czech Republic. But the most amazing “integral and long-term business and human relations with a person of a different nationality and culture”¹⁷ was his friendship with the Czech philosopher Ferdinand Pelican. Their fruitful relationship lasted for more than twenty years. Pelican translated his Russian colleague’s works into Czech and published them in his philosophical journal “Ruch filosofický.” His Russian friend Yakovenko, in his turn, published Pelican’s articles in the journals that he edited, e.g. “Der russische Gedanke” and “Internationale Bibliothek für Philosophie.” It is worth noticing that the final fundamental work of Yakovenko about Belinsky (translated into Czech by Pelican) was not accepted for publishing in the Soviet Czechoslovakia (1948) and still has not been published in either Russia or the Czech Republic.

Notwithstanding the difference in philosophical approaches, Hessen highly valued his friendship with T. Kotarbiński, who was the Polish scientist, a philosophy professor at Warsaw University, and later a rector of Lodz University. Their friendship commenced in 1926, when they first met during Hessen’s first trip to Warsaw, and lasted until his death in 1950. Hessen meditates on the reasons for this friendship in his memoirs: “I think that both of us were pulled together by the innate abhorrence of any type of leadership mania, love of freedom and the same almost biological aspiration to freedom and almost biological aspiration to the truth in its both aspects – truth and justice.”¹⁸

(4) Finally, the last level of cooperation can be described as the level of reception of the Russian Neo-Kantian ideas by western scientists. We should single out a few directions of this type of studies:

a) Owing to certain well-known facts some famous Russian poets to a greater or lesser degree have a strong tendency to study certain Neo-Kantian plots in their works. It has a long-standing and well-established tradition in the theoretical works of B. Pasternak, A. Bely, and V. Ivanov in the Western Slavists’ environment.¹⁹

¹⁷ С. Магид, *Борис Яковенко и Фердинанд Пеликан*, “Вестник РХГА,” vol. 7, 2 (2006), p. 227.

¹⁸ С.И. Гессен, *Мое жизнеописание*, in *idem, Избранные сочинения*, Москва 1998, p. 751.

¹⁹ See particularly Л.С. Флейшман, *Борис Пастернак в двадцатые годы*, Санкт-Петербург 2003; S. Dorzweiler, *Boris Pasternak und die Marburger Schule*, in *Alma Mater Philippina* (Marburger Universitätsbund E.V.), Sommersemester 1991, pp. 8-14; J. West,

b) Western researchers continue their work with archival materials of the Russian Neo-Kantians, which help to discover the new dimensions of their talent; they define the bibliographical data, and so the facts of active cooperation between Russian philosophers with the cultural environment of the countries they immigrate to, became public. Russian authors' works that used to be published in a small circulation and became almost rare, are now published with a big number of copies.

In particular, Robert Bird, a professor of the University of Chicago, published a number of letters and poems written by F. Stepun in the "New Literary Review" (no. 63, 2003). This information was obtained from the Yale archive. It defines the philosophical self-evaluation of the Russian thinker and represents him as a remarkable poet.

Alexander Shitov worked with the archival materials of Boris Yakovenko while in Prague. The young Italian researcher Renna managed to recover certain interesting biographical facts concerning the life and art of the Russian philosopher. Renna used archival and periodic publications in order to specify Shitov's numerous connections with western philosophers, writers, and politicians.²⁰

It is necessary to do justice to the Lithuanian colleagues who accordingly evaluated the contribution of the Russian philosopher Sesemann to the development of the foundations of the Lithuanian culture by publishing the two-volume collection of his works in Lithuanian.²¹ There is a group of researchers of his literary heritage in Lithuania.²²

Works of this Russian philosopher have given rise to a great amount of interest in other European countries. His work *Aesthetics* was first translated into English and published in Amsterdam. In the editor's introduction L. Donskis calls Sesemann "a symbolic bridge between Finland and Lithuania, a European thinker in the narrowest meaning of the word."²³

The first book in English about the Russian philosopher was published in 2006.²⁴ In this book the author discusses Sesemann's understanding of

Ivanov's Theory of Knowledge: Kant and Neo-Kantianism, in R.L. Jackson and L. Nelson (eds), *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, Jr. New Haven 1986, pp. 313-325.

²⁰ C. Renna, *Boris Jakovenko e la cultura filosofico europea: una ricostruzione biografica*, "eSamizdat," vol. II, 3 (2004), pp. 97-105.

²¹ V. Sezemanas, *Raštai*, vol. 1: *Gnoseologija*, Vilnius 1987; vol. 2: *Filosofijos istorija. Kultūra*, Vilnius 1997.

²² E.g. A. Lozuraitis, L. Anilionis, B. Genzelis.

²³ L. Donskis, *Editor's Introduction: Mapping Inter-War Lithuanian Philosophy*, in V. Sesemann, *Aesthetics*, Amsterdam – New York 2007, p. XXIV.

²⁴ Th. Botz-Bornstein, *Vasily Sesemann. Experience, Formalism, and the Question of Being*, Amsterdam – New York 2006.

experience as a dynamic, constantly self-reflective phenomenon, which can not be totally objectified.

c) There has been a stable serious interest in the art of the great Russian thinker of the last century – M. M. Bakhtin – over a couple of decades. This interest brought his western followers to the idea of the necessity of finding the origins of the main ideas of the Russian cultural philosopher. The Marburg school of Neo-Kantianism, according to the Russian thinker, had a strong influence on him, and the main proponent of this influence – according to Brian Poole – was Matvei Kagan.²⁵ The researcher supposes that the concept of historical development, which Bakhtin presents in his culturological works is based upon Kagan's ideas of historical philosophy, which in their turn interpret the main provisions of Cohen's monistic conception. Messianism, which is opposed to eschatology in Cohen's ethics and philosophy of religion, becomes the main leitmotif of viewing history (through Kagan) for Bakhtin. That is why the western researcher suggests going "back to Kagan" in order to correctly evaluate the degree of borrowings and independence in Bakhtin's concepts that had made him world-famous.

d) There is no doubt that pedagogical and legal political ideas of Hessen have gained the biggest amount of popularity. The development of these ideas was backed by the concepts of his Baden and Marburg teachers. There is a cohort of scientists in Italy, Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic who have been referring to the works of the Russian philosopher and educator since the middle of the last century.²⁶ The fact that Hessen's book *The Foundations of Pedagogics* was translated into a few European languages and came out in four various editions in Poland alone, proves that the pedagogic conception of the Russian thinker has been arising genuine interest.

Andrzej Walicki is probably the most well-known researcher of Sergey Hessen's works. He was Hessen's student and paid his dues to his teacher. Andrzej Walicki dedicated his fundamental study *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism* to the memory of his teacher. This work came out in two editions in the Russian language. In his work the Polish scientist strives to represent the legal philosophical conception of the Russian thinker as

²⁵ See Б. Пул, "Назад к Кагану." *Марбургская школа в Невеле и философия М.М. Бахтина*, "Диалог. Карнавал. Хронотоп" 1 (1995), pp. 38-48.

²⁶ E.g. A. Walicki, T. Nowacki, W. Okoń, S. Sztobryn, A. Folkerska et al. (Poland), E. Bertacchi, G. Broccolini, L. Volpicelli, R. Neri, P. Riggio et al. (Italy), L. Liegl, H. Meyer-Bothling (Germany), V. Gonč, C. Kučera (Czech Republic).

a concept that synthesises the founding principles of liberalism and socialism based on legal regulation and control.²⁷ It should be noted that ideas of Hessen's "legal socialism" are the direct continuation and development of the ideas of "ethical socialism" of the Marburg Neo-Kantianism.

Therefore, even the most general and casual review of the interaction between the Russian Neo-Kantians and the western world, which was carried out at different levels and was based on different foundations brings us to certain conclusions:

– Russian Neo-Kantians set an ambitious goal for themselves during their academic careers at German universities. They want to start the genuine philosophical tradition in Russia that will, in its turn, be based on the long-lasting European philosophical tradition. Until the end of their days this goal is the most important one to be reached;

– Having found themselves at the "crossroads" of the ideological confrontation between various philosophical schools and directions, Russian Neo-Kantians managed to preserve the "critical spirit" of the Neo-Kantian learning and independently develop it from both theoretical point of view (enriching Neo-Kantianism with the achievements of phenomenology, Hegelism, religious philosophy) and practical point of view (using Neo-Kantian methodology for analysis of pedagogical and legal political concepts);

– Finally, it should be mentioned that the efforts of the Russian Neo-Kantians were great. They strived for cultural and philosophical interaction between Europe and Russia. Numerous works of the Russian writers and philosophers as well as the European ones were translated into the respective languages; a number of culture projects were realized, etc.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that the studies of the Russian Neo-Kantianism (as well as the German one) are only beginning both in Russia and in the West. But the richness of the materials that can be found in the treasuries of the Russian Neo-Kantian thought and that still have not been introduced into the academic world give a hopeful reason to anticipate the new discoveries and interesting findings along the way. The history of Russian Neo-Kantianism has not been written yet, but one can see that the steps that are being taken are becoming more and more confident. I hope that this article will help to make one of these steps.

Transl. by Alina Bolshakova

²⁷ See A. Walicki, *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism*, Oxford 1987, Chapter VII.

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Natalia Danilkina

Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University (Kaliningrad, Russia)

Sergey Hessen in Czech Republic: an émigré philosopher as a phenomenon of European culture

To analyze the peculiarities of the perception of Sergey Iosifovič Hessen (1887–1950) in Czech Republic let us refer to the book *Sergius Hessen and Czechoslovakia*¹ by Vladimír Goněc, published in 2000 at the Masaryk University. It presents a noteworthy research on intellectual biography of the philosopher in emigration.

Hessen left Russia in 1922. From 1923 till 1934, before his move to Poland, he lived and worked in Prague: at the J. A. Comenius Russian Pedagogical Institute and the German University. He was also a co-editor of the journal “Russkaja Shkola za Rubezhom” (“Russian School Abroad”). The official positions of the thinker do not say much though about his contribution to development of philosophy in Czechoslovakia, which was highly assessed by V. Goněc.

First of all, Hessen’s key role in building a bridge between Czech and German philosophy, in “bringing the ideas of neo-Kantian and post-neo-Kantian ontologism and theory of values into Czech environment, due to keeping the intense communication with German philosophical centers,”² is highlighted. In Prague itself, several philosophical fields of studies were developed, among them – the specific Prague branch of brentanism associated with the German University and led by Oscar Kraus. The arrival of Emil Utitz and Ludwig Landgrebe, who escaped from the Nazi pressure in 1933, gave a new impetus to development of Czech phenomenology.

¹ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo* [*Sergius Hessen and Czechoslovakia*], Brno 2000.

² *Ibidem*, p. 16. Hessen started his intellectual career with studies in German universities in 1905; among his teachers were W. Windelband, H. Rickert, E. Lask, J. Cohn, G. Jellinek and later H. Cohen, P. Natorp, N. Hartmann.

Besides, Prague had a considerable positivistic tradition and strong ties with the Vienna Circle; one of the most prominent figures of the European neo-positivism Rudolf Carnap moved to teach in Prague in 1931.

Concerning Hessen's position in philosophical environment of Czechoslovakia, it is pointed out that the neo-Kantian philosopher became closer to phenomenologists. At the turn of 1920–30s he entered into philosophical discussions with R. Carnap and other neo-positivists, whose gnoseological outlines appeared to him a sort of variations of the basic theses put forward by E. Mach and D. Hume, “just invested with new heavy armour of logistic and semantic reasoning.”³ In his argument with positivism, Hessen was on the same side with the younger generation of Czech philosophers represented by Karel Vorovka, Vladimír Hoppe, and Windelband's disciple – Ferdinand Pelikán.⁴

Friendly ties also connected Hessen to the reformers of Czech pedagogics Václav Příhoda and Karel Velemínský.⁵ As a theorist, Hessen was inquiring both in history of pedagogics and current education reforms in Europe paving the way for the new field of studies – comparative pedagogics. He regarded pedagogics as an applied philosophy, and its reference point was the concept of values elaborated in neo-Kantianism and thereafter in phenomenology (N. Hartmann). In 1936, the new theoretical synthesis (V. Gonč) was published in Czech language – *The Philosophical Foundations of Pedagogics*, based on the previous Russian edition (1923), but completely revised and expanded by the author.⁶

In general, Hessen's research activity during the Prague period covered several major fields: theory of knowledge (e.g. analysis of the development of physics of Galileo and Aristotle⁷); social philosophy (issues of legal socialism presented mainly in “Sovremennye Zapiski”⁸); pedagogics (publications in periodicals “Russkaja Shkola za Rubezhom,”⁹ “Die

³ S. Hessen, *Moje życie*, in idem, *Pisma pomniejsze*, Warszawa 1997, pp. 42-43.

⁴ V. Gonč, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, pp. 54-57.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ In Russian, *Основы педагогики. Введение в прикладную философию*, Berlin 1923; in Czech, *Filosofické základy pedagogiky*, Praha 1937.

⁷ С.И. Гессен, *Развитие физики Галилея и ее отношение к физической системе Аристотеля* (in Russian, *Development of physics of Galileo and its relation to physical system of Aristotle*), “Сборник Русского Института в Праге,” vol. 1, Prague 1929, pp. 185-204.

⁸ In Russian, “Современные записки” (“Contemporary Papers”) – the journal of Russian emigration published in Paris in 1920–1940.

⁹ In Russian, “Русская школа за рубежом” (“Russian School Abroad”) – a pedagogical journal issued in Prague in 1923–1929. See also S. Hessen, *Moje życie*, p. 37.

Erziehung” and others); research in Russian thought (essays about F. M. Dostoevsky, V. S. Solovjov, L. N. Tolstoy). The first two domains of studies are reviewed in the book, while the other two are omitted. Although the gap is partly made up thanks to the annex 1 – an excerpt from Hessen’s autobiographical essay *My Life* (translation from Polish) – the absence of reference to the Russian thought of the 19th century is still regrettable. That would definitely expose Hessen’s contribution into variety of its interpretations¹⁰.

Goněc rightly emphasizes the orientation of Hessen’s philosophy to the West: “Hessen supported the intention to form the new principles of rationalism inspired by contemporary philosophical trends in Western Europe and North America, and against the orientation to irrationalism and theism.”¹¹ At the same time, Hessen’s historical study *Modern Russian Philosophy*¹² (1923), devoted to the emerged “branch of West European-oriented modern Russian rationalism” could be a kind of evidence in terms of self-identification of the philosopher and his vision of Russian philosophical diversity¹³. The Czech researcher, however, is not inclined to reckon Hessen to any trend of Russian philosophy. The departing point of his analysis is that it is impossible to indicate Hessen’s affiliation to any “national” philosophy.¹⁴

The latter provision can only prove to be true on the assumption of Hessen’s promotion of idea of supra-nationalism (*наднационализм*) as the ultimate aim of philosophy, but the meaning of the term should be specified here. Supra-nationalism, as it is described in the editorial preface to the first issue of “Logos,” requires the “diversity of national creativity”.¹⁵

¹⁰ Hessen’s bibliography of the period includes: *Трагедия добра в “Братьях Карамазовых” Достоевского* (1928), *Лев Толстой как мыслитель* (1929), *Борьба утопии и автономии добра в мировоззрении Ф.М. Достоевского и Вл. Соловьева* (1929), and other essays translated into different languages. This contribution was highly appreciated also by some European experts of his time. For his research on Dostoevsky, Hessen was conferred a status of the foreign member of the School of Slavonic Studies, King’s College, London.

¹¹ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 15.

¹² In Czech, *Nejnovější ruská filosofie*, “Ruch filosofický,” vol. 3 (1923), pp. 14-19.

¹³ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 16.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

¹⁵ See *От редакции*, “Лорос” 1 (1910), p. 12. “Logos,” the International Journal for Philosophy of Culture, established by a group of Russian and German students in 1910. Hessen was a co-founder and a coeditor of the journal. The Russian edition was stopped in 1914. An attempt at its resumption was made by Hessen and Yakovenko in 1925 during their stay in Prague.

For the proponents of the philosophy of universal cultural values it is based both on understanding the individual national development and recognition of the value of the single and entire cultural humanity.

One of Hessen's greatest merits, in Goněc's opinion, consisted in creation of the essentially new atmosphere of international collaboration between scientists and philosophers in Prague, in overcoming the mutual biases of different sorts. "Thanks to the mediation of such personalities as Hessen, Jakovenko, Losskij and Lapshin, such an important event as the VIII International Congress of Philosophy was finally held in Prague in 1934. [Continued in a footnote] It must be considered that the congress brought a huge wave of new ideas and inspirations for philosophical thinking in Czechoslovakia and for the development of the ideas in new generation."¹⁶

In early 1930s Hessen affiliated himself with in the Society of Slavonic Studies¹⁷ and the famous Prague Linguistic Circle,¹⁸ he was one of the initiators of the Prague philosophical circle,¹⁹ quite international as well. The latter's secretary was young philosopher Jan Patočka, who studied in Freiburg in 1933. His main interest laid in the field of phenomenology, which had practically superseded neo-Kantianism in Freiburg University by that time.²⁰ Anyway, the common acquaintances fostered the rapprochement between the two thinkers, Goněc believes.²¹

The reception of Hessen's ideas in Czech philosophy forms another important point of analysis. Goněc notes the fact that Hessen and Lapshin had an impact on Patočka's concept of objectivistic phenomenology, which is particularly noticeable in his works written after the end of World War II, e.g. *Negative Platonism* (1953)²². According to Goněc, Patočka's a-subjective conception is oriented similarly to Hessen's noetic; both

¹⁶ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 16.

¹⁷ *Deutsche Gesellschaft für slavistische Forschung* in Prague, founded in 1930 around its journal "Slavische Rundschau."

¹⁸ Founded in 1926, among his leaders were the émigré scientists Roman Jakobson and Sergey Karcevsky.

¹⁹ *Cercle Philosophique de Prague pour les Recherches sur L'entendement Humain*, founded in 1934.

²⁰ J. Patočka went to Freiburg to E. Husserl, after his studies in Sorbonne (1928–1929), where he was introduced into phenomenological method by Alexander Koyré (Alexandr Vladimirovich Koyranskiy).

²¹ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, pp. 17, 54–55.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 17. It is also mentioned that Hessen and Lapshin both showed a keen interest to Patočka's thesis "Přirozený svět jako filosofický problém" (1936) (in Czech, *Natural world as a philosophical problem*).

authors had much in common in interpretation of ancient philosophy, both paid special attention to Socratic understanding of constant tension between our attitude to the whole being and the fundamental inability to grasp the whole in a form of finite knowledge.²³

It must be said here, that *Negative Platonism* does not contain any direct references to Hessen. At the same time, it refers to the main contradiction in his philosophy that can be hardly disregarded. The contradiction consists in limitation of the area and the method of philosophical investigation when referring to infinitely diverse research material – the entire reality, ungraspable in cognition.²⁴ The contradiction was epistemologically legitimized by the distinction between the object and the material of cognition carried out in neo-Kantianism (H. Rickert). Patočka's inquiry refers to the origins of the contradiction intrinsic to all anti-metaphysical philosophies and sciences. The way out is suggested to be sought in pre-metaphysical philosophy that was poor in knowledge, and which was still present in Plato by means of Socratic "knowledge of not-knowing," and – in re-opening the act of transcendence instead of transcendental sort of "being" whatever it meant for philosophy of Aristotle, or Medieval theology, or 20th century historiosophy (E. Zeller, W. Windelband, etc).

It is assumed in Goněc's analysis of Hessen's achievement in Czechoslovak period that the thinker tended to a theoretical synthesis on the base of different fields of practical philosophy – philosophy of education, philosophy of economics, legal philosophy, philosophy of democracy, disclosing the "wrong direction and wrong elements of political and social thought and futility of attempts to implement them. At this scale the further evaluation of immediate Russian experiences is carried out by Hessen – if compared to other Russian émigré thinkers – as the most generalized and brought into correlation with all-European experiences."²⁵ While discussing Hessen's social and philosophical views in greater detail the researcher, however, has evidently recourse to simplification. It is not exactly so that Hessen spoke of historical process of development of the lawful state as of the process of *bridging a gap between reality and the construct of principle* (Goněc). The use of "ideal type" method allows emphasizing

²³ See J. Patočka, *Negativní platonismus*, in: *Sebrané spisy J. Patočky*, vol. 1: *Péče o duši*, Praha 1996, pp. 308-309.

²⁴ See Н.В. Данилкина, *Концепция образования в философии С.И. Гессена. Автореферат дисс. ... кандидата философских наук, 09.00.03*, Калининград 2011, p. 10.

²⁵ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 17.

the existing gap between the reality and the ideal. But it should be borne in mind that Hessen's analysis is consistent with the Kantian ideal as impossible to be accomplished, the gap between the ideal and reality as impossible to be overcome,²⁶ while reading: "The culmination was the state of Napoleon as the most perfect and the most fulfilled absolutist state. In Russia, on the contrary, there appeared just unfulfilled and impossible to be fulfilled attempts to overcome the difference between reality and principle; the barrier between them remained in Russia insurmountable."²⁷ In quoted passage the author's own assessment of historical development is apparently attached to Hessen's historiosophical vision. Hessen is of the opposite opinion concerning Russian absolutism: along with some examples in other countries it is regarded as corresponding to the ideal endeavors of absolutism (the formation of the Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire by M. Speransky in the first half of the 19th century, and the judicial reform in 1865 are regarded as contributing into realization of the firmness of law as the main principle of the epoch).²⁸

Hessen's vision of Russian history was surely not idealized. In 1917 he wrote: "(...) consolidation of freedom is not a single day or single gust matter, whatever strong and mighty the gust is. Implementation of freedom is the business of tireless work of many generations, the work that requires sustained effort of will and knowledge of the whole people (...). Russian freedom is exposed to grave risk – the risk of degeneration to arbitrariness. Duty of every Russian citizen is therefore to protect the freedom won by such heavy sacrifices."²⁹ A possibility of a regress in social and state development was not excluded by the philosopher. At the same time, Hessen possessed a certain kind of *historical*, or *historiosophical optimism* (A. Walicki) that was apparently based on his trust in human culture, by which he understood both the higher objective values and personal development of the subject while working for practical implementation of those values. In his concept, the law is supposed to be the guarantor of the process, the source of protection of human personality and recognition of

²⁶ The fact of terminological substitution is meaningful here: by changing Weber's "ideal type" to "historical type" Hessen stresses the distance of the both from the ideal as drawn in utopias.

²⁷ V. Gonč, *Serģius Hessen a Āeskoslovensko*, p. 31.

²⁸ The question is analysed in a separate work: N. Danilkina, *Montesquieu's ideal of absolutism: a neo-Kantian standpoint*, Collection "Cahiers Montesquieu," vol. 10 (2013), preprint.

²⁹ С.И. Гессен, *Политическая свобода и социализм*, in idem, *Избранные сочинения*, Москва 1998, p. 144.

her individual value. So the personality is regarded as the subject of social transformations, who resolves the actually emerging conflicts by means of her own efforts. As it is shown by Goněc, Hessen rejects the positivist interpretation of the *legal force as spontaneously tending to end in itself*, and criticizes such metaphysical concepts as the *general will* that can easily turn into the *will of the one* who possesses a monopoly of power and proclaims his will the will of the people, if the general will is conceived without taking into account the individual freedom of will.³⁰

Goněc's attitude to the Russian émigré scholar is defined not otherwise than in terms of the *Europeanness* of the latter. In accordance with the popular at the end of the 20th century trend in the Czech historiography,³¹ such a position had to be accompanied by the exclusion of the thinker from the *Russian* intellectual discourse, and so that is in the book: "(...) despite the enormous breadth and diversity of tradition of Russian thinking – from the church philosophy to the neo-bolshevism – Hessen had never belonged to this tradition, he was only trying to expand it with a form of purely European thinking."³² Unfortunately, the text does not provide any refinements concerning the features of the *pure European thinking* not mediated by non-European infusions. The thesis seems all the more paradoxical amid the indications of mutual influences of the thinkers at least within the scope of the book. The international collaboration of Russian intellectual elite, which did not form a closed community, but shared scientific values in Europe, was furthermore described in another work of the author about Russian philosophic emigration.³³

Hence, the geopolitical boundary pursued by Goněc between Russian and European thinking is of particular interest. It can be understood as referred to a special kind of social and political thinking, that, by implication, somehow "fits" the territorial and time boundaries and emphasizes the identification of the law with the *state power will* (P. Milukov) – the idea was widely spread in official political and legal doctrines in the 19th century, but notably staggered on the eve of the Russian revolution 1905–1907. An obvious tendency is to show that Hessen's liberal ideas, including his

³⁰ Cf. V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, pp. 19, 21.

³¹ See R. Vlček, *Proč hledíme s despektem na ruské a sovětské dějiny? X sjezd českých historiků*, Ostrava 14–16, Zář 2011, <http://konference.osu.cz/sjezd2011ostrava/dok/sekce_b/vlcek_radomir.pdf>.

³² V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 41.

³³ V. Goněc, *Ruská filozofická emigrace v Československu*, "Slovanský přehled," vol. 79, 1 (1993), p. 39 and others.

principle of intensification of law as the source of individual security and the base of *West-European social reformism*³⁴, were foreign and inherently unacceptable in Russia. Here also goes the argument that “Hessen’s concept of liberalism, which is so contrary to the Russian tradition, has a distinct influence of Masaryk’s ideas.”³⁵ It is not quite clear, however, where should the whole tradition of Russian liberalism be placed, including the pertaining to Prague intellectual environment “postclassical Russian liberalism, which was presented especially in the writings of Pavel Novgorodcev³⁶ in the first two decades of the 20th century,” deferentially noticed by the author.³⁷ And what is then the role of Hessen’s family history in this argumentation, his growing up in a liberal environment, to which belonged his father, a leader of the political party of constitutional democrats the researcher reports about: “S. Hessen’s father, attorney Iosif Hessen belonged to the Petrograd Law School, also was the editor of the journal ‘Pravo’³⁸ since 1898. He was also a political leader of the Russian liberal opposition, a board member of People’s Freedom Party (better known as the ‘Cadets’ – the name came out of the political slang), and a co-editor of its main press organ, the newspaper ‘Rech?’”³⁹ In this regard, only one more observation is left to be mentioned. As concisely noted in A. Walicki’s study, the constitutive traits of the 19th-century Russian *intelligentsia* were “anti-traditionalism, secularism, opposition to the power and conscious engagement in the cause of progress.”⁴⁰ So the whole layer of intellectual elite formed in the meantime could be sequentially regarded by the Czech researcher as non-typical and opposed to Russian thinking (?). All those questions can be as well addressed to some theorists in Russia, who argue the contrast of Russian and Western legal cultures and are about rejecting the very idea of the lawful state, since its principles primarily belong to the West-European political and judicial “world.”⁴¹

³⁴ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, pp. 19-20.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

³⁶ Novgorodcev Pavel Ivanovich (1866–1924) – philosopher, jurist, historian of law, one of the most prominent representatives of Russian liberalism. In 1922 – one of the founders of the Russian Faculty of Law at Charles University in Prague.

³⁷ V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 21.

³⁸ In Russian, “Право” (“Law”).

³⁹ In Russian, “Речь” (“Speech”). Cf. V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 9.

⁴⁰ A. Walicki, *W kregu konserwatywnej utopii. Struktura i przemiany rosyjskiego słowianofilstwa*, Warszawa 2002, p. 446.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. А.М. Величко, *Государственные идеалы России и Запада. Параллели правовых культур* [*State Ideals of Russia and the West. The Parallels of Legal Cultures*], Санкт-Петербург 1999.

The essentialist line pervades in the study of Goněc and is extrapolated to the entire cultural and intellectual life: “as a matter of fact, Hessen had spiritually emigrated from Russia already in the beginning of the century and as a true European could join with fruitful creativity the communities, in which he lived the last thirty years of his life;”⁴² “Both in terms of genetic links and from the point of view of his influence he rather belongs to the German world of ideas (and also Polish) than to that, which his origin connects him to, i.e. Russian,”⁴³ etc. Such an assignment of Sergey Hessen to the European intellectual discourse formulated within the binary opposition of the European and the Russian can be inscribed into a certain context, and this context is a political one, more precisely – a politically polarized praxis; its metaphor might well be the Iron Curtain that had been separating Russia from the European mental and cultural space since the beginning of its statehood. A similar context switch can be related to the “battle for Dostoevsky”⁴⁴ that was going on in Czech literary studies in the second half of the 20th century and expressed the collision of different opinions on Dostoevsky’s “arrival” to Czech environment. Meanwhile, T. G. Masaryk, who had studied many volumes of the Russian classic, outlined the main features and the mission of Russian thought: “It is characteristic for the great Russian writers that they are all imbued with the ethical and social aspirations – that is explained by the development of Russia and Europe. Russian thinkers have mastered philosophy of Europe and hence they have been developing it. In a live swirling of the thought – from philosophy of Belinsky, Herzen, Chaadaev and other so-called Westerners up to the current of national and Slavophile kind that is manifested in the last works of Pushkin, in Gogol, Kireevsky, Khomyakov and others – Dostoyevsky (...) seeks the reconciliation and unification of the views at the highest level, in which he perceives the task of his nation. And it should be admitted that he made a great step toward that, as he has been already becoming a teacher, not only for Russians, but also for all educated world. By means of ideas, not of violence, Dostoevsky proclaimed, humanity will unite for their real happiness.”⁴⁵ Hessen’s ethics at the summit of its evolution was an attempt at the reconciliation and unification of the kind,⁴⁶ but that remains beyond the meaningful analysis of Goněc.

⁴² V. Goněc, *Sergius Hessen a Československo*, p. 7.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

⁴⁴ F. Kautman, *Boje o Dostojevského*, Praha 1966.

⁴⁵ T.G. Masaryk, *Studie o F. M. Dostojevském (s rukopisnými poznámkami)*, Praha 1932, pp. 13-30.

⁴⁶ See Н.В. Данилкина, *Любовь, долг и индивидуальное бытие: попытка*

An example can be given in this regard. Hessen is following Kant, when distinguishing between the law and morality.⁴⁷ At the same time, Kant's interpretation of moral relationship between the people as based on subjective autonomy appears incomplete to the scholar. The moral relationship, Hessen says, demands something more than legal respect to a citizen. That "more" is *caritas*, i.e. the love to a human being, which was praised by Schiller or Dostoyevsky. In those considerations Hessen holds with N. Alekseev⁴⁸ and G. Gurvitch⁴⁹ – the prominent legal scholars. The global assessment of the latter's contribution is so described by Hessen: "If you add that Gurvitch in his philosophical views is a kind of follower of Fichte, and that in his recent work the influence of Russian intuitivism and German phenomenology (especially M. Scheler...) clearly reveals itself, that in his social and political views he most closely adjoins Proudhon, and in his theory of law – Hauriou and L. Petrazytski, whose teaching he manages to present in a completely new light – then another bright feature of the new work of Gurvitch will become apparent. Our author had passed through the triple culture – Russian, German and French – and makes an attempt at a synthesis, in Europeanism of which the Russian element plays far not the least role..."⁵⁰ The quoted opinion presents Europeanism as not opposed to Russianness, that proceeds also from definite philosophical views. Understanding of human history as development towards the *unity in diversity* (in Hessen's case – towards *pleroma of culture*) implies the cross-cultural communication to less or greater extent.

философского синтеза и этике образования С. Гессена [Love, duty and individual being: an attempt at philosophical synthesis in S. Hessen's ethics of education], in В. Перов, Д. Гусев (eds), *Теоретическая и прикладная этика: традиции и перспективы. Материалы всероссийской молодежной конференции*, Санкт-Петербург 2010, pp. 63-67.

⁴⁷ S. Hessen, *Prawo i moralność*, in idem, *Pisma pomniejsze*, pp. 205-207.

⁴⁸ Alekseev Nikolai Nikolaevich (1879–1964) – a representative of the Moscow School of Legal Philosophy (P.I. Novgorodcev, E.N. Trubeckoy, I.A. Ilyin, B.P. Vysheslavcev). From 1920 lived in exile, taught at the Russian Faculty of Law at Charles University in Prague (1922–1931), later on – in Berlin, Strasbourg, Paris, Belgrade, Geneva.

⁴⁹ Gurvitch Georgij Davidovich (1894–1965) – philosopher, sociologist. Emigrated in 1921. After a short stay in Berlin and Prague moved to France. Taught at the Institut d'études slaves and Russian Faculty of Law at the University of Paris, from 1927 – at the Sorbonne. After WW II – a key figure of French sociology; the founder of "Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie" (1946).

⁵⁰ С.И. Гессен, *Идея социального права (По поводу книги Г. Гурвича "L'idee du droit social")*, "Современные записки" 49 (1932), p. 423.

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Oksana Dovgopolova

I. I. Mechnikov Odessa National University (Odessa, Ukraine)

The Paradoxes of Reception of the Russian Emigrant Thought in Bulgaria

The 1917 Revolution was the reason for the increasing number of Russian intellectuals in Europe. We can ascertain the different ways of their incorporation into the European theoretical space. The author of these lines proposes to focus on the peculiarities of the reception of the theory of the historian P. M. Bitzilli in Bulgarian science. Petr Mikhailovich Bitzilli (1879–1953) was a Professor of Novorossijsky Imperial University. He left Odessa in 1920, and in 1924 was invited to the University of Sofia, where he worked till 1948. We believe that the analysis of Bitzilli’s legacy in Bulgaria will help to reveal the peculiarities of the Russian emigrant thought in “non-central” European spaces. Sofia was perceived by Russian emigrants as European periphery, unlike Paris or even Prague. The example of Bitzilli’s theory emphasises the phenomenon of the reception of the Russian thought, reveals those aspects of the phenomenon which appear hidden when we look at the perception of the Russian culture in such European centers as, for example, Paris.

The aim of our inquiry is to show the evolution of Bitzilli’s theoretical views in pre-revolutionary and emigrant times; to reveal the reasons for the transformation of the historian’s scientific interests. Here, we do not present the rich historiography of Bitzilli’s studies,¹ because the point of our interest lies in a specific field: the interrelations between the direction of the historian’s scientific interests and the needs of the relatively young country, in which he found himself after 1924. The additional point of our

¹ For the description of historiography see Т.Н. Попова, *Бициллиеведение: проблемы институционализации*, in О.А. Довгополова (ed), *Curriculum Vitae*, vol. II: *Творчество П.М. Бицилли и феномен гуманитарной традиции Одесского университета*, Одесса 2010, pp. 15-26.

interest is the comparison of the scientific evolution of Petr Bitzilli and Lev Karsavin. Both the historians appeared a part of the peculiar scientific school of Medieval Studies in the Russian Empire, and both after the revolutionary break were involved in the development of the national historical traditions of their second motherlands (Bulgaria and Lithuania respectively). The Lithuanian period of Karsavin's life has become a subject of academic interest in the recent years.²

The field of our inquiry is quite wide, so the material will be presented in sections as follows: place of Bitzilli's theory in the scientific tradition of the Russian Empire, evolution of Bitzilli's scientific interests in Bulgaria and common features of Bitzilli's and Karsavin's theoretical evolution.

I

The legacy of the remarkable historian Petr Bitzilli shows us a wonderful example of the destiny of the intellectual in times of changes. Being not only a representative of a brilliant scholarly tradition of the first quarter of the 20th century in Russia, but one of the originators of the modern Bulgarian historical science, Bitzilli remained unknown for decades in Russia, Ukraine and Bulgaria. Due to his anti-Marxist views, he stayed in the background till the communist regimes fell. In the late 1980s the study of Bitzilli's legacy was launched in the Russian and Ukrainian science, and his books were republished. But his image in the contemporary science appears as the one of a distant classic whose achievements have been overlapped by the humanistic tradition of the 20th century. We suppose that a noteworthy image has been formed due to the mode of understanding of the scientific tradition development. Here, we shall try to reveal the outlines of Bitzilli's theoretical scheme.

Bitzilli was born in Odessa in 1879. He graduated from the Novorossiysky Imperial University (Odessa) in 1905 and started teaching at the Department of the Common History. During the first decades of 20th century Bitzilli contributed to the establishment of a very fruitful direction in the historical science, which was very close to historical anthropology – the direction which formed in Europe only in the late 1920s in the works of *École des Annales*. In 1912 Bitzilli defended the thesis “Salimbene: the

² See, for example В.И. Повилайтис, *Карсавин в Литве*, in В.И. Повилайтис (ed), *Культурный слой. Исследования по истории европейской культуры*, vol. 2, Калининград 2001, pp. 36-47; С. Хоружий, *Русский философ в Литве: A case study*, <<http://bookre.org/reader?file=433664>>.

Essays on the Italian life in the 13th century”³ at St Petersburg University. This investigation is a brilliant example of the so-called historical anthropology. Through the personality of Salimbene, a Franciscan monk and author of the unpopular in his time *Chronicle*, the historian shows an average person’s modes of thinking in the 13th century. Bitzilli developed a methodology for revealing the voices of the “silent majority,” studied the peculiarities of a medieval biographical conscience, created a wide picture of everyday life in Italy. In 1919 Bitzilli published *The elements of medieval culture*.⁴ This book has been acclaimed as a standard-setting investigation in cultural studies on post-soviet space.

Bitzilli’s research was a part of the special direction of Mediaeval Studies, developed in St Petersburg and Odessa. The so-called School of Ivan Grevs created a field of Mediaeval Studies oriented at the problems of religious conscience and culture. The main representatives of this school were Lev L. Karsavin and Olga Dobiash-Rozhdestvenkaya. The noted historians were the representatives of the three scientific centers: Odessa (P. Bitzilli), Petersburg (L. Karsavin and O. Dobiash-Rozhdestvenkaya) and Paris (Dobiash-Rozhdestvenkaya received her the second education at Sorbonne). They all were inheritors of the great historians-positivists of the 19th century, and raised the historical science to a qualitatively new level, close to the methodology of the future *École des Annales*.

This direction vanished in Russia after the Revolution due to its anti-Marxist focus. The economic history was acknowledged by the noted researchers as not the basic, but an auxiliary field of investigation. The strict attention to the phenomena of spiritual and religious life appeared unacceptable in the Marxist context. Bitzilli and Karsavin left Russia for Bulgaria and Lithuania respectively. Dobiash-Rozhdestvenkaya stayed in the Soviet Russia, but renounced her pre-revolutionary scientific beliefs.⁵ After his emigration in 1920 Bitzilli appeared an undesirable figure in the emerging Soviet humanities. As an anti-Marxist, he was described in official science as a representative of a “religious-mystique direction” or an

³ Published as monograph: П.М. Бицилли, *Салимбене: Очерки итальянской жизни XIII в.*, Одесса 1916.

⁴ П.М. Бицилли, *Элементы средневековой культуры*, in idem, *Избранные труды по средневековой истории: Россия и Запад*, Москва 2006, pp. 107-231.

⁵ С. Неретина, *Человек в истории (О.А. Добиаш-Рождественская. Культура западноевропейского средневековья. Научное наследие. О.А. Добиаш-Рождественская. История письма в средние века. Руководство к изучению латинской палеографии. В.М. Ершова. О.А. Добиаш-Рождественская)*, “Новый мир” 3 (1989), pp. 252-256.

“epigone of bourgeois positivism.” His brilliant research into the mediaeval mentality and biography was “left on the shelf.”

Bitzilli’s and Karsavin’s research was absent from the shelves of Soviet libraries till the era of “Perestroyka.” But the restored investigations appeared in the mind of the post-Soviet reader in a truncated image. The ways of the development of humanities in the 20th century were well known, so the achievements of Russian researches of the first decades of the 20th century had been automatically included in the outlines of the prominent European scientific directions. The unique features of the pre-revolutionary Russian historical science vanished against the background of *École des Annales*.⁶

II

The main representatives of the Odessa – Petersburg School of Mediaeval Studies found themselves in the marginal European academic spaces (Bulgaria and Lithuania). The examples of their destinies allow us to discover the peculiarities of the reception of the Russian emigrant science in the relatively young European countries. The figure of Bitzilli is rather representative in this context – he spent all his life in relatively “boundary” (the term of Bulgarian researcher Galina Petkova⁷) academic centers. Odessa was a periphery of the Russian Empire and Sofia was a periphery of Europe.

We have shown that belonging to Novorossijsky Imperial University (Odessa) allowed Bitzilli to create a theory in correspondence with the main European tendencies. Leaving Odessa in 1920, he was planning to prolong his scholarly activities at one of the European universities. Bitzilli was looking for the place in which he could continue his research till 1924, when Sofia University invited him to head the Department of Common History. The historian had a hard time in Skopje, for he had no permanent job. And even in such circumstances he continued his research. In 1922–1924 Bitzilli wrote *The Essays on the Theory of Historical Science*,⁸

⁶ О.А. Довгополова, “*Casus Бицилли: феномен интеллектуальной контрабанды и судьбы научных традиций*,” in eadem (ed), *Эсхатос-II: философия истории в контексте идеи “предела:” Сборник статей*, Одесса 2012, pp. 203-225.

⁷ Г. Петкова, *Литературоведческий проект П.М. Бицилли: между Салимбене и Пушкиным (опыт реконструкции)*, <http://liternet.bg/publish10/gpetkova/proekt_ru.htm#4>.

⁸ П.М. Бицилли, *Очерки теории исторической науки*, Прага 1925.

which was published in 1925 in Prague. He was a genuine *person of university* and refused to change his way notwithstanding the circumstances. In Skopje Bitzilli discovered Latin paleographic monuments, attributed and described a few inscriptions. The text of *The Essays on the Theory of Historical Science* shows the continuity of his scientific interests.

The position of the Head of the Department of the Common History at Sofia University opened up new vistas of scientific work for Bitzilli. He was a professor of Sofia University till 1948 and all this time was involved in the active teaching and research work. He taught 78 courses, each semester starting a new one and never repeating the same lecture twice. He created a number of monographs, devoted to different periods of cultural history of Russia and Bulgaria. But here in Bulgaria he radically altered the direction of his scientific research. The two main directions of his research were Bulgarian history and literary criticism.

He entered the Bulgarian intellectual tradition and took the most active part in laying the foundation of the Bulgarian historical science. Using the words of K. Delchev, Bitzilli discovered the unique peculiarities of Bulgarian history unknown before.⁹ The features of the Bulgarian Renaissance, the absence of distance between intellectuals and the people in times of the Bulgarian Romanticism, the place of the Old Bulgarian language, peculiarities of Bulgarian national mentality – all these themes were investigated by Bitzilli for the first time in the Bulgarian academic research. The traces of Bitzilli's research are quite noticeable in contemporary Bulgarian historical and philological science. Regrettably, this fruitful and intense research and teaching activity was stopped after 1944, when the changes in the political development of Bulgaria made the presence of an anti-Marxist professor at university impossible. From 1948 on Bitzilli was forced to pursue his research nearly without any hope of publishing them or of finding any new employment. This fact caused some distortion of Bitzilli's image in the Bulgarian science. K. Delchev emphasises that despite the outstanding contribution to the Bulgarian science, Bitzilli is primarily conceived of as a non-Bulgarian author.¹⁰ The image of Bitzilli as a Bulgarian scientist is now being renewed by the efforts of such Bulgarian intellectuals as K. Delchev and T. Galcheva.¹¹

⁹ К. Делчев, *Мирогледът на Бицили*, in П. Бицили, *Малки творби*, ed. by К. Делчев, София 2003, pp. 33-35.

¹⁰ Ibidem, pp. 7-38.

¹¹ Т. Галчева, *П.М. Бицилли – опыт возвращения*, in П.М. Бицилли, *Избранное. Историко-культурологические работы*, vol. 1, София 1993, pp. 7-40.

The recognition of Bitzilli as an exclusively Bulgarian/Russian/European scientist is impossible. He was separated from the Bulgarian society with his Nansen passport (he was denied the Soviet citizenship, but received the Bulgarian citizenship not long before the end of his life), and at the same time worked as a major figure at Sofia University. He was involved in Eurasian discussions, but held a skeptical position in the question of the specific role of the Russian Spirit in the renewal of Europe. Bitzilli represented the type of Russian emigrant who was oriented at academic and not political life. The itinerary of his life was mapped out by academic values.

His professional position determined the question of political choice. As a sober historian, he could not allow himself to be involved in some “messianic” project. His ironic assertion about the philosophy of history reveals his position in ideology: “philosophy of history was a mode of understanding of the Absolute *sub specie* history. Clio has become rigorous nowadays and does not allow this.”¹² The decision to leave Russia and to betake himself to some European country was motivated by his strict conviction of the importance of the academic mission. In Russia it was impossible due to ideological control. Bitzilli found the only possibility of saving himself as a member of the academia thanks to the job offer from Sofia University. It was a European choice, but Bulgaria was a European periphery. And the brilliant scientific direction which Bitzilli developed in Russia was not required here. Mediaeval studies were not interesting at the university which had been created as a center of national mentality. We can suppose that such a change of academic interests was not compulsory, but coincided with the historian’s compulsions. But in any case the mediaeval studies were not as topical in Bulgaria as inquiry into Bulgarian history. Thus, the powerful direction of historical science passed into oblivion with the change of Bitzilli’s interests.

III

The change of the direction of Bitzilli’s scientific research in Bulgaria can be explained with different reasons. The brilliant philological preparation allowed him to reveal his interests in the history of Russian literature. The practical needs of his Department at Sofia University pushed him towards inquiry into Bulgarian history. The Bulgarian researcher G. Petkova

¹² П.М. Бицилли, *Очерки теории исторической науки*, р. 24.

suggests that the whole picture of Bitzilli's academic interests shows us a holistic core of his cultural research which ranged from Salimbene to Pushkin.¹³ Delchev shows Bitzilli as a universal historian,¹⁴ whereby his evolution in science appears as a representation of universalism. We are inclined to believe these suppositions in point of Bitzilli's universalism. But it is obvious that Bitzilli's refusal to prolong his work in mediaeval studies was connected with the peculiarities of the scientific development of the relatively young European countries such as Bulgaria.

The comparison of Bitzilli's and Karsavin's academic destinies displays a common picture. Both historians created a brilliant direction of historical science in pre-revolutionary Russia; both left Russia because of their anti-Marxist views and got involved in the development of the national and historical traditions of their new motherlands. They took part in the creation of schools of national history in Bulgaria and Lithuania, delivered lectures in national languages, pursued thorough inquiry which laid the foundation for further research in national history. Also, the tragic similarity of the fates of the two historians lies in the fact that escape was impossible for either of them. The wave of communist power engulfed them in 1940s. Surely, Karsavin's destiny appeared really tragic. Bitzilli lost his job, but Karsavin lost his life.

The apparent similarity in Bitzilli's and Karsavin's careers is interesting in the context of the development of academic traditions. We have shown that Bitzilli's choice was determined by his position as a scholar and a member of the academia. A similar intention was demonstrated by Karsavin. His decision to reject an offer from Oxford University in favour of the newly-created University in Kaunas seems to be strange. The circumstances surrounding this invitation are strange too – an Orthodox thinker was not welcome by the University authorities representing uniform thinking. Why did Karsavin accept the invitation? He had more opportunities to find a worthy place as a religious thinker than as a historian. But he decided to become a professor of the University of Vitautas the Great in Kaunas, established in 1920 as a new centre of national education. He began teaching in Lithuanian, launched brilliant research into Lithuanian history, and assembled a considerable library for his seminar. We can hardly imagine the efforts undertaken by Karsavin while he was fulfilling his program at

¹³ Г. Петкова, *Литературоведческий проект П.М. Бицилли: между Салимбене и Пушкиным (опыт реконструкции)*.

¹⁴ К. Делчев, *Мировзглядът на Бицилли*, pp. 11-12.

Kaunas and later Vilnius Universities. Later on, Karsavin remembered the self-sufficient Kaunas period as the happiest time of his life in Lithuania.

In Lithuania Karsavin abandoned his pre-revolutionary scientific interests for the sake of the Lithuanian national history. At the same time he prepared philosophical texts and poems in Russian. Karsavin remained a member of the Russian emigrant community, a part of the Russian world. In one of his letters he even explained his decision to come to Lithuania with his desire to be nearer to Russia.

The same blend of earnest involvement in the academic life of the new motherland and the preservation of the Russian theme we can see in Bitzilli. The comparison of their academic fates reveals certain peculiarities of the life of a Russian intellectual in Europe. After the 1917 Revolution in Russia, they were obliged to make a crucial decision about the essence of their lives. Russian academics considered themselves part of the European intellectual traditions and created their own original concepts on the basis of their inquiries. The Revolution brought them to the edge of their existence as intellectuals. The examples of Bitzilli and Karsavin show us the existential gesture of the intellectual who tries to maintain the academic tradition in the collapsing world. The impossibility of intellectual treason pushed them out of Russia. Regarding themselves as elements of the European academic space, they sincerely involved themselves in the creation of new intellectual centres.

In contrast to their colleagues in powerful academic centres, Bitzilli and Karsavin found themselves in young European countries, at universities created as centres of national renewal. Sofia University was created in 1888, ten years after the establishment of the Bulgarian state. Kaunas University was set up in 1920 in response to the creation of the Lithuanian state. Both universities appeared as parts of the project of the national state creation. We dare to assume that both Bitzilli and Karsavin saw a special existential task in their work at these universities. The only place where a university teacher (and *as a teacher*) could be involved in the process of a creation of a state, is a university in a young country. The existential gestures of Bitzilli and Karsavin as professors of Sofia and Kaunas Universities were deep and complete. They both changed the direction of their research for the sake of the elaboration of traditions of national history and the development of new scientific centres. The comparison of Bitzilli's and Karsavin's careers reveals a striking similarity in their lives. It takes but a single glance at Bitzilli's life to notice a series of accidents: he did not choose Sofia freely, did not change the direction of his research freely.

The example of Karsavin's life emphasises the specific gesture of the intellectual who sees his world mission in the creation of educational and academic centres. They try to change the world not by means of politics, but through their academic activities. Here lies the origin of their selfless work. The university was their mode of life and their civic position.

We can observe here an example of a very specific mode of reception of the Russian thought in young European countries. The academic traditions of such countries primarily receive existential gestures rather than treasures of elaborated scholarly achievements.

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Andrei Bronnikov
Arnhem (Netherlands)

Russia in Rilke

*Never: Rilke about Russia, not Rilke and Russia
– but Russia in Rilke.*

M. Tsvetaeva

There is something astonishing about the fact that Rainer Maria Rilke – the great German-language poet of the twentieth century, who stands next to Hölderlin, Schiller and Goethe, and who probably deserves the highest position in this hierarchy of poets – is able to say: “What do I owe Russia – it made me what I am, I emerge internally from there, the whole homeland of my instinct, all my inner resources are there.” To what extent can we trust these words and what does Rilke actually mean when speaking so about Russia? In the words of one of the most eminent European poets this sentence sounds like a metaphor of some inner reality and a sign of the presence of some myth which completely mastered the poet. If so, then it would be interesting to examine more closely this myth and to determine its possible influence on Rilke’s poetry. In this work we attempt to show how the Russian experience and concepts associated with the cultural myth of Russia allowed Rilke to put together important elements of his own mythmaking, which helped him to create his distinctive art forms and establish himself as a true modernist poet. It is necessary to remark here that our attitude to myth and mythmaking is free from any negative connotations. The “mythmaking” is understood in a broad sense as involving not the creation of abstract ideas and images, but a very real (in the framework of art) way out beyond the limits of the empirical reality and creation of a new, higher reality. A similar perception can be found in the statement made by S. N. Bulgakov: “The myth arises from religious experience – that is why the mythmaking involves not an abstract power of thought, but some way out of the realm of the self into the realm of the divine, some kind of God’s acting – in other words, the myth has theurgic origins

and theurgic meaning.”¹ In its theurgic meaning, as the “way out (...) into the realm of the divine,” mythmaking can become the basis of an artistic method. The work of art (and in particular a modernist work of art) does not just copy empirical reality, but creates a new and supreme reality. This reality enters into the world along the lines of a cultural myth rooted in the perception of art by the viewer, reader and listener. In the early twentieth century, mythmaking became a conscious choice and important dimension of the new art, whereas making art was perceived by the public and the artist as a kind of religious activity. A modernist artist is unthinkable without his own myth. No doubt that a modernist myth is present in the works of Rilke. But which one? In contrast, for example, to Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, who repeatedly announced their aesthetic principles, Rilke concealed the source of his myth, hiding behind the diversity of poetic images as if chosen at random from a variety of cultural contexts. Eclectics and polyphony of meanings are used by the poet as the main method of building the form.² In Rilke’s poetry, the high and ordinary, the spiritual and material are interwoven and exchanged with each other. His images are turned inside out, like the broken surfaces of sculptures by Rodin. His poetry is dynamic. Its meaning is always in the making. How would it be possible to find any common ground in all this? And does it exist at all? The poet’s biography does not provide the answer. The origin of Rilke, who was born in 1875 to a German family living in then Austro-Hungarian Prague, determined his constant duality, his everlasting rootlessness. Rilke is the ceaseless wanderer without a home, without a country, without a family: a true poet, who – as Marina Tsvetaeva put it – lives outside any language, translating from the all-poets’ single language of poetry into human languages. Then, what about Rilke’s repeating and insisting references to Russia as

¹ С.Н. Булгаков, *Свет невечерний. Созерцания и умозрения*, Москва 1994, p. 62.

² This makes Rilke close to the artists of the Art Nouveau. For example, the iconic paintings of the “golden period” of Gustav Klimt contain the same tension between ecstatic eclecticism of the images and the underlying quiet irrationality of the content that are common to all major works of Rilke. The ideological context of Rilke’s works is built with Nietzschean and modernist ideas. According to V. Durr (V. Durr, *Rainer Maria Rilke. The poet’s trajectory*, New York 2006, pp. 108-147), the ideological synthesis embodied in the *Duino Elegies* is based on the concepts of openness put into circulation by Alfred Schuler, a controversial figure of Munich’s cultural underground. It is known that Rilke attended his lectures in 1915. These themes Rilke could also discuss with philosopher and Orientalist Rudolf Kassner (see H. Schmidt-Bergmann (ed), *Rilke und Kassner*, Thorbecke 1989). Rilke certainly was not an independent philosopher or theorist, as he is sometimes presented. But as a poet, he could give a perfect art form to the ideas he was interested in.

his “homeland?”³ One can, of course, attribute all this to the life circumstances or the propensity of the soul, but life is bigger and greater than any circumstances, especially when it comes to the poet, and “the problem of the soul, as we know, is methodologically the problem of aesthetics.”⁴ To understand Rilke-the-poet we cannot do without a general aesthetic concept, without some way of seeing that would highlight the most important, while neglecting the minor details. We believe that the attitude of Rilke towards Russia and his interpretation of the Russian culture were formed in the transpersonal realm of ideas of the “Russian myth”, being one of the variations of European Orientalism.⁵ In this view, Rilke’s image of Russia should be determined by a system of coordinates associated with a set of ideas of the Russian myth, while the processing of these ideas in the context of the modernist aesthetics should define the borders of the poet’s own cultural myth, which impacts all his work. This concept allows us not only to develop an unbiased view on the issue of self-identification of the poet, but also to see some common grounds in Rilke’s eclectic art.

The Russian myth came into Rilke’s life in the mid-1890s with Julius Zeyer, a prominent Czech neo-romantic poet who sought inspiration in ancient legends and folklore. Zeyer was a member of the “cosmopolitan circle” of poets in Prague and an avid fan of Russian culture; he travelled to Russia and worked for Panslavist journals. Rilke had regular contact with Zeyer when living in Prague. From his Prague period and, particularly, from Zeyer, Rilke inherited mysticism, idealization of antiquity, Slavophile ideas and boundless love for Russian literature. Later, the young poet found similar qualities in Lou Andreas-Salomé, a Russian-born intellectual and Nietzsche’s friend, the encounter with whom in 1897 in Munich proved

³ “It is becoming clearer and clearer to me that Russia is my homeland, and everything else – is alien,” R.M. Rilke, Letter to N.A. Tolstoy, 1902, in К.М. Азадовский (ed), *Рильке и Россия. Письма. Дневники. Воспоминания. Статьи. Стихи*, Санкт-Петербург 2003, p. 482.

⁴ М.М. Бахтин, *Эстетика словесного творчества*, Москва 1979, p. 89.

⁵ Beginning with Goethe, Orientalism emerged as one of the essential elements of the new European poetry. It is possible that Orientalism is one of the strongest features of European culture since its beginnings in antiquity. As with any cultural phenomenon that is directed outside itself, Orientalism rather speaks of its own culture than the subject to which it is directed. We can consider this to be an attempt to understand ourselves through the image of another, or search for all kinds of geopolitical meanings, or talk on the influence of Eastern civilization, which in the face of Christianity penetrated the heart of western culture. Either way, Orientalism determined many areas of European spiritual and artistic development. The real geographical East usually had little to do with its interpretation and use in European art. Russia and attitudes to it are no exception.

decisive for his destiny. In one of his late letters, Rilke, with his usual lucid insight, observes: “she was one of the most remarkable persons I have ever met in my life (...) without the influence of this outstanding woman my development would not have gone by the ways in which I have been able to achieve something.” By the time of the encounter with Rilke, who was fourteen years younger than her, Lou had been a recognized writer and the author of several God-seeking works on topics of religion and culture. Much has been written on the influence of Lou on Rilke and their relationship. Of particular note are the books by P. Brodsky,⁶ D. Reshetilo-Roth,⁷ A. Tavis⁸ and K. Azadovsky,⁹ who provide a thorough and broad account of biographical details of Rilke’s life and work, concentrating on the “Russian” events of the 1897–1901 period. There is a special focus here on the voyages of Rilke and Lou to Russia, their encounters with Leo Tolstoy and peasant poet Spiridon Drozhzhin, meetings with Russian intelligentsia and artists, trips to the Russian countryside and their impressions of vast Russian expanses. For our purposes, we should firstly consider the ideological context of all these events.

The philosophical quest of Lou Andreas-Salomé was influenced by Nietzschean pessimism associated with the idea of the loss of European culture’s inherent integrity and vital force. It was proposed that the search for these qualities be made in the East. Lou, who was born in Russia, spoke the language and had acquaintances in the cultural circles of Moscow and St Petersburg, was more than anyone else suitable for this task. She had strong Russophile views, which were close to Rilke as well. The basis for these views was the belief that Europe had indeed left behind the spiritual integrity and religious experience, but that all this was still possible and, in fact, existed in Russia, which was vested with the mythical features of a country of naïve people uncorrupted by civilization and therefore capable of historical and spiritual development.¹⁰ The Russian myth that spread

⁶ P.P. Brodsky, *Russia in the works of Rainer Maria Rilke*, Detroit 1984.

⁷ D.A. Reshetilo-Rothe, *Rilke and Russia. A re-evaluation*, New York 1990.

⁸ A.A. Tavis, *Rilke’s Russia. A cultural encounter*, Chicago 1994.

⁹ К.М. Азадовский (ed), *Рильке и Россия. Письма. Дневники. Воспоминания. Статьи. Стихи*, Санкт-Петербург 2003; idem, *Рильке и Россия: статьи и публикации*, Москва 2011.

¹⁰ “The older and more advanced a culture becomes (...) the more surely the time nears when it begins to look back and yearn for that which, in the course of so long a development, necessarily has gone lost: yearns for what is simple, original, naïve, and – as yet unexhausted – still holds and conceals mysteries.” In L. Andreas-Salomé, *Russische Dichtung und Kultur*, “Cosmopolis” XX (1897), p. 572. “Russia – the last nook in the heart

among European intellectual and artistic bohemia was the result of a combination of the fashion for Orientalism, supported by the whole cultural situation of the *Jugendstil* age, and the interest in themes and images supplied in excess by Russian literature. The Russian myth can be identified by a number of specific ideas, complementary to the view of the inferiority of modern Europe.¹¹ The complementary nature of the myth was to offset the shortcomings of reality and preserve the integrity of culture in the era of fragmentation and loss of the ideals of the past. This helped to recreate and update own type of culture, even if covered with the appearance of the other. For many modern artists, finding and creating a “foreign” myth provided momentum to the search for new artistic methods. In literature, the works of Tolstoy, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Turgenev and others had altered the image of Russia and evoked interest in things Russian, stimulating active cultural exchange in the form of translations, exhibitions and performances and making mysterious and undiscovered Russia the desirable destination for European intellectuals. The first time in history, European intellectuals and writers had much to learn from their eastern neighbours. Nietzsche famously said, “Russia is the only country that currently has a future.” The idealised peasant Russia was perceived as an alternative to western industrial development destroying humanity. This perception arose from Slavophile interpretations of works of Russian writers, particularly Dostoyevsky, whose ideas influenced many western philosophers and anticipated European existentialism.¹²

of the Lord, all his beautiful treasure – there (...) they serve the deep piety from which miracles and works of art appeared.” R.M. Rilke, Letter to Helen Voronina, 1899, in K.M. Азадовский (ed), *Рилке и Россия*, p. 146.

¹¹ The mystery of the “Russian” soul, mystical God of Orthodox icons and churches; the deficiency of the rational West and the spiritual superiority of the irrational East; man-the-creator generating his own vision of the world and God, and nation-the-artist able to demonstrate the mystical depths of the soul in the face of harsh conditions of existence; patriarchal way of life in the primordial proximity to nature, its spiritualized objects as the pledge of true being; limitlessness of the space as a prerequisite for the becoming of the unrestricted spirit, etc.

¹² “(...) more insight into the world of Dostoyevsky is happening in Germany at the turn of 19–20th centuries – during the adoption of neo-Romanticism and the rise of a new wave of mythmaking. It was the aspiration of neo-Romantic authors towards their own soul (...) that contributed to the birth of the myth of the soul, and, in fact, of the new God. The most notable attempt to create the myth of the Russian soul was the ‘biographical study’ of Dostoyevsky, written by Nina Hoffmann in 1899. (...) Hoffman sharply contrasted Russia and Europe as a life and mind: ‘while Germans are reasoning, Russians just live.’” Г.А. Тиме, *Немецкий “миф” о Л. Толстом и Ф. Достоевском первой трети XX века*, “Русская литература” 3 (2001), pp. 36-52.

The influence of Lou Andreas-Salomé on Rilke had the character of an all-pervading cultural initiation. Like a man newly knighted, Rilke had not only received from Lou his name, following her advice to change Rene to the more poetical Rainer, but also acquired from her hands his domain. The poet made two pilgrimages to Russia with Lou. The first was during Easter 1899. This trip had a profound impact on Rilke, making Russia an essential part (“resource,” by his own admission) of his inner life. During the Easter service at Moscow’s Kremlin cathedral, the poet experienced a moment of spiritual awakening – a true epiphany. The sensation of connecting with supreme reality that embraced him at that moment would stay with him for the rest of his life: “That was my Easter, and I believe it will suffice for a whole life; the message was given to me writ strangely large in those Moscow nights, given into my blood and into my heart.”¹³ For Rilke, it was more than a religious experience. Most of all, it was the experience of the living embodiment of the cultural myth and, in a sense, the experience of practical theurgy. Now he could consider himself to be one of the preachers of myth, one of the dedicated souls reaching for the great mystery. All this shaped the special world of Rilke’s poetry. Impressions from the Russian experience are evident in the first major work of Rilke – *Book of Hours*. This book is uneven in places; some of the poems resemble his early poems of the Prague period, but there also appears something else. The poet’s spiritual initiation in Russia and the adaptation of the cultural myth dictate him new meanings and images. The first part of the *Book of Hours*, the *Book of the Monastic Life*, was written in only a few weeks between trips to Russia. By this time, Rilke and Lou were totally immersed in the study of “things Russian,” as Rilke called them in his letters. Rilke was enthusiastically studying Russian art, literature, history, religion and language to a level that he could write poetry in Russian. Developing his version of the Russian myth, the poet connected in his idealised vision of the Russian peasant the religiosity with artistry, where the latter was seen as a manifestation of the ability to recreate beautiful and profound images of the divine. The form in which this religious folk-the-artist created for centuries deep and mystical art was, of course, the icon: “If one speaks of peoples as one speaks of men whose development one grasps, so one can say: (...) the Russian folk wants to become an artist. Looking into the darkness of icons, this folk enlivens them with countless Madonnas and

¹³ R.M. Rilke, Letter to Lou Andreas-Salomé, 1904, in *Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke*, transl. by J.B. Greene and M.D. Norton, New York 1947, p. 59.

the creative yearning again and again is making these empty ovals alive with mild countenances...”¹⁴ Not surprisingly, the *Book of the Monastic Life* contains many allusions and references to the Russian reality, and the protagonist of the book is a Russian monk-iconographer.¹⁵

The central concept of the *Book of the Monastic Life* is a typical idea borrowed from the set of ideas of Russian myth: secularised western art, fascinated by worldly glory, is unable to reveal the spiritual depths that are accessible to true art created in the silence of the mystical experience. Here is an example of how this idea is transformed by Rilke into a poetic image:

I have my brothers in the South
 where laurel grows in monasteries.
 I know how human Madonnas are on
 their paintings. I often dream of younger Titians,
 through whom God burns us.
 But when I'm bending for my inner, I see:
my God is dark as if a web of hundred
 roots that drink in silence.
 I'm raising from His heat, but more
 I do not know because my branches are
 deep down and rest just waving in the wind.¹⁶

In the “brothers” from the South one can recognize Italian painters, whose style of painting of biblical subjects Rilke defined as lightweight and devoid of the necessary depth and mystery. In comparison, the inner world of the Russian icon painter is pictured as having a direct and intimate interaction with the divine through a personal mystical experience. The metaphor for God is a web of roots supporting life. According to the poet, the icon painter is different from his western counterpart, because he is close to the hidden, dark source of life and therefore can convey all its mysterious

¹⁴ P.M. Рильке, *Русское искусство*, in К.М. Азадовский (ed), *Рильке и Россия*, p. 608.

¹⁵ P.P. Brodsky performs a line-by-line analysis of texts, pointing to numerous influences from Russian literature (Dostoyevsky, Leskov) and painting (Kramskoi, Vasnetsov, Ivanov). Brodsky also notes that Rilke judges Russian art from positions other than Western art. See P.P. Brodsky, *Russia in the works of Rainer Maria Rilke*, p. 60.

¹⁶ Translations of poems and fragments by the author except *Archaic Torso of Apollo, And Being Dead is Hard Work...*, *For When the Traveler Returns...* by S. Mitchell and *I have Dead Ones...* by A.S. Kline.

depths. Rilke's credo is manifest in this small poem, as he might have seen his art as the work of an iconographer. Note that for Rilke a work of art and an icon both require active participation of the viewer: "(...) what in the highest sense remains valid for every work of art, insofar as it concerns the one who feels and experiences it truly: that it is really only a potential, a provision of a space wherein the viewer must recreate what the artist originally created – a possibility that fulfills itself in the frames of these paintings by virtue of the religious feeling of those who pray before them."¹⁷ Thanks to the text of the *Book of Hours*, Rilke is often seen as a "religious" poet. Some scholars even tend to see the *Book of Hours* as a unique example of an accurate discernment of the Orthodox culture by a European poet. In this respect, it would be interesting to compare the opinions of Russian religious philosophers on this work. F. A. Stepun was, apparently, the first to read Rilke carefully and to discover the poet for the subsequent commentators. In his article *The Tragedy of the Mystical Consciousness*,¹⁸ which was published in 1912 by the "Musaget" publishing house of Russian Symbolists, Stepun unequivocally denies any connection between Rilke's religiosity and Orthodoxy, pointing out instead its pantheistic roots and comparing it with the religious mysticism of Eckhart and Plotinus. Further, Stepun writes: "In the quietness of silence and the darkness of the soul Rilke finds his God as quietness, silence and darkness. But, clothed in the dignity of silence and darkness, God cannot be blamed for movement and creativity." On this basis, Stepun assumes that the religious quest of Rilke turns into antinomy, namely, that a creative man cannot be godlike, if his God is a God of silence and stillness, arriving at the conclusion that Rilke's God is "Nietzsche's God." S. L. Frank, in turn, also noted Rilke's pantheism; he interprets the many images of God in the *Book of Hours* (where God appears as an old man, a neighbour, a bird, a root, a forest, etc.) as reasonable, suggesting that Rilke's God is defined in terms of *concordantia oppositorum*, that is comprehensible through opposites. Frank comments on the unusual for the modern poet personal tone of turning to God in the *Book of Hours*. However, to illustrate this personal tone, Frank chooses the poem *Lösch mir die Augen aus: ich kann dich sehn...*, of which we know now that it was written in the summer of 1897 as a love poem dedicated to Lou.¹⁹ Already in the *Book of Hours* Rilke manifests

¹⁷ Р.М. Рильке, *Русское искусство*, p. 608.

¹⁸ Ф.А. Степун, *Сочинения*, Москва 2000, pp. 73-88.

¹⁹ *Rainer Maria Rilke and Lou Andreas-Salome. The Correspondence*, transl. by E. Snow and M. Winkler, New York 2006, p. 20.

himself as a modernist artist who plays with diverse, often eclectic and sometimes hidden meanings, allowing the reader to perceive his work from various angles. At the same time, Frank, not knowing the details of Rilke's life, makes an insightful observation related to the most characteristic feature of Rilke's religiosity – its connection to the personal experience of revelation: "The most characteristic (...) in the form of Rilke's religious consciousness is that it has an imprint of direct revelation. The poet tells us only that he experienced and learned by personal experience. (...) Rilke sees and feels God with the naivety of infantile consciousness that believes to be the first who caught a sight of something that no one before him did know (...). God is for him an obvious reality, which was discovered by him – the reality it seems he would talk on to others with the same conviction, even if no one before him did not know about it."²⁰ Here, Frank accurately points out what constructs Rilke's mythmaking – his ability to create the world anew, not paying attention to the previous examples – which, of course, is nothing else than the style of a true poet.

By the mid-1900s, Rilke's lively contacts with Russia gradually waned. Even before this, the direct contact with Lou ended, and for the rest of their lives they communicated mostly through correspondence. Many authors believe that at this point the influence of Russian ideas on Rilke weakened, to be replaced by his fascination with Rodin and the French Impressionists. But meeting Rodin and moving to France had a rather random cause related to the opportunity to work on essays and books that he was being commissioned to write on French artists. There was nothing here that could be compared with the all-consuming existential experience gained by Rilke in Russia. It was only through this experience that Rilke became a poet who created and developed his own existential myth. All the subsequent work of Rilke can be seen as the expansion of this myth in the context of European modernism. In terms of form, the Russian myth emerged in the work of Rilke as an attempt to create a verbal *icon*; the poem draws the reader into its space as if entering into a dialogue with the reader and transforming the reader. In terms of content, the poetics of the middle period is based on the global confrontation between man and thing, while the poetics of the late period, on the global confrontation between man and being. In both cases, man, as depicted by Rilke, is a European man carrying the flaws of the modern era. The *thing* confronting this man is an object from

²⁰ С.Л. Франк, *Мистика Райнера Марии Рильке*, "Путь" 12 (1928), pp. 47-95; "Путь" 13 (1928), pp. 37-52.

the departing patriarchal world, which contains within itself the option of transformation and return to the spiritual roots. The same can be said about *being*, which is always adjacent to man and has all the attributes of the holistic mythological being. Here, the recognisable features of the Russian myth do appear, forming the basis of the more general existential myth. Indeed, Rilke's myth is the myth of the flawed hereness confronted with mysterious inner being – invisible but true reality. This reality, the invisible, is treated by the poet as sacral. It is the root, the birthplace, of his religion. The poet's destiny is to connect the hereness with the invisible, making being complete. In order to do so, the poet has to make journeys into the invisible, into the sacral land, where he finds the source of his inspiration and the form of his art. Wandering between the worlds, the poet no longer belongs here. The personal theurgic experience of mythmaking finds itself in the prophetic intonations of the poet, who, like the Angel of the *Elegies*, can pass unscathed through transparent boundaries of being and explore the world on both sides of reality.

Under the influences of Rodin and the Impressionists, Rilke searched for new forms and poetic means, trying to connect his existential myth with aesthetic discoveries of modern French artists. The time spent in Paris became for Rilke a period of development of the *Dinggedicht*: the “thing-poem.” Often, these poems are examples of ekphrasis, when the subject of a poem is a work of art. One of the typical works of this kind is the poem *Archaic Torso of Apollo* written in 1908:

We cannot know his legendary head
 with eyes like ripening fruit. And yet his torso
 is still suffused with brilliance from inside,
 like a lamp, in which his gaze, now turned to low,
 gleams in all its power. Otherwise
 the curved breast could not dazzle you so, nor could
 a smile run through the placid hips and thighs
 to that dark center where procreation flared.

Otherwise this stone would seem defaced
 beneath the translucent cascade of the shoulders
 and would not glisten like a wild beast's fur:
 would not, from all the borders of itself,
 burst like a star: for here there is no place
 that does not see you. You must change your life.

As with other thing-poems, *Archaic Torso of Apollo* is only to a certain extent the description of a specific object. Rilke is interested, first of all, in the innermost essence (“true meaning”) of things, which is understood by him as the only true and real meaning of things in opposition to the vanity of hectic life. The insight of the innermost essence comes through dematerialization of the object and substitution of the object with its eidōs. The “gaze” of Apollo, impossible in a decapitated torso (a part of the flawed *hereness*), has magical attributes. It is as if this gaze is poured inside the body of the sculpture and turned out of its depth on to the observer, who (according to the dedication of this cycle of poems to Rodin) is an artist, a creator. But who is the true observer? Each border and each edge of the archaic torso, like a star from the sky, is looking at man. This is the gaze of being that shines its light from the mysterious depths of the work of art. And it does not gaze calmly; it is full of action and power, its energy is compared with the energy of a wild beast. The poem, which first develops in the traditional elegiac key, suddenly ends with the straight imperative: “You must change your life.” The presence of timeless being, calling from beyond the hereness, requires man to change his life in the face of this supreme being. The need for moral transformation radically changes the course of the poem as well as the course of the entire collection *New Poems*, the second part of which it opens. The very thought of deriving the ethical imperative from the impression produced by the contemplation of the artistic image could not have appeared if the poet had not been under the influence of his Russian experience. Here an echo of the epiphany experienced in 1899 in Moscow is heard. Something related to the impact of the icon emerges. P. P. Brodsky also points out the parallel of meanings of the poem by Rilke and the earlier description of the Apollo Belvedere by Dostoyevsky, who – in the spirit of Schiller – made ethical conclusions from the encounter with the ancient work of art.²¹

The transition from the interaction between “man and thing” to the more general problem of “man and being” is illustrated well by Rilke’s poem *Requiem for a Friend*, written in 1908 on the death of the artist Paula Becker. In this poem, which was addressed to the mystical event of meeting with the deceased friend, the motif of some distant land appears. It is assumed that this land has never been seen by the poet’s friend (thus, it is *invisible*), but somehow is close to her. The poet is asking the spirit of the deceased about the need to travel there:

²¹ P.P. Brodsky, *Russia in the works of Rainer Maria Rilke*, pp. 191-192.

I have dead ones, and I have let them go,
 and was astonished to see them so peaceful,
 so quickly at home in being dead, so just,
 so other than their reputation. Only you, you turn back...
 ...I thought you were much further on. It disturbs me
 ...that you lose a little of your eternity, my friend,
 and that you appear here...

....What do you ask?

Say, shall I travel? Have you left some Thing
 behind somewhere, that torments itself
 and yearns for you? Shall I enter a land
 you never saw, though it was close to you
 like the other side of your senses?

I will travel its rivers: go ashore
 and ask about its ancient customs:
 speak to women in their doorways
 and watch when they call their children.

I'll note how they wrap the landscape
 round them, going about their ancient work
 in meadow and field: I'll demand
 to be led before their king, and I'll
 win their priests with bribes to place me
 in front of their most powerful statues,
 and leave, and close the temple gates.

The scenes of patriarchal life, “ancient work,” “ancient customs” and a temple allow the reader to guess easily what land is in question. This land misses the dead as a forgotten thing would miss its master, and this seems to be so important that the laws of nature can be repealed, overcoming death and making the boundary between the dead and the living transparent. The poet suggests that his visit to this land should help his friend *there*, restoring in some mysterious way the balance of the shaken world. One of the mystical events, the visit of the dead, is balanced by the other mystical event, an imaginary journey through the imaginary land, where the poet is at home. The trip to the imaginary land seems like some kind of sacral ritual, every action of which is carefully recorded in the lines of the poem. As if through a magic lens, the key images of Rilke’s poetics are focused here: thing, far side, nature, duality of existence, childhood, work, simplicity of life, man, mystery, closed, temple. All this creates an atmosphere of

ritual and liturgical solemnity. The possibility to perform this ritual and help those who are now on the other side of life puts the poet outside the regular framework of the world. From the familiar image of the Russian myth, as if from a grain, a mysterious image of open and boundless being is sprouting; the boundaries between the living and the dead, interior and exterior, the imaginary and the real happen to be conditional for this being, and the poet, as if a mysterious angel, wanders across this open space between the dead and the living and has at his disposal all the magical powers to influence the course of events in the world. These motifs are at their peak in the *Duino Elegies*.²² The subjects of *Requiem* sound there with a new beat and power:

And being dead is hard work and full of retrieval before one can gradually feel a trace of eternity.

Though the living are wrong to believe in the too-sharp distinctions which they themselves have created.

Angels (they say) don't know whether it is the living they are moving among, or the dead.

The eternal torrent whirls all ages along in it, through both realms forever, and their voices are drowned out in its thunderous roar.

A vast roaring *being* rushes through the world in all its dimensions, but unlike the rest of nature, man of the *Elegies* sees only a part of it: "With all the eyes the natural world sees the Open. And only our eyes are turned backward..." For this man there is only one way out of the cell of confined existence – the way which goes through the depths of his heart:

See, I'm alive. But why? Neither childhood nor future
shall be smaller... Superabundant being
rises within my heart.

In contrast to the chamber music of *Requiem*, a full, all-surrounding sound of *Elegies* resonates like a chorus of modernist operas. If such a huge chorus posed any questions, then these would be the questions addressed not to man or to his simple things, but to the very being, to the essence of this

²² Rilke began his work on *Elegies* in 1912, when the first two elegies were written (according to a legend, the poet heard the very first lines of the first elegy in the sound of the wind by the walls of the castle of Duino). In the next two years parts of the two other elegies were composed, then after a long break, the entire cycle was completed in the Muzot chateau in Switzerland, in the winter of 1922.

being expressed in its divine supreme nature. The theurgic power of *Duino Elegies* has a strong religious charge, comparable with the ritual of the liturgy.²³

As we can see from the examples given above, for a quarter of a century Rilke's evolution went from spiritual contemplation (*Book of Hours*, *Book of Images*, *Requiem*), through searching for the hidden essence of things (*New Poems*), toward the revelation of the exalted being (*Duino Elegies*, *Sonnets to Orpheus*). The image of being in the *Elegies* completes the synthesis of Rilke's poetics, which is characterized by a connotative chain: *icon-thing-being*. As if some bridge across non-being, *icon-thing-being* reunites the poet's inner world with reality at both sides of existence; the temporary hereness, on the one hand, and unspeakable, invisible openness, on the other. One side of the *icon-thing-being* is turned to man, the other is turned to being. The role of the poet is the actualization of being via incur-sion into the very essence of thing and expression of this act in the form of an iconic image that links the world of man to ultimate reality. *Thing* becomes a central element of Rilke's poetic theurgy. It is regarded by the poet as a mediator between empirical reality and ultimate being. In the moment of profound contemplation, which precedes the transformation of a thing into a work of art, the reality of the supreme world emanates through the surface of the object. This has similarity with the icon. The process of creating a poem becomes similar to meditation, and the resulting work of art has the features of prayer and religious ritual. A thing-poem in Rilke's poetry is nothing but a "myth-thing" in which "empirical objectness is mysteriously connected to the transcendent entity."²⁴ In this equation, the poem is equal to the myth. Ultimately, Rilke's poem aims at becoming a modernist icon – a myth-thing in which being opens to man through the

²³ "The fusion of life and death is just one of many connections that link Rilke's *Duine-ser Elegien* with the spirituality and aesthetics of Russian Orthodoxy. Just as Orthodox belief sustains paradoxes of space and time, so Rilke's *Elegies* work to transcend the boundaries of the delineated world and break down the border between external and internal reality. He attempts this through the use of grammatical devices that obscure demarcations, between 'falling' and 'rising' for example, and incorporating aural and visual moments into his poetry. In fact, the entire mystical expanse of the Orthodox liturgy is recreated in the *Elegies*, as they follow a transformative process that merges musical, verbal and visual incarnations of Eastern Orthodoxy moving from invocation, to contemplation, to transformation and communion. Although Rilke often undermines the external liturgical structure, the essential 'meaning' of the liturgical process, that of spiritual transformation, remains the same." J.S. Cushman, *Beyond ekphrasis: Logos and Eikon in Rilke's poetry*, "College Literature," vol. 29, 3 (2002), pp. 83-105.

²⁴ С.Н.Булгаков, *Свет невечерний*, p. 63.

reality of art. Reviving, the myth becomes part of the hereness. The ritual of living through myth, as well as the act of recognizing (spiritualizing) the thing must be associated for Rilke with his Russian experience. It is not hard to say for him that the home of his spirit is there. This is that sacred land, where the poet was going to in the verses of *Requiem*. And this land is, of course, close to his friend-artist because, according to Rilke, this land must be a homeland for any artist seeking revelations of being. But where is this land? It cannot be found on maps. We hear the poet memorizing rivers, peasants, children, temples of the land, where he might have been, but we should not deceive ourselves: this country is only within him. Is there much of a real country? This does not matter. Where myth is alive, there is a poet alive; his homeland is where the source of his poetry is. The poet for Rilke is Orpheus, fearlessly going into a different, invisible world, in an attempt to find the lost integrity of existence. In Rilke's poem about the famous story, Orpheus tries to rescue his Eurydice – his earthly destiny – but looking back at her, loses her forever. Instead, he obtains a tragic new experience that he brings back with him as if a forgotten thing which has been found there. This thing is related to the exemption from the hereness, it is obtained outside the hereness and is embodied in word, in the outermost and purest word – the thing's εΦδος – the poetic word:

For when the traveler returns from the mountain-slopes into the valley,
 he brings, not a handful of earth, unsayable to others, but instead
 some word he has gained, some pure word, the yellow and blue
 gentian. Perhaps we are *here* in order to say: house,
 bridge, fountain, gate, pitcher, fruit-tree, window –
 at most: column, tower... But to *say* them, you must understand,
 oh to say them *more* intensely than the Things themselves
 ever dreamed of existing.

Revealing to things their innermost essence, the poet connects in his art the opposite worlds, opening the hereness for the gaze of supreme beings. "Praise this world to the Angel (...) Tell him of things." All that things can do here without a poet is just silently cry out to man. So the torso of Apollo gazes at us. So the icon looks at a praying man. The "forgotten" thing longs for the artist, calling out to him in the hope of being recognized and transformed into the work of art. Through the poet things obtain their voices, become heard and recognized in the hierarchy of being. The main feature of Rilke's thing that distinguishes it from the rest of the world is its

ability to reveal hidden spirituality and help the poet to identify and create the invisible: “Live things, things lived for us, are running out and can no longer be replaced. We are perhaps the last still to have known such things. On us rests the responsibility not alone of preserving their memory (that would be little and unreliable), but their human and ‘laral’ value (‘Laral’ in the sense of the household gods.) The earth has no way out other than to become invisible: in us who with a part of our natures partake of the invisible, have (at least) stock in it, and can increase our holdings in the invisible during our sojourn here, in us alone can be consummated this intimate and lasting conversion of the visible into an invisible no longer dependent upon being visible and tangible, as our own destiny continually grows at the same time more present and invisible in us.”²⁵

The poet reveals the hidden meaning of things and brings this meaning into the hereness. “He brings (...) word he has gained.” To see the light of revelation in the objects – the task of the poet; to become poet (that is to “change your life”) – the duty of man and the only way that leads to the attainment of holistic being. Art becomes religion. Aesthetics becomes ethics. In Rilke’s land everyone is poet – the participant in universal mysteries of turning visible things into invisible entities. Being transformed into a modernist icon, Rilke’s poem conveys to us the message of his art: we are here to convert the visible into the invisible. Creation of the invisible occurs during a ritual act that is defined in the lines of the poem with the precision of its rhythms and measures. Paradoxically, all wealth and glory of visual images in Rilke’s poetry serve to reach the final goal which is opposite to the vision, namely, the goal of creating the invisible. But it is a paradox at first glance. Just like our vision creates in the visual cortex of the brain images invisible to outsiders but very real to us, poetry creates its invisible reality that in some other dimension may be no less real than the images in our minds. Only the invisible remains unchanged in the world that is in constant transformation.

Nowhere, beloved, shall be this world, but only within us.
 Life goes on, changing, and the external decreases. Where once
 was a solid house, now stands in the way its image that
 remains unchanged only in our minds.

²⁵ R.M. Rilke, Letter to W. von Hulewicz, 1925, in *Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke*, pp. 372-376.

The external fades out, giving a space to the inner because “(...) even the most visible happiness in us cannot occur if we do not transform it inside.” This motif of *Elegy Seventh* repeats, while expanding, the motif that once appeared in *Archaic Torso of Apollo*, the imperious tone of which remains now in the past, giving way to a milder form of the subjunctive. Man is and shall be always alone between the immense, separated worlds intersecting at the precarious point of the image existing within the man’s mind. And yet, in *Elegies* – in these Orphic songs on man’s mortality and perishability of his world – the hope persists because before all goes away and disappears in the eternal torrent, all always has time to turn into the everlasting and indestructible image – in the pure word. And with the nostalgic tone of “Nowhere, beloved, shall be this world, but only within us...,” the memory of the poet turns again and again to his lover and their mutual universe. But what is this memory? What is this universe? Is it not an echo of that long-ago happiness, those Russian journeys with Lou?

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Teresa Obolevitch

The Pontifical University John Paul II in Cracow (Cracow, Poland)

Russia in Étienne Gilson¹

In the 1920s and 1930s France was overcome by a wave of fascination, or even a peculiar fashion for Russian culture. The reason for a situation like this was the fact that it was in this country that many Russian intellectuals, among whom philosophers, took shelter. In 1922 they were forced to leave the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, Russian thinkers – above all Nikolai Berdyaev and Lev Shestov² – exerted a major influence on French philosophers, and particularly existentialists. The positive effect of the Russian tradition on the French intellectual milieu has been well-documented in literature. However, there are also less enthusiastic opinions concerning this – sometimes blind – rapture that engulfed the French over the Russian culture (e.g. a recent criticism of the “French illusions” was voiced by the sovietologist Alain Besançon in his book *The Holy Russia*³). Against this backdrop of the many diverse appraisals and opinions it is worth considering the approach to Russia and Russian thought adopted by Étienne Gilson, one of the most renowned French historians of the 20th century philosophy, as well as the restorer (along with Jacques Maritain) of the so-called existential Thomism. First, I will mention some of Gilson’s biographical facts which prove his knowledge of the Russian culture, and then I will analyse this French author’s intellectual relations with émigré Russian thinkers.

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² See Ж.-К. Маркадэ, *Проникновение русской мысли во французскую среду: Н.А. Бердяев и Л.И. Шестов*, in Н.П. Полторацкий (ed), *Русская религиозно-философская мысль*, Питтсбург 1975, pp. 150-163; В.П. Визгин, *Николай Бердяев и Габриэль Марсель: к феномену встречи*, “Вопросы философии” 3 (2010), pp. 110-118; idem, *Габриэль Марсель и русская философия*, in А.П. Паршин (ed), *Семинар “Русская философия” (традиция и современность). 2004–2009*, Москва 2011, pp. 214-237.

³ See A. Besançon, *Sainte Russie*, Paris 2012 (the Polish edition: A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś*, transl. by Ł. Maślanka, Warszawa 2012).

1. Gilson's Russian experiences

Étienne Gilson (1884–1978) was dubbed into “the last French humanist.”⁴ He penned many great works, in which he reconstructed – beginning with the Patristic period – the history of philosophy, and to be more precise, the philosophy that came to be known as Christian.⁵ Gilson took an avid interest in various aspects of the Russian civilisation such as the language, arts, philosophy and politics.⁶ It is noteworthy that, as a young professor of the University of Lille, he served as a second lieutenant during the First World War. In 1916 he was captured and put away in the German camp in Burg-bei-Magdeburg, near Verdun. Not wanting to fritter away time, he learnt languages from the other captives, among others Russian from nine Russian officers. He included a remark about that language in his famous work *Being and Some Philosophers* (1949, abridged English edition), where, quoting from André Mazon’s Russian grammar (Paris, 1943), he included an example illustrating the copular function of the verb “to be:” “for a proposition to be a two-term one, its verb must be a mere copula which does not include the predicate in its own meaning. This is so true that some languages, Russian for instance, completely do away with the copula and yet immediately intelligible even to readers whose own mother tongue constant use of it. ‘He old,’ ‘she lovely,’ ‘they students’ do not raise the slightest difficulty in any mind, and nothing can be more clear than the following translation of a correct Russian syllogism: ‘All men mortal; Socrates men; Socrates mortal.’”⁷ There is no doubt that these deliberations bear the mark impressed by the lessons in Russian begun in the German camp.

In 1919 Gilson was in Kharkiv. Later, he regretfully and bitterly reminisced that in Russia St Thomas had been replaced with Marx. Gilson invoked the following episode from his stay in the city. While travelling on

⁴ See О.Э. Душин, *Этьен Жильсон: судьба и дело*, in О.Э. Душин, И.И. Евлампиев (eds), *Альманах “Verbum,”* vol. 2: *Наследие Средневековья и современная культура*, Санкт-Петербург 2000, p. 13.

⁵ See *Vie et Oeuvres d’Étienne Gilson Professeur au Collège de France Membre de l’Académie française*, in J. Maritain et al. (eds), *Étienne Gilson philosophe de la chrétienté*, Paris 1949, pp. 14-21; *Vie, titres et fonctions d’Étienne Gilson*, in *Mélanges offerts à Étienne Gilson de l’Académie française*, Paris – Toronto 1959, pp. 9-58; M. McGrath, *Étienne Gilson. A Bibliography. Une Bibliographie*, Toronto 1982.

⁶ In *Painting and Reality* he mentioned Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera *Boris Godunov*. See E. Gilson, *Painting and Reality*, London 1957, p. 101.

⁷ E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, Toronto 1952, p. 192.

a tram, he turned to a fellow traveller, a red commissar, observing that Kharkiv was a very big city, to which he replied that it was not only big, but also modern, for there were not many churches, but a lot of factory stacks. Gilson remarked that there was no smoke rising out of them, to which the commissar answered that it was Sunday... It was with bitterness that the French philosopher reminisced that after a few days of travelling around the city and being exposed to its indoctrination, he found the prospect of any other conversation depressing.⁸

It was not the only time Gilson stayed in the Soviet Union. In 1922, while already a Sorbonne professor, he was among the first and few French people (owing to his knowledge of Russian) to participate, as a representative of the League of Nations, in a charitable mission in the Ukraine and on the Volga, organising canteens for children in Odessa and Saratov. He wrote about the plight, the rampant famine and disease in reports submitted to the Nansen Committee. Later on, he described his experiences in *The terrors of the year two thousand*: “have only to shut my eyes for a moment to see once more, in the villages of the Ukraine and on the banks of the Volga, the dead children in 1922, whose little corpses lay abandoned in their emptied schools; or again, wandering along the railways, those bands of children reduced to savagery who later were to be mowed down with machine guns.”⁹ Other memories of his stay in Russia are included in *Where is Christianity?* Here are they in their entirety:

“(...) Where did I learn about Christianity? Let me reach even further back into the past. In September 1922 I was in Moscow, Russia, where the revolution and famine were wreaking havoc. At railway stations I was welcomed with portraits of Lenin and Trotsky, and in squares with busts of Karl Marx. There may still have been some remnants of the Catholic Church somewhere there, in Moscow, but I was dubious about that, and irrespective of how things really stood, nobody could show it to me. On the other hand, having walked up and down the streets, I reached the chapel adjacent to the Red Square and the Kremlin walls. A peek into my baedeker assured me that I was standing in the presence of the most famous church in Russia – the Iverskaya Tchassovnia or the Iverskaya Chapel of the Mother of God. There was one more mundane thing in the guidebook: ‘The chapel is normally packed full; beware of pickpockets.’ Indeed, it was so full that many believers were not able to enter, and in order to pray, they were kneeling

⁸ See É. Gilson, *Les Tribulations de Sophie*, Paris 1967, pp. 18-19.

⁹ E. Gilson, *The terrors of the year two thousand*, Toronto 1984, p. 2.

on the steps, in the street and by the walls, behind which there were Lenin himself and the supreme Soviet government on guard. I never learnt if one Christian or another was a pickpocket. But this I know for sure. On the same side of the street, between two guards, a prisoner was walking in our direction. One of the present Christians stood up, approached him and gave him a kiss of peace. I am positive that on that day in front of the Iverskaya Tchassovnia I saw Christ Himself comforting a suffering man. At that time we were not in the church, and the man was not Catholic, but he taught me that *wherever my neighbour was a Christ, there was Christianity too.*¹⁰ Apparently, the stay in Russia was instrumental in not only intellectual, but also spiritual development of the French thinker.

During his stay in Russia, and trying to see how the land lay before a potential French-Russian scholarly cooperation, Gilson wrote to A. Maizon: “each attempt at the resumption of the relations with the Russian colleagues will prove futile if it is not made in collaboration with the incumbent government.”¹¹ Still, quite soon a possibility of establishing relations with the Russian thinkers appeared, which was caused by the emigration of the latter to France. However, as the afore-mentioned A. Besançon observes, the Russian thought had little influence on Gilson’s quest, for he was too strongly attached to the Thomist tradition, which was alien to Russia, though quite popular in the 16th and 17th century. Still, he was presented with an opportunity to meet – in person and through his publications – many authors from that country, e.g. Vladimir Lossky, Alexandre Koyré, Semyon Frank, Lev Shestov. These relations will be explored in the next section. In the meantime, coming back to Gilson’s assessment of the communist regime and the reign of Marxism in the Soviet Union, we should note his comments on Lenin’s *Materialism and Empirico-Criticism*, which he made in *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*,¹² but above all his multi-faceted criticism of atheism (including the kind of atheism that he termed proletarian¹³) as a phenomenon which had a destructive impact on the culture. It was here that Gilson sympathised with Russian religious

¹⁰ I am quoting from the Polish translation: E. Gilson, *Gdzie jest chrześcijaństwo?*, transl. by T. Rakowski, “Człowiek w Kulturze” 8 (1996), pp. 291-292.

¹¹ Quotation from S. Cœuré, *La langue russe et la “carte mentale” de l’Europe au XXe siècle. Réflexions sur l’exemple français*, “Matériaux pour l’histoire de notre temps,” vol. 76 (2006), p. 27.

¹² See E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, London 1928, pp. 291-293, 296, 298.

¹³ See J. Sochoń, *Wizja ateizmu Étienne Gilsona*, Warszawa 1993; idem, *Ateizm*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 248-249.

thinkers, both the ones who had emigrated and the ones who had stayed in the Soviet Union.

Being critical of the communist regime, Gilson wrote: “everywhere where is a State-enforced philosophical conception of the world, no trace of freedom is left either in the political order or in the social and economic orders. Totalitarian States may not agree on the same truth, but each of them maintains that there is an absolute truth, which is its own truth, and that just like its own citizens, the rest of the world should bow to it. (...) [T]he communist revolution was supposed to be a short interlude between the suppression of the *classe bourgeoise* and that of the State, whereas it has in fact resulted in the domination of the working class by a political party and the submission of all citizens to the most efficient State police there ever was, that if the Russian czars.”¹⁴ And towards the end of the Second World War he stated: “German hitlerism, Russian communism, Italian and Spanish fascism and American Deweyism had stood in the way then: each of them had focused on the production of their own brand of citizen, and not one of them had seen a pressing need for the teaching of moral and intellectual virtue.”¹⁵

Gilson also wrote some texts about the current political situation in Russia, which were included in the papers, e.g. *Stalin et la métaphysique*,¹⁶ *Le point de vue de Moscou*,¹⁷ *Une découverte russe*,¹⁸ and *En lisant Staline*.¹⁹ Besides, in the three texts published in “Le Monde” (*Défaitisme et neutralité*, *La neutralité vers l’est* and *La neutralité vers l’ouest*) he advocated Europe’s neutrality in the event of the war between the Soviet Union and the USA. This French historian of philosophy criticised Marxism-Leninism (and Stalinism), that is dialectical and historical materialism (“master of Holy Russia”²⁰) and political economy for their non-scientific character (in the theoretical aspect), as well as for the fact that the states

¹⁴ E. Gilson, *Dogmatism and Tolerance. An address to the Students and Faculty of Rutgers University given at the Voorhees Chapel of The New Jersey College for Women on December the 12th, 1951*, New Brunswick – New Jersey 1952, pp. 3, 6.

¹⁵ *An Abbreviated Biography of Étienne Gilson’s Intellectual Life. 1884–1978* (Except for a few minor additions, all the content in the above Biography is derived from L.K. Shook, *Étienne Gilson*, Toronto 1984), <<http://www.uowc.org/gilson-society/biography-of-etienne-gilson%E2%80%99s-intellectual-life/>>.

¹⁶ “Une semaine dans le monde,” 28.09.1946, p. 11.

¹⁷ “Le Monde,” 9.01.1947, p. 1.

¹⁸ “Le Monde,” 26.08.1949, p. 3.

¹⁹ “L’Aube,” 12.02.1947, p. 1.

²⁰ E. Gilson, *The terrors of the year two thousand*, p. 1.

erected on this wobbly foundation must resort to strength and violence to assure their existence (from the practical perspective). Referring to Stalin's article *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, he ironically observed that the editor of the French edition of 1945 noted that the first translation had been brought out in France in 1937, which was 300 years after Descartes' *Discourse on the Method*.²¹ Thus, Stalin was placed on an equal footing with the French pride, the father of modern philosophy, to whom Gilson devoted his PhD dissertation entitled *Liberty in Descartes and Theology* (1913). Obviously, the neo-Thomist could by no means accept such a juxtaposition. Likewise, Gilson did not have a liking for Hegel (quoted by Marx, Lenin and Stalin), emphasizing that the fact that he lived after Aristotle and St Thomas Aquinas in no way meant that he was better than them.²²

It is worth noting that Gilson took an active part in the debate on the possibility of the existence of Christian philosophy, which took place in France in the years 1931–1936. Addressing all the nuances of that discussion (attended by É. Bréhier, J. Maritain, L. Brunschvicg et al.) would surpass the scope of the article;²³ at this point let me, however, point it out that Gilson took the view that the Christian philosophy is the philosophy pursued by faithful Christians, which separates the order of knowledge from the order of faith, but still recognizes the value of the Revelation for the fruitful development of philosophy as such. For Gilson the most perfect example of Christian philosophy was the thought of St Augustine and St Thomas, who – in his opinion – effected the most perfect harmony of reason and Revelation.²⁴ I am mentioning this fact because the émigré Russian theologian and philosopher Wasilij Zienkovsky took a position on Gilson's stance, though misinterpreted. Namely, in his work *The basis of Christian*

²¹ See É. Gilson, *Les Tribulations de Sophie*, pp. 121-122.

²² See *ibidem*, p. 157.

²³ See, for instance H. Gouhier, *É. Gilson et la notion de philosophie chrétienne*, in *idem, Étienne Gilson. Trois essais: Bergson, La philosophie chrétienne, L'art*, Paris 1993, pp. 37-73; G.B. Sadler (ed), *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation: The 1930s Christian Philosophy Battle*, Washington 2011; G.B. Sadler, *Christian Philosophy in John Deely's Four Ages of Understanding*, "Semiotica," vol. 179, 1/4 (2010), pp. 103-118; *idem, The 1930s Christian Philosophy Battle: Bibliografica Tematica*, "Acta Philosophica" 21 (2012), pp. 393-406; R.J. Fařara, *Spór o rozumienie "filozofii chrześcijańskiej" między É. Gilsonem a H. Gouhierem*, "Człowiek w Kulturze" 19 (2007), pp. 331-355; P. Milcarek, *Rozumienie filozofii chrześcijańskiej przez Etienne Gilsona*, in T. Klimski (ed), *Etienne Gilson. Filozofia i mediewistyka*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 37-48.

²⁴ See, i.e. E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, New York 1938, p. 99.

philosophy (*Основы христианской философии*), and referring to the *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, Zienkovsky stated that Gilson did not recognize the term “Christian philosophy,” considering it nonsensically analogous to the concept of Christian physics or Christian mathematics.²⁵ Zienkovsky himself defended the right to use the term “Christian philosophy,” which can already be seen in the title of his work, and moreover he made an accusation against the French historian of philosophy that he, as a Thomist, laid too great emphasis on the difference between the sphere of Revelation and the sphere of natural reason, and hence theology and philosophy, which soon after St Thomas Aquinas led to the total autonomization and secularization of philosophy, thus laying waste to the western culture. In fact, as he wrote that “to speak of Christian philosophy is equally absurd and the expression should be simply discarded,”²⁶ Gilson meant the standpoints of his opponents É. Bréhier and L. Feuerbach, who both rejected the possibility of combining Christianity and philosophy. Zienkovsky jumped to a conclusion about Gilson’s opinions on Christian philosophy, which is not surprising if we take into account the difference between their philosophical styles: the Thomist one in the case of the French author, and the style based on the Eastern Christianity tradition in the case of the Russian. While Gilson showed the dissimilarity of the orders of reason and faith, at the same time making a synthesis of these (in the form of the Christian philosophy), for Zienkovsky the only possible philosophy was the philosophy resulting from the act of faith – reasoning suffused with Revelation, devoid of any attempt whatsoever at the separation (if only formal) of fides and ratio. Both the French and the Russian thinker employed the term of Christian philosophy, though they understood it differently. The difference in the approach to the philosophising style is also discernible on the part of Gilson, who took a rather critical stance on the Russian thought – not only Leninism, which he criticised, but also religious philosophy with which he became familiar owing to the direct relations with émigré intellectuals. Namely, beside his discussion included in the *History of Philosophy and Philosophical Education*, he makes the following remark: “A philosopher (...) still needs to be taught (...). And who can help him in his need, if not another philosopher who will be for him both a master and a companion during his whole life? The most urgent of all problems, then, is to find such

²⁵ See В.В. Зеньковский, *Основы христианской философии*, in idem, *Христианская философия*, Москва 2010, p. 17; W. Goerdts, *Russische Philosophie. Zugänge und Durchblicke*, Freiburg – München 1984, p. 374.

²⁶ E. Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, Notre Dame – London 1991, p. 3.

a man, and this is far from easy; for in order to be a master, a philosopher should be great, and great philosophers are scarce. Very large countries, like Russia, have never seen one (...)."²⁷ It is an eloquent testimony to how much this French humanist underestimated the tradition of the Russian thought, and Zienkovsky's above-quoted opinion about Gilson complements the picture of mutual misunderstanding between the two styles of philosophizing.

2. Gilson and Russian thinkers

The proof of a different approach to philosophy can also be found in the history of Gilson's intellectual relations with Russian thinkers. Above all, we should mention Vladimir Lossky here (1903–1958). After leaving Russia in 1924, the young Lossky (who had already managed to complete a few years of philosophical studies at St Petersburg University and Charles University in Prague) became a student of Gilson at the Sorbonne. Under his direction he began writing a PhD dissertation. At first, Gilson proposed a purely historical subject related to medieval communities in Provence,²⁸ but eventually Lossky took up the issue of negative theology and cognition of God in Meister Eckhart. He worked on his text for over 20 years, until his premature death which precluded him from completing his dissertation. The Sorbonne authorities decided to confer the posthumous title of doctorant-*à-lettres* upon him. Lossky's work was published in Paris in 1960. His supervisor provided a preface, in which he set out the context of the author's conception and development of the book. He wrote that twice a year Lossky had visited him in his apartment to discuss his work. Gilson thought highly of Lossky's study. At the same time, this French historian of philosophy, whose specialism was the Middle Ages, presented a somewhat different reading of Meister Eckhart's thought than the one by the Russian author. Gilson remarked that Lossky focused primarily on the aspect of the inscrutability of God, while other readings were also possible, e.g. ones based on the notion of being, the One or the Intellect.²⁹ This, however,

²⁷ E. Gilson, *History of Philosophy and Philosophical Education*, Milwaukee 1948, p. 21.

²⁸ See Н. Лосский, *Воспоминания. Жизнь и философский путь*, München 1968, p. 227.

²⁹ See E. Gilson, *Préface*, in V. Lossky, *Théologie négative et connaissance de Dieu chez Maître Eckhart*, Paris 1960, p. 10.

was not the moot point between Lossky's and Gilson's thought. It is common knowledge that the source of Eckhart's work was Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. Whereas St Thomas – one of the medieval commentators of the latter – radically corrected his teachings, “cleansing” them of neo-Platonism, Eckhart not only remained faithful to the neo-Platonic tradition, but also developed it. Lossky was the first to draw attention to the fact that the Nordrhein master's philosophy was similar to the teachings of the last Eastern Christian Church Father – St Gregory Palamas,³⁰ who distinguished between the completely inscrutable nature of God and His activities-energies, through which God manifests Himself in the created world. However, St Thomas stressed the simplicity of God and His existential aspect, which was the thing particularly highlighted by Gilson. As the French thinker Olivier Clément, who, having read Lossky's works, became converted to the Orthodox faith observed: “It is exactly for this reason that the Western Church condemned Eckhart, whereas the Eastern Church recognized the palamitic expressions as articles of faith.”³¹ David Bradshaw, a representative of the western tradition, adds: “One could hardly find a more striking example of the misunderstanding between the two halves of Christendom: a view that Aquinas regards as heretical had, unknown to him, been orthodox in the East since at least the fourth century.”³²

The reason for the discrepancies in the reading of Pseudo-Dionysius, and by extension in the evaluation of Eckhart and Palamas apparently lies in the disparate exegesis of Aristotle's teachings conducted in the Christian East and West in the Patristic Period. Namely, in the West, “the works of Aristotle were translated in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, *energeia* had to be rendered in different contexts by three different terms: *operatio*, *actus*, and *actualitas*. Although this division was inescapable given the resources of Latin, it tended to obscure the unity of the single concept (or family of concepts) underlying these diverse terms. Because of these limitations, the notion of participation in the divine *energeia* made little impression on western thought.”³³

³⁰ See М.Ю. Реутин, “Христианский неоплатонизм” XIV века. Опыт сравнительного изучения богословских доктрин Иоанна Экхарта и Григория Паламы, Москва 2011, p. 11.

³¹ O. Clément, *Orient – Occident, deux passeurs: Vladimir Lossky et Paul Endokimov*. Quotation from К.В. Преображенская, *Богословие и мистика в творчестве Владимира Лосского*, Санкт-Петербург 2008, p. 40.

³² D. Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West. Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom*, Cambridge 2004, p. 256.

³³ *Ibidem*, pp. 153-154.

Both Palamas and St Thomas constructed great syntheses of the Christian thought: the one of the Eastern Christian tradition, the other of the Western Christian tradition. Lossky and Gilson became famous as outstanding commentators and continuators of their respective masters: the Russian – Palamas (whom he chose, among others, being influenced by Eckhart), and the Frenchman – St Thomas Aquinas. What is more, Lossky laid the foundation for the future, 20th-century Eastern Christian thought system, which was constructed by Georges Florovsky in the form of neo-Patristic synthesis. As the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams observed in his PhD dissertation *The Theology of Vladimir Nikolaievich Lossky: An Exposition and Critique* (1975), most probably the Russian philosopher was trying to show the Orthodox Church as a consistent and vital outlook, for Thomism was such a one in the interpretation of his teacher, Gilson.³⁴ Curiously enough, in his famous encyclical *Fides et Ratio* John Paul II quoted Étienne Gilson as an example of a “fruitful relationship between philosophy and the word of God (...) in a Western context,” and Vladimir Lossky as the respective one “in an Eastern context.”³⁵

Interestingly, it was in emigration, precisely in France, that the Russian thinkers turned to the somewhat abandoned heritage of the Byzantine Middle Ages (especially Gregory Palamas), which after all is the source tradition for the Orthodox Church. Whereas in the neo-Thomist milieu the mediaeval tradition – also owing to Gilson – was not disrupted; *philosophia perennis* set the philosophizing canon.

Another Russian-born philosopher who attended Gilson’s seminar was Alexander Koyranskiy (born in Taganrog, better known as Koyré, 1892-1964). They first met on the front during the First World War (Koyré served as a volunteer first in the French army, and from 1916 also in the Russian one, pursuant to the agreement between the French and Russian government). In 1919 he settled in France for good, fleeing from the red terror. The supervisors of his PhD dissertation entitled *La Philosophie de Jacob Boehme* were L. Brunschvicg and É. Gilson, who – according to A. Kojève – called it “one of the best books on the history of philosophy.”³⁶ Gilson also came up with the idea of a book dedicated to the Russian thought:

³⁴ Cf. P. Уильямс, *Богословие В.Н. Лосского: изложение и критика*, transl. by Д. Морозова, Ю. Вестель, Киев 2009, pp. 32-33.

³⁵ See John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, no. 74, <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_15101998_fides-et-ratio_en.html>.

³⁶ See А.В. Ямпольская, *К проблеме феноменальности мира у Мишеля Анри*, “Логос” 5 (2010), p. 246.

La philosophie et le problème national en Russie au début du XX^e siècle.³⁷ Even though Koyré was primarily a renowned historian and philosopher of science, he still remembered about his teacher, which he proved by including his text in the jubilee book written in honour of Gilson.³⁸ Also, in his polemics with Karl Barth, the French philosopher referred to Koyré's reflections, that is to his interpretation of St Anselm's ontological argument.³⁹

As for other influence exerted on Gilson by Russian thinkers, one should mention Semyon Frank's dissertation (1877–1950) *The Object of Knowledge*, and more precisely its abridged French version entitled *La connaissance et l'être* (1937). In *Being and Essence* (1948), in Chapter 9 entitled "Cognition of Being," he cited Frank as a reference, writing that "the object is something perfectly defined, still the definition of it is not familiar to us, and so we need to discover it."⁴⁰ As an existential Thomist, Gilson added that "if the object is defined by its essence, then it is also defined – though in a different order – by its act of being." It is worth pointing out that Frank too – though from a different perspective – advocated the primacy of being over essence, the growing of all things out of the absolute being and further determination of their essence.

Furthermore, Gilson established contact – through Jacques Maritain – with Nikolai Berdyaev (1874–1948), who had him staying in his apartment in Clamart near Paris, and was engaged in polemics with Lev Shestov (1866–1938). The intellectual relations with the latter merit particular attention. As early as 1923 Gilson positively responded to Shestov's article *La nuit de Gethsemani. Essai sur la philosophie de Pascal*, published in the journal "Les Cahiers verts," by sending his own text about Pascal to him. Shestov did not appreciate Gilson's study, observing as follows: "It demonstrates that 'to stupefy' does not mean 'to stupefy' but on the

³⁷ See A. Koyré, *La philosophie et le problème national en Russie au début du XX^e siècle*, Paris 1929, p. 7.

³⁸ See A. Koyré, *Jean Baptiste Benedetti, critique d'Aristote*, in C. Edie (ed), *Mélanges offerts à Étienne Gilson de l'Académie française*, Paris – Toronto 1959, pp. 351-372.

³⁹ See É. Gilson, *Sens et nature de l'Argument de Saint Anselme*, "Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge," vol. IX (1934), p. 29; A.B. Ямпольская, *Идея бесконечного у Левинаса и Коїре*, "Вопросы философии" 8 (2009), <http://vphil.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=64&Itemid=52>.

⁴⁰ É. Gilson, *L'être et l'essence*, Paris 1994, p. 285. In the English abridgement (*Being and Some Philosophers*) this chapter is missing. Cf. С. Франк, *Предмет знания. Об основах и пределах отвлеченного знания*, in idem, *Предмет знания. Душа человека*, Санкт-Петербург 1995, pp. 58-60.

contrary (he finds the article and shows me the phrase): ‘to fix the instability of reason under the stability of the automaton, that is to submit it to the dumb animal, to stupefy it...’ I wonder what he thought my answer would be? That I would agree with him? I replied that what he said was rather interesting. He was offended... His article appeared in a Protestant theology magazine... Remarkable!”⁴¹ He further writes: “Berdyayev told me that he spoke with Gilson about my essay on Medieval Philosophy. But Gilson said nothing about the ideas I expressed there... I showed there that catholic philosophy was under Aristotle’s judgment: ‘poets lie a lot.’ It did not bother him. ‘On the other hand, he said, I have only this reproach to make: why didn’t he talk about the nominalists and the realists?’”⁴² Shestov was interested in Gilson’s works: many a time he referred to his work *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, and even devoted to it the essay *Athens and Jerusalem*, which was first published in the periodical “Revue Philosophique,” and later on was as part of the book of the same title. In a conversation with Benjamin Fondane he said the following about Gilson’s work: “An excellent work, penetrating, well-informed; he speaks of the metaphysics of Exodus but he says nothing of the metaphysics of the *Fall*. He has no understanding of it. To exchange paradise for a fruit, for a *nothing!* He cannot quite see that it is Knowledge that is meant. The Greeks speak through him, there are even textual passages from Spinoza, and he thinks that he has authority from the Bible!”⁴³ Hence, “the French do not really understand philosophy”⁴⁴ – said Shestov. Gilson – having acquainted himself with the Russian thinker’s standpoint which (after Tertulian’s fashion) radically separated Athens and Jerusalem – wrote to him in a letter of 11 March 1936: “In a lecture on humanism, which I delivered at the Congress in Naples in 1924, I also quoted Tertulian’s words: ‘*Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolimis?*’ and I answered: ‘Rome.’ You return to Luter, that is to that which is Luteran and can be found in Dostoyevsky, who is so dear to you. I, for that matter, believe that the Revelation is continued through the agency of the Roman-Catholic Church, and that the mission of the Roman-Catholic Church is to fully present the Revelation.”⁴⁵ Here, we again have

⁴¹ *Conversations with Lev Shestov by Benjamin Fondane* (1934, no date provided), <http://www.angelfire.com/nb/shestov/fon/fondane_full.html>.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ *Ibidem* (06.10.1934).

⁴⁴ *Ibidem* (1934, no date provided).

⁴⁵ Quotation from *Kalendarium życia i twórczości Lwa Szeszowa*, in L. Szeszow, *Apoteoza nieoczywistości. Próba myślenia adogmatycznego*, transl. by N. Karsow, Sz. Szechter, Londyn 1983, p. 223.

the example of two different styles of philosophizing, this time – the tension between Shestov's existential philosophy and fideism, and Gilson's existential Thomism. According to Shestov any attempt at combining *fides* and *ratio* is misguided, whereas it was in that relation that Gilson saw the essence of Christian philosophy.⁴⁶

This study in no way exhausts the subject of the Russian motifs in the life and work of Étienne Gilson, nor his relations with Russian thinkers. However, in conclusion, it is worth mentioning that in his lifetime his name was known above all in the emigration milieu. Currently, the rich heritage of this Parisian neo-Thomist arouses a lively interest also in Russia, where his works are being translated and published, particularly those dedicated to the history of philosophy and Christian philosophy.

Transl. by Łukasz Malczak

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⁴⁶ For further information on this see A. Del Noce, *Gilson e Chestov*, "Archivio di filosofia," vol. XLVIII, 2-3 (1980), pp. 315-326.

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Alexander Usachev

Yelets State Ivan Bunin University (Yelets, Russia)

The Mainstream Influence of Russian Thought on European Philosophy

As a whole the constructive reception of Russian philosophical ideas may be recognised as an essential phenomenon for the European philosophy. At the beginning of the 19th century Russian thought forged active relations with such European professors as Shelling, Hegel and such philosophical schools as the Kantian, Phenomenological one, etc. The habit of simple accessibility of the main patterns of European philosophy became an ordinary fact of Russian scientific life.

The influence of Russian philosophy on European thought is a varied process. However, it cannot be named a general one. During the 20th century and later the vector of the movement ideas was changed. Having thought about the works of F. Dostoyevsky, F. Nietzsche drew the conclusion that the writer was a deep psychologist of the epoch. The common direction of N. Danilevsky's ideas can be found in the famous book by O. Spengler *The Decline of the West*. The school of Husserl's phenomenology laid the foundation for the activity of such philosophers as A. Koyré and his philosophy of science, G. Shpet and his investigation of Hegel's heritage. His translation of *Phänomenologie des Geistes* into Russian is a classic.

Not only mutual influence could be interpreted as a form of being space of Philosophical Europe. The representative of the analytical philosophy L. Wittgenstein was an authentic admirer of L. Tolstoy's literature. During one of the interviews with H.-G. Gadamer, he remarked that on Heidegger's worktable there was often a book by F. Dostoyevsky. Moreover, this great Russian writer is identified as a philosopher in Europe. This peculiarity indicates the number of concepts which have been developed in world thinking. He gives the pattern and psychology type of "the man from underground" to the world literature. The nondescript – in the social sense

– man expresses the will to be a person who “has the right.” The question of this problem could be formulated in the following way: what must the main instance be in the process of recognition? The instances can be internal and external. The internal instance is self-consciousness, reception of the self as a man with unshakeable essence, which is obvious for anybody. The ontological necessity to prove the foundation of his existence is out of the internal reality. For “the man from underground” the external instance of recognition reduces to zero. It is very hard work to penetrate into life situations and order of man’s thinking. Every man in every time is a purpose for another and never a tool, said Kant in the *The Critique of Practical Reason*. Dostoyevsky shows a complex process of self-identification of the man as a person by artistic form. There are many latent and evident obstacles on the way to investigation of the soundness of a being’s relationships. The German thinking of the Enlightenment offered a formal analysis of people’s full age conditions. The Russian writer opened delicate features of the ordinary man’s being, and the conception of “one-dimensional man” by G. Marcuse demonstrates a crushing and devaluation of the idea of an autonomic person.

The facts of the Russian revolution and aggressive atheism greatly influenced European religious philosophy, which has characteristic peculiarities. Many meditations and special analytics appeared at that time. Russian thinkers such as F. Dostoyevsky, N. Berdyaev, S. Bulgakov and others, made a perfect and true “diagnosis” of the developing of atheism in the history of Russia, as a new type of a religion. Such qualities as purposefulness, fanaticism, and common phenomenology bear witness to that. We can remark the differentiations in the sphere of questions about the Truth and epistemological aspects between religion and atheism. The representatives of the French religious philosophy took this idea up as their activity. Sometimes a very emotional reaction of European thinkers, who followed the Russian historical dynamics, occurred. “To declare the war on God – this is a religious act!” – wrote J. Maritain. He thus referred to F. Dostoyevsky’s discourse about the Russian people in the situation of social changes. “The Russian have been becoming atheists too easily... Our people have become atheists not as pure ones, but they will believe in atheism as a new faith without fail, and will not notice that they have believed in zero.”¹

M. Heidegger’s heritage excludes the program text *Nihilism*. “Nihilism” became the base for construction of universal negotiation of the usual and

¹ Ж. Маритен, *Религия и культура*, in idem, *Знание и мудрость*, transl. by Л.М. Степачев, Москва 1999, p. 79.

well-established values. He writes: “The word nihilism came into vogue through Turgenev as a name for the notion that only what is perceptible to our senses, that is, only beings that one experiences oneself, only these and nothing else are real and have being.”²

The field of religious philosophy was cultivated by a common movement of thought of the Russian and European philosophers. According to memories of E. Gilson, whose meditation about the influence of philosophy on theology, philosophical ideas have a great significance in the formation of the contemporary religious picture of the world. Particularly, Bergson’s ideas had greatly influenced the new generation of students of theology. The process of interaction and influence of Russian thought on the formation of the 20th century’s polemical space could be considered as natural. Such Thomist philosophers as E. Gilson, G. Marcel, J. Maritain were acquainted with Russian culture very well. For instance, they pay attention to the decision of the question of culture and civilization.³ Maritain departs from this position and formulates his own theory. He identifies culture and civilization in the following way: “Civilisation could be named in such a way, when it is understood as a culture, that is an authentic humanistic and intellectual *par excellence*, moral and spiritual (in the broad sense of the word) development.”⁴

Dostoyevsky’s meditation on the Western Church evoked specific resonance and provided a scientific reason for the reflection about the priorities between religious quietism and social activity of the Church. As for other members of the journal’s “Esprit” group, for Berdyaev, Dostoyevsky’s idea of the “The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor” had a great significance in the definition of religion’s destiny in the contemporary world. The context of one’s development was connected with religious philosophy. So, Berdyaev remarked: “‘The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor’ was always of paramount importance for me. In it I have seen the image of Dostoyevsky’s creativity. For me the Catholic pattern of the Legend was presented as a derivate. ‘The Great Inquisitor’ is the world beginning which various shapes and opposing forms – Catholic and authoritarian religion, communism and a totalitarian state.”⁵

² M. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, transl. by F.A. Capuzzi, vol. 4: *Nihilism*, San Francisco 1991, p. 3.

³ “The many German and Russian thinkers oppose civilization to culture...” See Ж. Маритен, *Религия и культура*, p. 40.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ Н.А. Бердяев, *Самопознание (Опыт философской автобиографии)*, Москва 1990, p. 168.

The Russian philosopher studied the Western type of thinking in emigration. The classical books by Kant and Hegel could not provide him with an authentic view of the European outlook as a whole. Berdyaev's activity was wide-enlightening and his written output was impressive. Besides, he was in dispute with proponents of Thomism, which proved an important page in his professional biography. In the group "Esprit" Berdyaev argumentation very often led to objection. The philosopher heard the opinions which were opposed to his theory of the world and society. They were formed by G. Marcel, J. Maritain, Ch. Du Bos, etc. **The reality of the discussion** could be assimilated to the elements of ancient cosmogony, where the struggle between the hot and the cold generates all things. In this spirit, the contours and details of religious philosophy were perfected. It was an indelible element of the Russian philosophical culture, as well as French Thomism and personalism.⁶ Berdyaev's late works are considered really personalistic. However, Thomist philosophers subscribed to the personalism propounded by E. Mounier's "Esprit."

Russian thought exerted an influence on the analytical philosophy of L. Wittgenstein. One of the postulates of this direction is: hard and complex things have to be expressed simply and understandably, according to the principle of words' economy. Wittgenstein writes: **"Are you a bad philosopher then, if what you write is hard to understand. If you were better, then you would make it easy to understand what is difficult. – But who says that is possible?!** [Tolstoy]."⁷

There are many examples of the communication between Russian and European philosophers. Many ideas of the Russian philosophy found their explication in the philosophical systems of later authors of the philosophical sphere. These ideas belong to V. Solovyov, S. Frank, P. Florensky, and the like.

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⁶ See *ibidem*, pp. 246-250.

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Maxim Manuilsky

“Human Being” magazine, The Russian Academy of Sciences (Belgorod, Russia)

Institute of Human Research. Historical Reminiscences

In 1991 the Institute of Human Research was established within the system of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Its main task was to conduct complex multidisciplinary studies of the human being. In Soviet Russia, attempts to create a special institution that would be engaged in the studies of man and his living conditions relate to the 1920–30s. Moreover, the key role in these studies belongs to a dialogue-confrontation between Soviet and Western social thinking. One of the project versions was proposed by the national scientist Bruno Adler (1874–1942).

Bruno F. Adler, an ethnographer and manager of museum studies, was acknowledged by the scientific community as early as in the pre-revolutionary period. After the revolution he continued his research activities. From 1922 to 1927 he lived abroad with a scientific mission. There, in 1925, Bruno Adler wrote an extensive article *The Present-Day State of Human Science in the USSR*, which was published by a German publishing house.¹ The article offered a detailed “objectivistic” description of what was going on in different branches of social sciences and the humanities, existing “losses” and achieved “innovations”. According to the author, further scientific research would require an establishment of the Central Institute of Human Research that would support ethnographical, anthropological, psychological, medical, biological and other types of scientific studies.²

¹ *Der gegenwärtige Stand der Menschenkunde in der U.d.SSR*, “Archiv für Anthropologie. Braunschweig” 1930, pp. 29-43.

² The author had a tragic life. After the article had been published in 1930, Adler was persecuted by some members of the scientific community backing up the existing regime. He was first dismissed from all positions, and arrested in December 1933. In March 1942 Adler was shot.

In all fairness, it is worth saying that the interest in human studies was already great in the early 18th century, when the first institutionalised scientific schools began appearing in Russia (under the European influence). Such a focus on the human being was to a large extent motivated by the rationalistic perception of science and knowledge as factors enabling to refine habits, promote the triumph of law and formation of a just social order. The feature typical of life in Russia was that such an ideology was implanted from above. It is enough to recall the Herculean efforts made by Peter I, who sought to “Europeanise” or “culturise” the country, at least, the nobility and merchants. The reforms proposed and introduced by the tsar, including an educational reform, were highly appreciated by French intellectuals. In spring 1717, when Peter I visited Paris, he was elected “Academician above all existing degrees” of the Paris Academy of Sciences.”³

The projects initiated by Catherine II were not as large, but no less ambitious. Clearly impressed by the idea of “tabula rasa,” the Empress set out to create a “new breed” of people, a harmoniously developed person brought up on science and arts. The practical implementation of this concept was entrusted to Ivan Betsky (from 1762 to 1779 personal secretary to Catherine II). It was he who established a Foundling Hospital in Moscow, Smolny Boarding School, wrote a series of didactic texts for the Empress, including the treatise *General Educational Institution for the Youth of Both Sexes*.⁴ It is a well-known fact that French enlighteners had close relations with and admired the educational activities carried out by Catherine II. The Smolny Boarding School was patterned on the model of the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr; Jean-Baptiste le Rond d’Alembert was proposed to become a tutor of the heir to the throne Pavel (but the thinker refused).⁵ It is worth pointing out that all these “transformations” were voluntary. In addition, when assessing the projects initiated by Catherine II and Betsky, there inevitably arises the idea that the famous Lyceum in Tsarskoye Selo, attended by Alexander Pushkin, can be regarded as a continuation (attachment) of their program only in relation to boys of the nobility.

In the 19th century Russian social thinking became enriched with new trends in human studies, which in the second half of the century would

³ А. Ангрени, *Культурное взаимодействие Франции и России в 18 веке*, in *Россия – Франция. Век Просвещения. Русско-французские культурные связи в 18 столетии*, Ленинград 1987, p. 22.

⁴ О. Чайковская, *Как любопытный скиф...*, Москва 1990. See Chapter IV “О ‘новой породе’ людей.”

⁵ А. Ангрени, *Культурное взаимодействие Франции и России в 18 веке*, p. 23.

acquire the name of “positivistic knowledge,” and would not be associated with the “reformatory and educational activities” of state governors. Nevertheless, this trend would mostly develop under the influence of the European intellectual tradition. In 1824, a native of Estland, Karl Baer who in 1834 joined up the state service in Russia, published a book *The Lectures on Anthropology for Self-Education (Vorlesungen über Anthropologie für Selbstunterricht bearbeitet. Erster Theil)* in Königsberg. The author of the book understood his task as to give an intellectual an opportunity to study himself, to put science into service of man: “Natural science should, after all, become a part of general education, and cease to be a sacred thing open only to the few.”⁶ Karl M. Baer laid the foundations of the “humanistic paradigm” in national science. As one of the founders of the Geographical Society and the Ethnography Department of the Academy of Sciences, he placed emphasis on a specific historical, as we would say today, empiric, applied character of human research and expanded it beyond theoretical, speculative limits.

The proposed program of scientific research was implemented and developed in our country for over 100 years, and was critically revised only after strong ideological pressure on social science, and as a result of the boom and differentiation of social sciences (psychology, sociology, social statistics, anthropology, etc. achieved a status of independent sciences). However, in the late 1920s, i.e. in the period of our interest, the above-mentioned paradigm, though updated, still persisted.

In 1928, the Academy of Sciences began to publish “The Human Being” magazine. The editorial board was formed of the most eminent scientists of those times, the cream of the national research school: V. Bartold, L. Berg, N. Marr, S. Oldenburg,⁷ V. Omelyanovsky, I. Pavlov, V. Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky, and Yu. Filipchenko.⁸ On the one hand, the magazine sought to offer to its readers a complex, interdisciplinary approach to man, but, on the other hand, it continued the traditions established by Karl Baer. Here are the main topics touched upon in the magazine: embryology, morphology, physiology, genetics and eugenics, hygiene and public health, ethnical anthropology, paleoethnology, material and spiritual culture, linguistics, geography, demography and statistics.

⁶ Quotation from: С.Ф. Ольденбург, *К.М. Бэр и изучение человека*, “Человек” 6 (2008), p. 21.

⁷ The said Oldenburg’s article opened the first issue of the magazine.

⁸ С.Н. Корсаков, *Журналы “Человек” в России*, “Человек” 6 (2008), p. 8.

Unfortunately, only two issues were released. For chronological reasons, Adler could not use the magazine for his article. But the common disciplinary background and depth of scientific approaches is evident. Adler focuses on the following disciplines: anthropology, primitive culture, ethnography, ethnology, geography, social statistics, archeology and museum management studies.⁹ The author speaks of the scaling down of anthropological and ethnographical studies, liquidation of many scientific institutions, lack of qualified staff and shortage of scientific printed matter. In our opinion, the issue of the above-mentioned “Human Being” magazine in the late 1920s, demonstrates positive changes in the scientific environment. However, it did not last long.

It is worth mentioning another two outstanding projects. They relied on the biological and evolutionistic standing, including genetic research that gained force in the 1920s. In any case, they dealt with the problem of modification of human nature – a topic not characteristic of traditional anthropology, ethnography, etc.

In March 1909, the famous Professor of Moscow University Grigory Kozhevnikov (1866–1933) delivered a public lecture “The Future of Man” at the Historical Museum. The author, drawing on Darwin’s theory of evolution, put forward an idea that biological science can drastically change the life of man and society, accelerate social progress and open up a “bright future.”¹⁰

We’ll get back to the “bright future” later on, and now let’s talk about the project developed by Georgy Segalin (1878–1960), not as famous, but no less original Russian scientist. As a practising physician, Segalin was carried away by the issues of human genius, and in the mid-1920s he launched a special magazine “Clinical Archives of Genius and Talent (Europathologies).” The magazine was welcomed by foreign psychiatrists: A. Forel, E. Kretschmer, W. Lange-Eichbaum. In particular, the latter wrote: “I believe it is very important and valuable for science that ‘Clinical Archives of Genius and Talent’ was also published in German so as to make it available on an international level.”¹¹ Perhaps, Dr. Segalin was ready for such developments. Back in 1921 he initiated the creation of an International Institute of Studies of Great Works. A detailed program of its activities was

⁹ Б.Ф. Адлер, *Современное состояние науки о человеке в России*, “Человек” 4 (2008), pp. 11-19; “Человек” 5 (2008), pp. 5-14.

¹⁰ Н.И. Вавилов, *Этюд об эволюции*, “Человек” 6 (2008), p. 143.

¹¹ Quotation from: А.П. Кормушкин, *От патографии до европатологии*, “Человек” 1 (2008), p. 22.

presented by the scientist to the Ural medical community.¹² The project was carefully worked out, including its organizational structure. In this article we can only name the key routes of study: collective creative work, arts and crafts of peoples with low- and high-level of culture, class creative work, artistic works of children and savages, infant prodigies, insane persons, genius and gifted people, etc.

Despite the ideological proximity of this project of “class arts” to the one by the authorities, it was never implemented. Perhaps, the problem was not only in practicability of many tasks put forward by Segalin. By that time the Institute of Brain Studies and Mental Activities led by V. Bekhterev had already been in operation, and the Segalin Center could in some aspect inevitably duplicate the work of this institute. Besides, the “international” cooperation would be rather difficult for the country that survived the civil war and foreign intervention a while before.

Let’s get back to the “bright future.” The Bolshevik ideology, which was predominant in the country at that time, believed it necessary to create a new man and change the human nature. That is why all similar ideas could hardly be opposed by new leaders. However, these ideas were criticised by European intellectuals. The standpoint of Bertrand Russell, an English humanist and philosopher, who was a convinced advocate of socialism, is quite typical. In 1920 he, being a member of the English delegation, visited Petrograd and Moscow and met with Lenin and Trotsky. In fact, he had had a liking for the architects of the “bright future,” but after the visit he changed his mind. He presented his new point of view in the book *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*, which was published in London that very year. Russell’s most convincing argument was as follows: “The final reason for the whole chain of evil lies in the Bolshevik ideology: its dogmatism of hatred and trust in brutal force as a tool allowing the change of human nature.”¹³

We’ve done a brief review of the approaches to the human being, which were applied in national science to clarify the context of the article by Adler. Proceeding from this review, we can state that many ideas and projects did not come to his focus. But, in general, he caught the main trends, and the article aroused interest of German publishers. Adler claimed to

¹² Г.В. Сегалин, *Институт гениального творчества. Проект международного института гениального творчества*, “Человек” 6 (2008), pp. 25-32.

¹³ Quotation from: Г.С. Батыгин, *Три вопроса лорда Бертрана Рассела русским большевикам*, “Человек” 1 (1991), p. 63.

know nothing about it being published.¹⁴ Speaking in terms of the history of science, it does not matter how the materials came into the hands of the publishers. The fact of its publication is much more remarkable and logical. By that time Germany had already had a rich tradition of the studies of man within different disciplines: economics, sociology, psychology, ethnography, etc. That is why the publication of the article prepared by the scientist from Soviet Russia should be perceived, first of all, as a normal element of the scientific discourse. But there is another task to be touched upon: the one of assessing the state of sciences of man in the USSR. And the fact that this estimate was initiated by the “Soviet” scientist is of no importance. On the contrary, it is an advantage, since unlike any German specialist in Russia, the author knew the situation inside out.

Finally, this publication is to be assessed in a wider intellectual and cultural context. As we have just mentioned, in the first half of the past century, Germany had a well-established tradition of empirical studies. Such well-known scientists as Max and Alfred Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, Adolf Levenstein and others were among their initiators and authors. Starting from the 1910s, a number of large-scale studies of the working problem were carried out, and scientists assessed both the economic conditions and subjective perception of life by the people.¹⁵ It is essential to point out that such works were carried out under the auspices of a non-governmental organisation, the Union of Social Policy. After all, Germany of the 1920–1930s was a place of the origin of philosophical anthropology associated with such names as Max Scheler, Arnold Gehlen, and Ernst Cassirer. And it was philosophical anthropology that was taken as the key theoretical concept, a kind of “Institute of Human Research.” Nevertheless, I might suppose that German scientific community was also interested in *another* model of the Institute of Human Research (developed by Adler) and relevant research works. Why?

The case is not only in a notorious German formalism.

Speaking from the pages of the German magazine, Adler stated: “traditional” humanistic studies experiencing global crisis can be revived only by way of creation of a centralized Institute of Human Research. I think that the German scientific community of that period (up to the Nazis coming

¹⁴ С.Н. Корсаков, *О Бруно Адлере и Институте человека*, “Человек” 4 (2008), p. 8.

¹⁵ К.М. Мануильская, *Становление и развитие эмпирических исследований в немецкой социологии*, “Социологический журнал” 1 (2010), pp. 88-89.

to power) considered such a model unacceptable, whereas Soviet Russia perceived it as the only possible.

However, this idea was implemented in the USSR only in the early 1990s. The establishment of the Institute is indissolubly connected with the name of Ivan Frolov (1929–2000). The decision to set up a scientific institution resulted not only from socio-political but also intellectual changes: the priority of pan-human values, development of a new (real) humanism, transformation of principles of scientific ethics into every-day regulators of scientific activities.

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Tadeouch Adoulo

National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Minsk, Belarus)

The Ontological Basis and Humanistic Potential of V. I. Vernadsky's Social and Anthropological Projects

The year 2013 marks the 150th anniversary of Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky's birthday. The scientific and intellectual output of this great scientist and thinker of the 20th century embodied a lot of brilliant ideas and discoveries, whereby he took the lead over the historical era in which he lived and worked as a researcher.

First of all, even though humanities pay attention to his Noosphere theory, the complex of this researcher's social views is sometimes reduced only to his noospheric project. This is not entirely correct. The Noosphere doctrine is of formidable importance, yet it is not the only theoretical achievement of the thinker in the field of social issues.

Even in his natural scientific research Vernadsky constantly went beyond the bounds of natural science and into the field of metaphysics, especially in those cases when he worked on the theory of "the living substance," on which he worked all his life. Moreover, Vernadsky was an active public figure, directly and vigorously reacting to changes in the country's social and political life. He fully comprehended it and took part in it. Therefore, it seems important to consider Vernadsky's relation to humanities in general and philosophy in particular, to science as a product of the world's collective intellect and as an important social institution, to various forms of world order, to the world wars, as well as to the actual practice of transformative processes in the country.

In his youth Vernadsky decided to devote his life to science, social and journalistic activity in order to improve human living conditions. In his diary on May 27, 1882 he made the following entry: "My goal is to acquire knowledge about all things man can know at the present, his powers (and especially mine) and time permitting. I want, however, to increase the supply of information, at least partially, so as to improve the state of man.

Unfortunately, this improvement more often than not depends not only on scientific knowledge and its application to the struggle with nature, but also on fighting with people and on political activity. Irrefutable, scientific and logical current affairs journalism is a powerful instrument here.”¹ Besides, the young Vernadsky considered personal knowledge the most essential condition of personal power, or – more correctly – personal independence. And he reached this goal in his life: he always took decisions himself and rarely listened to anybody.

Standing for changes in the Russian social system and its humanization, Vernadsky revealed the essence of the political doctrines predominant at that time, comprehensively analyzing possible urgent social reforms as well as their implementation in the country. In his views on the future of Russia he disagreed with both the ideologists of the so-called conservative doctrine focused on further preservation of the existing order, and socialist revolution theorists counting on a radical break-up of social foundations followed by proletarian dictatorship. Vernadsky was one of the theorists and organizers of the Constitutional Democratic Party. However, he thought the presence of several parties in political life, their joint cooperative activity aimed at building more humane society, possible and necessary, because “only with the co-existence and mutual struggle of different answers given by different political programs, appears the possibility that the right decision will be forged in the end.”²

As a proponent of democratic reforms in the country, Vernadsky spoke critically against those who were completely indifferent to social life and lived as “foreigners in their own country.” He noted that the crisis, “which befalls the peoples and states only once in a thousand years of history, strongly demands the effort of all our forces, our wholehearted participation in public life at the moment, because we are making flesh of the flesh, bone of the bone of the Russian people, and we cannot live without and separately from Russian life. We can and we must determine our participation in life, drawing only on considerations of moral and civic duty. The public weal should take precedence over personal interests and habits.”³

While not a supporter of violence against the person, Vernadsky fought for amnesty for all participants in the Russian Revolution of 1905–1907, and stood for the abolition of death penalty. “The human person – he noted

¹ *Страницы автобиографии В.И. Вернадского*, Москва 1986, p. 33.

² В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, Москва 1995, p. 60.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 63-64.

– is the most precious and inalienable entity, which can be found in the world. It is closely related to the human mind – everything good and valuable is concentrated in it. Nobody can or must encroach on its existence. Finally, all the age-old work of humanity is for the sake of its preservation and development. Every murder is horrid and cannot be justified by any practical considerations, no terror can be justified; yet worse is the form of state life that legalizes the murder of a person by another person.”⁴ Vernadsky distrusted dictatorship in any form and, naturally, could not positively accept the October Revolution of 1917. In April 1918, he noted in his diary: “The sense of justice has been violated, the culture has become degraded and nothing has been achieved in the sense of a general improvement of life and poverty reduction. Poor results of the socialist ideology.”⁵

It is quite clear that the interpretation of current anthropological problems, as well as the issues of social development and direct participation in social and political activity require serious philosophical knowledge and a sufficiently high level of philosophical culture.

It should be at once noted that Vernadsky was not engaged in the systematic study of philosophy, and his attitude towards it was ambiguous and constantly changed. On the one hand, the scientist admitted philosophy and its role in the development of scientific thought. “Without philosophical work – stated he – scientific thought cannot act – and the deepening of neither scientific hypotheses and theories nor cosmological mental constructions cannot go in an intensive way.”⁶ On the other hand, he categorically denied the ability of philosophy to achieve “general validity” to go “deeper than science in understanding the surrounding world,”⁷ and he also denied its capacity for empirical generalizations. “Never – he wrote – can any scientifically studied phenomenon, any empirical scientific fact, or any scientific empirical generalization be put to an end without a trace in verbal images, logical constructions or concepts – in those forms which have become a framework of philosophical thought for the development, synthesis and analysis of the former.”⁸

Certainly, Vernadsky correctly observed that philosophy through its concepts (the conceptual-categorical system) cannot really “express away”

⁴ Ibidem, p. 120.

⁵ В.И. Вернадский, *Дневники. 1917–1921. Октябрь 1917 – январь 1920*, Киев 1994, p. 70.

⁶ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, Москва 1988, p. 314.

⁷ В.И. Вернадский, *Дневники. 1926–1934*, Москва 2001, p. 194

⁸ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, p. 308.

any empirical fact. But it is not intended to it; it cannot and does not wish to substitute for natural sciences. It has another role: to analyze, organize and summarize the empirical evidence obtained by other sciences; it is to create an image of the world, to find a place for a man in this world, to reveal the historical forms of relations between man and nature. Natural scientists themselves cannot solve these problems, which is confirmed by current practice. Overall, in this periodically changing assessment, there is a clearly positivist setting, typical of the vast majority of natural scientists, and it is seen by the philosopher.

Yet, the influence of philosophy on Vernadsky's outlook is indisputable, though he – as it was noted above – never studied philosophy systematically. Whatever his attitude to philosophy was, as a scientist working in a completely new, unknown areas of science, Vernadsky had to think *dialectically*. And he did so. Therefore, with good reason, we can speak about Vernadsky's *dialectical worldview*. For example, he thought it necessary to create a system image of the world, although at one time he commented on the *Dialectics of Nature* by F. Engels quite critically. The scientist complained: "I was always surprised by the lack of desire to embrace Nature as a whole, displayed in the field of empirical knowledge, where we, notably, can do it. We often offer a simple collection of facts and observations, while we can provide something more integral."⁹ Vernadsky dialectically interprets science itself as a form of theoretical consciousness. He sees it as a natural product of the developing world, the collective mind. Therefore, for its advance combined efforts of scientists of all countries and nations are required. All sorts of boundaries and artificial barriers are highly sensitive to both scientific thought and science in general; they thoroughly stifle its natural progressive course. In this regard, Vernadsky was an internationalist in spirit and in practice. He was not only a member of several foreign academies, but also a direct organizer of scientific communities abroad, a founder and the first president of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, a rector of the University of Tauride in Crimea. At a point, Vernadsky was hoping that "this [second – T.A.] World War will be the beginning of a new era – in the storm and thunder the noosphere will be born. A new state of life on our planet, which have been prepared during thousands of years, utopians' dream will become a reality, when the war – the organized murder, hunger and malnutrition can relatively quickly disappear from our

⁹ Ibidem, p. 411.

planet.”¹⁰ Their hopes for the future peace of the world have been linked to the masses as “a conscious political force.” But at the same time he understood that under the circumstances of international confrontation, the active use of scientific discoveries for military purposes, as well as the achievement of military superiority over the opponents, and even over the neighbours, which the world wars had clearly demonstrated, the idea of “an open science” could not be attained yet. And it is with this very idea – the idea of engaging the collective mind of the world for the sake of the humane future of the human civilization – the scientist linked the concept of the noosphere development.

Another important feature of Vernadsky’s *dialectical* thinking is a vision of events and facts in constant motion – in the formation, development and struggle of opposing tendencies. In particular, he foresaw a further sharp and uncompromising struggle between states. That’s why he called for a full support and development of science. It is important to note that in his published works, manuscripts, letters and, in particular, the diaries which he kept regularly throughout his life, Vernadsky – not as a scientist, but as a philosopher – thoroughly and in detail theoretically reproduced various historical stages of the Russian state along with the life of its various social strata, and especially of the intellectuals.

It is very impressive that the spectrum of Vernadsky’s science interests in the field of humanitarian knowledge is so broad and fundamental, beginning with the issues of morality, love, marriage, family, art, and ending with the problems of social and political structure of the state and the world. He constantly addressed these questions in his diaries and letters. We should give credit to this great scholar and encyclopaedist. He proved his best not only in natural sciences, but also in social disciplines. Vernadsky provided scientists with a lot of tasks, many of which still have not been solved, and some of them are not even mentioned by his biographers.

For example, analyzing the consequences of the First World War, he fathomed the complex issues of social psychology. Vernadsky came to the important conclusion that “the war has not only created the innumerable changes of financial situation in a short term, caused barely conceivable shocks in economic and public events, brought a terrifying amount of suffering (...) It has no less penetrated into spiritual life, profoundly affected

¹⁰ В.И. Вернадский, *Несколько слов о ноосфере*, in О.А. Карчевцев (ed), *Грёзы о Земле и небе: Антология русского космизма*, Санкт-Петербург 1995, p. 105.

the psyche of individuals, the understanding of historical processes and spiritual foundations of the existing order.”¹¹

Vernadsky deeply cared about the national question in Russia, and particularly about the Ukrainian issue because of its severity and magnitude. He believed that “the Ukrainian (Little Russian) nation formed the specifically delineated ethnographic identity within the national consciousness. Due to that fact, the efforts of people – closely or distantly related to the country by their nation – to turn it into a simple ethnographic material to reinforce the dominant nation were and still stay unsuccessful.”¹² Despite the actively pursued Russian policy of “centralism” and the specific measures which were taken, “the national life in Ukraine has not disappeared.” This fact should be admitted. Together with the fact that “neither prosecution by the government, nor the lack of public support has suspended the work that is put in – in the interests of their people – by the Ukrainian intellectuals.”¹³ Given the situation, it is important to remove any governmental level restrictions for Ukrainians in the literary and cultural work, to revive the Ukrainian language, etc.

Vernadsky’s work covers the question of autonomy, which was topical for Russia in the early twentieth century. The scientist did not agree with the official program of the Constitutional Democrats on the national question, which relied on the central government in their view, serving the preservation of the guarantor of national unity in Russia. Taking into account diverse geographical conditions in Russia, he thought it was necessary to give local people the right to decide about their own affairs based on local laws. Of course, these local laws cannot determine all the conditions of life; they are much narrower than the laws adopted by the parliament, nevertheless they are inviolable laws which must be respected. In pursuance of these laws, local autonomy and freedom of the national life are stated, since “it is desirable that the fields of provincial autonomy coincide with the fields of homogeneous population of one nationality, inasmuch as it is possible.”¹⁴

Vernadsky was acutely aware of the danger posed by centrifugal forces in Russia. To reduce the impact of these destructive forces he proposed to solve the problem by learning the history, language, ethnography, literature of the nationalities living in Russia at the state level, i.e. suggested to use

¹¹ В.И. Вернадский, *О науке*, Санкт-Петербург 2002, vol. 2, p. 56.

¹² В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 212.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 218.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 238.

the strong potential of science and culture. These ideas are still relevant to modern Russia.

The researcher was also occupied with other important issues of social development and social philosophy. For example, in the scientist's diaries many profound records are devoted to the understanding of the role of the individual and masses in history. While not denying the public law or the enormous role of the people in human history, at the same time the scientist never diminished the role of the individual and his thought; in other words, he saw a dialectic connection between the particular (isolated) and the general (universal). While not denying the public law and the enormous role of masses in human history, at the same time the scientist did not diminish the role of the individual; i.e. he saw the dialectic connection between the single (optional) and the general (universal). In 1892, long before the historical materialism became the official philosophy of the Soviet Union, he wrote: "With the help of people's collective work, life of human communities and the humanity itself takes on a harmonious character – permanently in this life, we can see that the manifestation of consciousness and the phenomena of life are adopting a character of immutable *laws*, being formed both under the influence of the individual consciousness and of *conscious* monotonous work of many small human individuals. Such a law-like character of conscious work of people's lives has led many scientists to the denial of the individual influence in history, but in fact in history we see the constant struggle of conscious (i.e. not 'natural') ways of life against the dead, unconscious system of laws of nature, and in this tension of mind there lies the beauty of historical events, their original position among other natural processes."¹⁵ He considered that "the more conscious the society is, the stronger it is."¹⁶ For this reason, even in the pre-revolutionary period of this activity Vernadsky stood for mass education, organization of public libraries and creation of a network of educational institutions. But to an even greater extent he conducted this very important work in the post-revolutionary period.

The scientist returned to understanding the role of the mass and the individual in history in 1920s. In his letter to V. V. Vodolazov he again stressed the role of the people's mass life, being, in his view, "very special, strong, powerful," and "an echo of cosmic forces,"¹⁷ and proposed a project on creating a new science, where continuous work of individuals acquires its harmonious and ordered look over the years.

¹⁵ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, p. 402.

¹⁶ В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 403.

¹⁷ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, pp. 398-400.

Vernadsky sparked the process of national consciousness growth in Russian life, showed M. V. Lomonosov's historical mission in this process, focused on the special position of the scientific thought and scientific achievements in national consciousness, and – as he stated – though “among all the forms of cultural life, *science* alone is a single creation of mankind, it cannot have a vibrant national image or simultaneously exist in several different forms.”¹⁸

The Russian thinker highly valued scientific knowledge. It was precisely with knowledge that he connected state power. He noted that “at this age, at this time the state power can be strong only in close union with science and knowledge. In the relentless struggle of states and societies, the winning are those on whose side science and knowledge are, and those who are able to use their instructions. Thus, they know how to enable employees to benefit from the latest technology advances and precise thinking.”¹⁹

The multi-faced picture of the contemporary state of science, high education, the intellect of a nation in general and the ways of their further development is analyzed and reflected on in Vernadsky's theoretical heritage in all its aspects. The thinker saw the plight of the Russian science in the early twentieth century, and he has repeatedly called on the powers to change their attitude to the native science. At the same time he was more and more aware of the futility of his efforts. He wrote: “The country which spends so little on research tasks, in comparison with its other costs, like Russia does, can hardly be named cultured nowadays.”²⁰ In this sense, Vernadsky connected the future of the Russian science with the transformation of existing social attitudes.

In his practice, the scientist always wanted to protect science, to “pump” public funds towards its development. For example, on December 16, 1916 at a very difficult time for Russia, he prepared a report “The state network of research institutions” for the meeting of the Commission for the Study of Natural Productive Forces of Russia, during which explained the need for such a network.

Big science requires significant expenditure. But such science is provided not only materially, but also with other equally important factors. In this regard, problems of the ethos of science rank high in Vernadsky's discourse. He believed that “the question of the moral side of science – regardless of religious, philosophical, or public display of morality – is

¹⁸ В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 183.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 179.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 184.

on the agenda for a scientist. It becomes an effective force, and we should take it into account.”²¹ Standing for the development of productive forces in Russia, Vernadsky linked this process to the development of technology, science, and man himself. He emphasized that “natural productive forces are dead without the animating human labour and human thought. They will produce a positive result only in full bloom of both sides of productive forces of the state: the gifts of nature and the human spirit.”²²

The problem of the relation between fundamental and applied research is extremely relevant today. But it was no less urgent in the past. Vernadsky was a supporter of fundamental research. He believed that it was “not the applied scientific technology [that] should be the task of state support, but free scientific work, human penetration of new areas of the unknown. Only under these conditions will we be at the level of scientific knowledge and will be able to approach the creation of something new.”²³ In 1917 at the Scientific Institute, Vernadsky was to deliver the report devoted to the problems of science in relation to public policy in Russia. In his report the scientist singled out the three most important areas of research: the natural productive forces of Russia, the peculiarities of the world situation and natural historical and ethnic composition of the Russian state.²⁴ As you can see, two of the three objectives of native science were in the sphere of social and humanitarian sciences. Vernadsky was a natural scientist, but, nevertheless, he understood the importance of social and humanitarian research for sustainable state development and personal upbringing. That’s why he was a supporter of a national network of research institutes.

Vernadsky paid much attention to the high school. He identified three main problems that the school should solve. According to him, the high school “should teach the adolescent generation, tell young people about human thought output, teach them how to think and work scientifically. It should be a place of scientific inquiry, a centre of independent scientific work. Finally, it should be the disseminator of education in the society, revive in adult age the things which were learnt and experienced in youth, disseminate new knowledge and new methods of work and thought.”²⁵

While standing for the democratization of university life, Vernadsky was an opponent of student strikes as a form of protest movement. “The strike

²¹ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, p. 96.

²² В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 234.

²³ В.И. Вернадский, *О науке*, vol. 2, p. 60.

²⁴ В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 244.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 164.

– he noted – is the wildest and most terrible form of student disorder. It is the easiest disorder to hold, because it is a *passive* form and has an aura of success. (...) It not only destroys the whole life of school curriculum, but it is harmful to the youth, because it teaches them idleness and debauchery.”²⁶

Not only science and industry, but also agriculture was included on Vernadsky’s agenda. Working on the agrarian program of the Constitutional Democratic Party, the scientist called for the intensive development of agricultural industry, increasing of labour productivity, irrigation, better usage of the available fertile land, as well as the lakes, on the basis of which fish production could be organized. He complained about the fact that educated people were “amazingly ignorant” in agricultural matters, and “there is a very low level of understanding of agricultural machinery among landlords.”²⁷ “I think – he noted – that in grain farming the democratic principle of land ownership or land usage may co-exist with the intensification of farming, in general formulation of public and social events in the form of experimental farms, experimental fields, research institutions, nurseries, seed plants, etc., as well as extensive development of various kinds of cooperatives.”²⁸

Another important feature of Vernadsky, characterizing the magnitude of the individual is his amazing ability to predict the future. To be persuaded of this fact, it is enough to read his *Notes on the organization of scientific work* – a document prepared in 1942 which determined the future development of Soviet science for many decades.

In this document Vernadsky put forward the four main program goals, which, as he believed, would ensure the success of national science and put the country on a par with the US, UK and Japan: *First*, we are to create new forms of scientific organization – a “more *democratic form* of scientific organization” must be restored as the Association of Soviet Scientific Workers, composed of scientists, doctors and engineers, who will meet every year; *secondly*, we are to form a modern strong research base; *thirdly*, we should provide quick access to foreign books and magazines, and finally, *fourth*, “we are to start the development of nuclear energy of actin-uranium in earnest and widely.”²⁹ I should say that all these problems of the Soviet science in the 1950–1970s were solved to some extent and accordingly the Soviet science reached the world level.

²⁶ В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 192.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 208.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 210.

²⁹ В.И. Вернадский, *Несколько слов о ноосфере*, pp. 105-108.

Or let us take another example. In 1922, long before the creation of the nuclear bomb, Vernadsky was convinced that humanity in the near future or in a century would become the owner of nuclear energy, and therefore considered it his duty to warn scientists of their responsibility in conducting scientific research related to such a powerful source of energy. He doubted that the person using such power would put it to good use, and in this context, he posed a tough question “Has he [man – T.A.] grown up enough to be able to use the power that science will inevitably give him?”³⁰ And again Vernadsky was right: nuclear power was first used not for creative, but rather for destructive projects – the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the first victims of the latest discovery in physics.

One of the objects of Vernadsky’s daily observations and painful reflections was the Soviet reality. In his diaries he offers an extensive and insightful description of the tragic era of 1920–1930s, when the Soviet Union was trying to turn from the “realm of necessity” into the “realm of freedom.” Vernadsky saw the divergence between the ideal model and reality – serious contradictions and disadvantages of the actual practice of socialist construction. As a great supporter and defender of liberal ideas and values, and one of the organizers and leaders of the Constitutional Democratic Party, consistently defending it, finally, Vernadsky as a companion (deputy) of the Minister of Education, on November 16, 1917 signed the official message of the Provisional government to the Russian citizens, which contained the call for “gathering around the All-Russian Constituent Assembly (...) in the face of mortal danger to the country and its integrity.”³¹ But he strongly repulsed “the practice of Bolshevism.” In his diaries he gave full vent to his evaluations and feelings. “This aspect of life – oppression – hasn’t changed at all – lamented the scholar in 1935. Instead of military policemen, there is the GPU. It is seen especially clear here in Leningrad, as it was in old St Petersburg and of kor[olenkovski] time... Here, the old intertwined with the new and important and spoils it.”³² On June 16, 1941 the scientist made the following entry: “One cannot help thinking about the need for the *freedom of thought*, as the basic structure of the social system in which the individual is not a manager of means of production. Equality for all is impossible without it. But it is impossible without freedom of thought too. Our system clearly indicates it; a million people turned – ‘during a period

³⁰ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, p. 395.

³¹ В.И. Вернадский, *Публицистические статьи*, p. 301.

³² В.И. Вернадский, *Дневники. 1935–1941*, vol. 1: 1935–1938, Москва 2006, p. 17.

of time' – into prisoners, which is a kind of slavery."³³ Vernadsky saw other serious disadvantages of the contemporary practice of socialist construction of the country. He noted the incompetent staffing in science and in the whole country, "the staff (and young staff) in the Party is below the average level – both morally and mentally. This tendency makes me look into the future anxiously, more anxiously than I used to think."³⁴ But in the early twentieth century, Vernadsky gave a different assessment of socialism. He believed that "socialism was a direct and necessary result of the growth of the scientific world outlook; it is perhaps the most profound and powerful form of influence of scientific thought on the course of social life, which has never been seen in the history of mankind."³⁵

Yet, Vernadsky did not speak ill of all the Soviet reality. Not for the fear of repression: in his diary entries, he openly expressed his views on the issues troubling him. There is a different reason. Vernadsky realized the necessity of social changes and, by comparing the pre-October with the post-October Russia, he could not ignore those, though a few, as he thought, positive changes that were gradually taking place in the country, especially in sciences. At the end of his life, in 1941, he stated: "Now it is historically clear that, despite the many sins and unnecessary, decomposing, cruel actions, on the average, they [the Bolsheviks] led Russia to a new way."³⁶ And a year earlier, in a letter to B. L. Lichkov, he made the following assumption: "I do not know much of Marx, but I think that the noosphere will be fully consonant with his main conclusions."³⁷

Vernadsky considered developing a theory of a "living matter" his life-work; in all probability he spent most of his time and efforts on that theory. This is evidenced by his numerous diary entries. His work on the new theory was constant, intense and painful. He seemed to have discerned a scientific result, the ultimate goal, but he was again and again assailed by doubts, and continued his work on the problem. And it was like that for decades, until the death of the scientist.

Here are separate diary entries indicating how grand, complex and weighty the project was. For example, the diary entry from 2/15 March 1918: "I worked on live substance. As I plumb this question I see new challenges, new difficulties and doubts. Sometimes I think that I won't manage

³³ Ibidem, vol. 2: 1939–1941, Москва 2006, p. 258.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 256.

³⁵ В.И. Вернадский, *Философские мысли натуралиста*, p. 409.

³⁶ В.И. Вернадский, *Начало и вечность жизни*, Москва 1989, p. 601.

³⁷ *Переписка В.И. Вернадского с Б.Л. Личковым. 1940–1944*, Москва 1980, p. 40.

the entire volume of the topic.”³⁸ After less than two weeks, 18/31 March 1918, he wrote about the same thing in a diary entry: “I worked on the living substance. But this is only a rough draft, which requires enormous effort. I know that here I provide a lot of new concepts and new understanding of nature, but what if I won’t be able to make it clear for the contemporaries. And I feel the lack of knowledge even in the areas that are already accessible to humanity.”³⁹ After a few months of hard work on the problem we again see a familiar note: “Yesterday I worked on live substance. – The topic moves forward slowly, and becomes somehow more and more extended and a lot of new questions appear. Sometimes there is some confusion. Maybe I offer the material which is already known, and may seem poorly treated to specialists.”⁴⁰

Naturally, there is a question: “Why is the theory of live substance so important for Vernadsky?” This theory did not have any meaning for ensuring personal physical immortality, because Vernadsky did not fear death and his attitude to it was very calm. “Death – he wrote – is nothing terrible, and I’m not looking for an explanation of it. All assumptions regarding its essence – religious or philosophical, admitting the existence of the afterlife, or denying it – seem to me baby talk, infinitely far away from reality.”⁴¹

Vernadsky did not claim any honours or personal glory, never sought them and never worked for them, nor did he work for pleasure. He did not derive any “pleasure” from his research work. “Even if my scientific achievements are very big, I think, I do not feel the same as other scientists seem to feel”⁴² – he noted.

So why did Vernadsky work so hard? For what purpose did he give himself over to science? To this question, Vernadsky answered. “I want to know, but not to enjoy the knowledge...”⁴³ In this confession there is only a part of the answer and not more. Certainly, the need to know the essence of a phenomenon is the basis of motivation for the scientist. Of course, Vernadsky as a scientist wanted to know not only the phenomena of nature, but the phenomena of life. And not only the mystery of “live substance,” but the mystery of social life, as it was discussed above. Despite some statements, sometimes redolent of stoical thought, Vernadsky was never

³⁸ В.И. Вернадский, *Дневники. 1917–1921. Октябрь 1917 – январь 1920*, p. 58.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 66.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 117.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 206.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

a stoic by nature, and certainly he was never an impartial observer of the world. Otherwise, his active practical work for the reconstruction of this not entirely reasonable world would have been completely incomprehensible. Vernadsky was not only a scientist and a science organizer. He also took part in political life, at least as one of the leaders of the Constitutional Democratic Party. To my mind, we should estimate his work on “the live substance” on this basis. Let us make the following hypothesis.

Vernadsky permanently felt the irrationality of the existing world, both the pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary one. He wanted to eliminate this existing “irrationality” to make the world reasonable, i.e. humane. How? As a scientist, he didn’t believe in the supernatural. He didn’t believe in the effectiveness of politicians’ activity either. He gave up on sincerity, honesty and intellectual capacity of many politicians. To his mind, philosophy, which he respected, but clearly underestimated its role in public life, was not able to solve the existing problems either, i.e. to eliminate social evils. And only science could help human civilization. “The real content of science is a scientific description of the picture of nature”⁴⁴ – the scientist comes to such a final conclusion. That’s why it is no wonder that the researcher made a bet on the Intellect. Not on an individual intellect, but on the collective planetary Intellect.

According to Vernadsky’s concept, the Cosmos is full of life, i.e. the live substance in a wide range of its varieties. The boundaries of the live substance and, therefore, a reasonable substance are mobile. To overcome evil in the world, it is necessary to expand the intellect. From these statements follows the idea of noosphere. Solving the problem of the construction of the noospheric world is not possible without solving the problem of the live substance, which is the carrier of the intellect. That is why the scientist directed so much effort at the solution of the live substance mystery. Solving this difficult challenge, Vernadsky believed that he was doing the “right thing.” Unfortunately, this project was not only of an enormous scale, but also hardly feasible. Why?

In that historical epoch scientists were only at the initial stage of the study of life itself (we speak about the level of genetics as a scientific discipline). Vernadsky, of course, knew about many scientific developments, but they were not enough to solve the problem of the live substance. In addition, space exploration did not reach the present level too. In short, the level of scientific knowledge did not allow scientists to reveal the

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 203.

mechanism of noosphere formation and the mechanism of life formation. What was left to do for the researcher in this regard? There was one way out: to go beyond the knowledge of natural sciences and refer to the philosophical and theoretical reflection. The noospheric model of the world presented by Vernadsky is, as we believe, not the natural scientific picture of the universe, but rather a philosophical and theoretical picture, a kind of ideal construction covering various social spheres, ranging from economics to the problems of education. It is not supported by the facts of natural science, and, therefore, according to Vernadsky's ideological position, is not feasible, because "the main difference between the basis of scientific work and philosophical constructions is that the latter are based on things inevitably different from reality."⁴⁵

With this statement we did not want to belittle Vernadsky as a thinker, or downplay his contribution to world humanities, including philosophy. On the contrary, we believe that with his theory of the noosphere Vernadsky made an important contribution to the understanding of human civilization, provided an operating room for a whole generation of researchers belonging to the movement of the "Russian cosmism."

In general, one can come to the following conclusion: while developing the theory of the live substance, Vernadsky acted as a representative of natural sciences, and while working on a draft of the noosphere, he acted as a philosopher, perhaps even without realizing it, or knowing it but always holding his philosophical (metaphysical) aspirations. In any case, Vernadsky's doctrine of noosphere remains unfinished and had not been confirmed by an experiment, which is what the researcher always sought. However, this doctrine gave a powerful impetus to theoretical thinking and even today it still helps in the active search for various human social projects. Thus, Vernadsky's individual intellect not only recreated his historical era in all its diversity and contradictions, but also went decades ahead of it, creating a huge intellectual reserve and operational freedom for the thought of future generations.

Vernadsky was a man of the future in nature. Even in his old age, he was not like an old man, he thought not about the past, but about the upcoming humane future, as it was demonstrated in the documents prepared by the scientist in his old age and related to the prospects of development of science and civilization. He was impressed by the ideas of equality and collective labour, which, according to the plan of socialism theoreticians,

⁴⁵ Ibidem.

should prevail in the new Russia. The social practice was completely different. And yet, despite all the conflicts of that historical era, he believed in great science, and an ideal society based on intellect, which he called “noosphere.”

Transl. by Olga Grin

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Ina Nalivaika

Belarusian State University (Minsk, Belarus)

The Role of Mikhail Bakhtin in the Formation of Contemporary European “Philosophy of Everydayness”

This paper deals with two significant and relatively separate subjects: the reception of Mikhail Bakhtin’s ideas in European philosophy and the forming of a new problem field of contemporary philosophy – the philosophy of the everyday (everydayness). Both of these subjects are rather complicated and have their own non-simple history.

The name of the Russian thinker Mikhail Bakhtin became one of the most frequently mentioned in philosophical discussions of the last three decades. A lot of books are devoted to his heritage and a lot of authoritative philosophical movements pretend to appropriate him for their own agendas.¹ Bakhtin is considered to be a phenomenologist, a structuralist, a philosophical anthropologist, a sociologist, etc. Some of the researchers even argue that Bakhtin could be named a proto-postmodernist because of his investigation into the topics (such as heterogeneity, otherness, sexuality, discourse, the body, the decentred self, etc.) that later on were recognised as a focus of postmodernist thought. Moreover, this multiple image of Bakhtin in Western philosophy is strengthened by the diversity of “national” receptions of his works. One may say about the “French,” “British,” or “German” Bakhtin according to different national accents in comprehension of his works, which originate from the specificity of national philosophical traditions as well as from the concrete linguistic situations as well as the specificity of translations. But all the above-mentioned “external” reasons are predetermined by one fundamental internal feature

¹ Among the most famous researchers of Bakhtin’s heritage one may mention such names as C. Emerson, M. Holquist, M.M. Bell, M.E. Gardiner, M. Bernard-Donals, K. Clark, W. Godzich, K. Hirschkop, R. Lachmann, A. Mandelker, G. Pechey.

of Bakhtin's works – they themselves have multi-faced, unfinalisable dialogical character. On the one hand, this feature attracts a lot of thinkers because such dialogical texts awaken their own thought; on the other hand, it causes a variety of interpretations and leads to the difficulty of definite final classification. So one can say that the so-called “European Bakhtin” is very complicated, still non-accomplished – a dialogically impregnated topic of contemporary philosophical thought.

The expression “European Bakhtin” is worthy of particular note. This combination of words undoubtedly covers not only the researchers and academicians geographically connected with European countries, but all those who study Bakhtin's works within the general context of European philosophical and cultural tradition, wherever they live and work. The popular appellation “continental philosophy” may also be used in this case, but above all it refers to the opposition between transcendental and analytical traditions, and cannot be correctly applied to the case of Bakhtin due to the already mentioned complex character of his philosophical thought.

But if it is so difficult to give exhaustive characteristics and a proper conceptual “affiliation” of Bakhtin's philosophy in general, the task of observing and analysing his role in the studies of everydayness looks even more complicated. Though a lot of contemporary Western philosophers note the great influence of Bakhtin on the investigation of the field of everyday life, only few of them try to perform a detailed and comprehensive analysis of this influence. And such a situation is not uncommon; it is deeply rooted in the specificity of Bakhtin's treatment of everydayness, as well as in the complicated, ambivalent character of the phenomenon of the everyday itself.

Let us begin with the latter one. During the 20th century the concept of *the everyday* (*everydayness*), borrowed from daily language, became one of the most widely discussed philosophical concepts. The problems of everyday consciousness and everyday language, stereotypes of daily behaviour and structures of everyday life and suchlike are among the most urgent themes of contemporary thought. Moreover, according to the opinion of different contemporary philosophers the phenomenon of everyday life obtains a positive ontological status that carries the situation far away from a classical tradition. Finally, different approaches to the everyday, studying it from numerous viewpoints, have created a specific new part of contemporary philosophy that has its own subject and its own problem field – the so-called philosophy of the everyday.

Nevertheless, to some extent the everyday still remains “terra incognita” due to the complexity and ambivalence of the phenomenon of everyday life itself. Everyday life is what is the closest and the most familiar to everyone, and at the same time most mysterious and non-understandable. (To illustrate this thesis Henri Lefebvre reminds his readers about G. W. F. Hegel’s maxim “The familiar is not necessarily the known”). It surrounds us and constantly escapes us; it is our daily routine and also opens us for the encounter with the extraordinary. Such a fluid nature of everydayness makes it a very complicated subject for research. Being the sphere which everyone is necessarily involved in, it doesn’t produce a usual theoretical distance for its observer; moreover, its unstable character makes everydayness absolutely unclosed, escaping from any accomplished finalised forms that might be the objects of theoretical examination. That’s why there are multiple approaches trying to “catch the elusive,” to “grasp the incomprehensible.” Sometimes these approaches seem to be contradictorily and hardly linked with each other. So the task of estimating the impact of the Russian thinker on the philosophy of everydayness includes the necessity of defining what particular phenomenon we are speaking about.

The second problem with defining the role of Bakhtin in the formation of the philosophy of the everyday is caused by the reason that he never made everydayness a particular subject of his investigations. Though he really made a lot for the theory of the everyday, he neither specially examined the concept of everydayness as a basic term of his philosophy, nor pursued the detailed studies of everyday life in all its multiplicity and concreteness. Nevertheless, the topic of the everyday penetrates all his texts starting from the very beginning of his philosophical works. Bakhtin contributed a lot to the concepts of everyday language and everyday popular culture, to the theory of embodied presence of the self in everyday life, to the topic of everyday intersubjectivity, etc. However, all this thematic variety originates from the basic foundations of his philosophy; first and foremost, from the dialogical understanding of human existence.

This thesis will be the central point of my paper, because in my opinion this ontological aspect of Bakhtin’s works determines the uniqueness and unity of all his philosophy as well as attractiveness of his thought to the European researchers of the everydayness. But the problem is that in spite the fact that Bakhtin’s dialogism seems to be well-known and widely discussed in contemporary philosophy, its ontological background is very often “lost” or “misunderstood.” While arguing this thesis I will deal with those theoreticians of the everyday who not only recognise the influence

of Bakhtin on the studies of everydayness, but underline his distinguished contribution to this field. Thus, for example, S. Morson and C. Emerson attribute to the Russian thinker “construction of a *distinctive social philosophy*, characterized by ‘a form of thinking that presumes the importance of the everyday, the ordinary, the “prosaic.””² One of the most prominent researchers of the everyday in the last ten years, Michael E. Gardiner, includes Bakhtin in a “‘subterranean’ tradition – or better, a counter-tradition – of thinking about everyday life, one that has been largely ignored or marginalised in the social science literature.”³ From his point of view this counter-tradition deals with the topics sidelined in the mainstream of the 20th-century philosophy of the everyday, such as human affect and emotions, bodily experience and practical knowledge, the role played by ‘lived’ time and space in the constitution of social experience, language and intersubjectivity. He argues that “[w]hereas for mainstream interpretive approaches the everyday is the realm of the ordinary, the alternative pursued here is to treat it as a domain that is potentially *extraordinary*.”⁴

Bakhtin takes one of the leading places in this tradition alongside such thinkers as Henry Lefebvre, Agness Heller and Michel de Certeau.

But what presupposes this distinguished place? To answer this question Gardiner undertakes a conceptual analysis of Bakhtin’s main ideas, trying to underline the ones essential to the understanding of the everyday.⁵ Beginning with the concept of “prosaics,” a neologism coined originally by two prominent Bakhtin scholars, G. S. Morson and C. Emerson, Gardiner examines Bakhtin’s such specific notions as *place-in-Being*, *chronotope*, *being-as-event*, *non-alibi in Being*, *answerability*, *otherness*, *alterity*, etc. This analysis is aimed at proving the starting point of his work on Bakhtin’s heritage – the conviction that all of ideas of the Russian thinker are connected with the everyday as the general background:

The key theme in such texts (texts by Bakhtin – I.N.) is that the values and meanings that most directly shape our lives emerge from the existential demands of daily living and our immediate interpersonal relationships.

² G.S. Morson, C. Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, Stanford 1990, p. 15.

³ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, London 2000, p. 2.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

⁵ Gardiner’s analysis of Bakhtin’s influence on the philosophy of the everyday seems to be the most systematical and correct, because it is grounded on the wide scope of Bakhtin’s original works, studying them both from chronological and conceptual viewpoints, and on the representative list of critical works devoted to Bakhtin. That’s why Gardiner’s receptions of Bakhtin will constantly be in the focus of this article.

The everyday therefore constitutes the central ground upon which our judgements and actions, particular those of a moral or normative character, are exercised.⁶

Gardiner certainly right when he connects such a high estimation of everyday life with Bakhtin's theory of the singularity of one's unique place in existence – place-in-Being. This concept is deeply connected with the understanding of everyday life as a paramount reality where "(...) we create, cognize, contemplate, live our lives and die – the world in which the acts of our activity are objectified and the world in which these acts actually proceed and are actually accomplished once and only once."⁷

Such unique singular acts or "events" (in Bakhtin's terms) constitute the current irreversible stream of one's existence "where the unique character of our everyday actions and deeds, and indeed *our very selfhood*, is constituted."⁸ The significant feature of thus understood selfhood is its lived bodily character, its embodied existence within the world.

According to Gardiner, in this very notion Bakhtin evidently contraposes himself to the well-established tradition of modernity that identified the self with the purely cognitive attitude to the other and our lived environment, which in turn reinforces an instrumental, disengaged attitude towards the world. Let us introduce a comparatively wide quotation to illustrate this contraposition:

For Bakhtin, one of the central imperatives of modernity therefore lies in the attempt to transcend our situatedness in concrete time/space by recourse to what Heidegger calls the "technological world-picture." In order to counter the abstractions of idealist philosophy and scientific positivism, Bakhtin argues that we must grasp the nature of the concrete deed or "act" as it constitutes the essential "value-centre" for human existence. His position is, in an important sense, a gloss on Goethe's famous dictum that "In the beginning is the deed." For Bakhtin, the self must be understood as a dynamic, embodied and restlessly creative entity that strives to attribute meaning and value to its life and surroundings, environment, into a coherent "world-for-me." In making the world a meaningful place, one that is steeped in personal values, the subject actively engages with and alters its lived situation; and, in doing so, it continuously transforms itself. This is an ongoing process: the self is continually "reauthored" as its life and

⁶ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, pp. 43-44.

⁷ M. Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, transl. by V. Liapunov, Austin 1993, p. 2.

⁸ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 47.

circumstances change, and is hence “unfinalisable,” always open to further development and transformation.⁹

Thus, the self is rooted in its place-in-being. It realises and constitutes itself in irreversible being-as-event; it is deeply connected with the surrounding world through the body and bodily movement, and it is currently changing itself and the environment. This unique embodied and dynamic model of the self brings us to the next topic – essential for Bakhtin – the problem of responsibility (or, in terms of Gardiner, answerability). Only living experience of the everydayness, our conscious and corporal involvement in the world, our practical doing within the lifeworld, being-as-event make us really responsible:

Only if we think and act in a “participative” fashion, in tune with the rhythms and textures of everyday life, “can we be wholly ‘answerable’ for our actions, in the sense that we are reflexively conscious of the existential and ethical implications of our acts. Being-as-event must therefore be lived through, and not passively comprehended from afar.”¹⁰

This “living-through” character of the existence presupposes a specific mode of answerability, connected with and originating from our practical activity within the world, our “participating” in the world life.

Answerability demands presence of an incarnated and participative subject. In challenging the logic of the formalist reason, Bakhtin argues, first, that there is no possibility of surmounting our “unique place in once occurring Being;” and secondly, that theoretical cognition is only one aspect of a wider “practical reason.” Abstract philosophical or aesthetic contemplation in and of itself can never gain entry into this universe of lived Being; it requires “actual communion” with the concrete actions that I perform, through my living corporeality.¹¹

Starting from this ground Bakhtin simultaneously rejects two points of former metaphysical thought. First of all, he justifies the so-called practical rationality, overcoming traditional distancing of the cognitive subject from the opposed object. The subject is actively incorporated in reality; he acts and performs within it. Former philosophy of the subject-object dualism is impossible in the case of being-as-event. At the same time such a position helps to overcome the traditional prejudice concerning the nature of everyday life.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 49.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 50.

¹¹ Ibidem.

In taking this position, Bakhtin is rejecting the common supposition that everyday life is the realm of the trivial and the habitual, and hence devoid of intrinsic value, which implies that meaning must be brought to our lives from such external value-spheres as philosophy, religion or politics. At the same time, it should be clear that Bakhtin does not espouse a form of proto-postmodernist relativism. Although we have to understand being-as-event “from the inside,” as it were, this is not a descent into subjectivism or psychologism. What Bakhtin terms the “answerably performed act” is a synthetic or architectonic activity that brings together the “sense and the fact, the universal and the individual, the real and the ideal.”¹²

This brilliant analysis of Bakhtin’s concept of answerability, undertaken by Gardiner, cannot however be considered to be sufficient, because here we really meet the counterposition of two cultural and philosophical traditions that opens itself in the specificity of linguistic constructions. The matter is that the Russian word *ответственность*, used by Bakhtin, may be translated either as *answerability* or as *responsibility*. For several cultural reasons the Russian language does not distinguish one meaning from the other linguistically; they are joint in one word. But English speaking philosophers used to translate this Russian word as *answerability*, following the specificity of their own tradition. This is quite understandable, taking into account the fact that classical Western philosophy traditionally emphasised the cognitive aspects of human existence rather than the ontological ones. Answerability is closely connected with our verbal ability to answer one’s question, to justify one’s opinion, to reach the truth. Responsibility addresses moral links with another personality, obligation. Bakhtin assumes both meanings of the word *ответственность*, emphasising the second one: the irreversible changing, which is the distinctive feature of being-as-event, presupposes personal responsibility towards the other. Gardiner, who uses an established translation, i.e. the term *answerability*, nevertheless feels obliged to distinguish between Bakhtin’s understanding of the word and the meanings familiar to the western reader:

Answerability often seems to mean, in an almost Habermasian sense, an ability to express the particularistic truths of a given situation in a manner that can be comprehended rationally by others, within the context of a shared lifeworld. So the meaning of acts are shared, jointly constructed within particular situations, and not purely subjectivistic. Just as there are

¹² Ibidem.

no “private languages” for Wittgenstein, answerability for Bakhtin implies continual communication with, and responsibility to, concrete others.¹³

Two points should be underlined in connection with this statement. The first seems to be purely linguistic: while speaking about Bakhtin’s philosophy, using the concept of responsibility instead of answerability is more correct and preferable. But this linguistic nuance addresses us to a more significant theme – responsibility connects me and the Other, and makes it in a specific manner. My responsibility includes not only my verbal answering the question of the other, and not only subjectivistic and psychological reactions to the changing world. It presupposes my moral responsibility towards the other that is realised as a deed, a practical act. For Bakhtin, moral reasoning can only emerge out of specific situations, and not be simply deduced from *a priori* concepts. An abstract objectifying glance at the other and at the world is impossible in the situation of responsible acting: “The penchant for abstract theory and the objectification of the world on the part of the modernist paradigm represents a retreat from lived experience, a symptom of profound alienation from the everyday world.”¹⁴

But responsibility concerns not only the world of social interpersonal relations. It really connects the individual and the universal; it is opened towards the human being and towards any existing entity. According to this position the image of the world and the model of the Other also accept specific unique characteristics. Bakhtin constantly underlines that not only the Other has a concrete unique status, but the world of things is also “a unitary and unique world that is experienced concretely: it is a world that is seen, heard, touched, and thought, a world permeated in its entirety with the emotional volitional tones of the affirmed validity of values.”¹⁵

Strictly speaking, Bakhtin expands the notion of the Other up to the volume including all the things, the being as a whole. Accordingly, the responsibility accepts the total character transforming into non-alibi in Being. On the one hand, through a practical action we can bridge the gap between our “small scrap of space and time” and that of the “large spatial and temporal whole.” On the other hand, because my participation in the world is unique and non-recurrent, shared by no other person, no one else can accept responsibility on my behalf: “That which can be done by me can never be done by anyone else.”¹⁶

¹³ Ibidem, pp. 50-51.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 51.

¹⁵ M. Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, pp. 56-57.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 40.

And I am the only one subject of responsibility for my deeds. Even if I am eager to refuse this responsibility, I cannot avoid it, I am doomed to non-alibi in Being.

Such intertwisting with alive, changing and unfinalisable world, to some extent coinciding with our everydayness, the world understood as the otherness, as a point of my responsibility, vividly shows the situated and embodied nature of human existence as unique unfinished “singularity of my own faith and life.” But to be and to act in this world of things we must be partly accomplished, we must have a definite form or identity. It is impossible to achieve it from the inside of my self. And here we need the accomplishing role of the Other. Gardiner writes: “Yet when engaging with the world as embodied beings, our ability to attribute meaning and significance solely through our own thoughts, deeds and perceptions is subject to certain limitations, particularly with respect to the ‘authoring’ of our own selfhood. Bakhtin places singular emphasis on the phenomenon of ‘transgression’ – that which transcends or lies outside our immediate subjective existence and cognitive activity, and which necessarily partakes of ‘otherness.’”¹⁷

This topic becomes the central point of *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*. According to Bakhtin, I realise myself initially through others: from them I receive words, forms, and tonalities for the formation of the initial idea of myself. To explain this thought Bakhtin appeals to the visual metaphors, to the experience of visuality. To cognise ourselves among the world of things we need to envisage ourselves, but there are serious difficulties on this way: “(...) from our own vantage-point (the ‘I-for-myself’), we are manifestly incapable of envisioning our outward appearance, and of comprehending our location within the ‘plastic-pictorial world’ (i.e. the lived environment of objects, events and other selves). To be able to conceptualize ourselves as cohesive meaningful wholes is fundamental to the developmental process of individuation, self-understanding and moral awareness. ‘Each of us is a singular narrative.’”¹⁸

Bakhtin states that one can only exist through the “borrowed axiological light of *otherness*.” And the role of everyday life in this process is decisive. It establishes non-epistemological, dialogical attitude to another as our co-participant in daily activity: “Bakhtin insists that this co-participation in the everyday world, through which our visual fields overlap and complement

¹⁷ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 53.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 54.

one another without completely coinciding, cannot occur solely through the medium of ‘cognitive discursive thought’ (...). Genuinely participative thinking and acting requires an engaged and embodied – in a word, *dialogical* – relation to the other, and to the world at large. Otherwise, the intrinsically affective and moral character of the self – other encounter is fatally undermined. Our capacity for abstract cognition and representational thinking is incapable of grasping the incarnate linkage between self and another within the fabric of everyday life, cannot comprehend our ‘organic wovenness’ in a shared social and natural world.”¹⁹

It is necessary to keep in mind that this “otherness of the other” as well as my own self have embodied character. Moreover, neither my body nor the body of the other is self-sufficient. The body and the self can only have a *value* in the presence of another. Bakhtin states: “(...) the body is not something self-sufficient: it needs the *other*, needs his recognition and form-giving activity.”²⁰

The other has the vantage of the “distance of outsideness” that helps him to present some definite recognisable form to me. But it is not a pure cognitive act, because both of us meet in the living and creative terrain of daily life. It is also the challenge of modernity which transformed the other into my object, but not into an equal subject. The relations within subject/object duality have unidirectional character and could never accept the form of the dialogue. But only the dialogue has the productive force of constituting the self within dialogical space between me and another.

Here we have already come to the central point of our discussion – Bakhtin’s dialogism and its role in the philosophy of everydayness. And first of all we must overcome the merely linguistic understanding of the dialogue in order to obtain a full evaluation of the significance of this principle. Primarily to and in spite of different applications of the dialogical approach Bakhtin confirms the ontological status of the dialogue. Absolute death (non-being) is the state of being unheard, unrecognised. Even if I cannot be heard and understood in my “small time,” the time of my finite life, I nevertheless expect to be understood in the “large time” of culture, I presuppose the existence of the ideal super-addressor. I am myself, and my meanings are not totally finished in the epoch of my physical existence. Moreover, they are born at the crossroads of me and another, in

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ M. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin, ed. by M. Holquist and V. Liapunov, transl. by V. Liapunov, K. Brostrom, Austin 1990, p. 51.

the open dialogue with the world. Summing up different viewpoints on the interpretation of this problem in Bakhtin texts, Gardiner writes: "Dialogue, in Bakhtin's view, is not simply a form of linguistic exchange that occurs between two existing entities or consciousnesses. Indeed, this is precisely what he finds objectionable about Ferdinand de Saussure's famous structuralist model of language-use. For Bakhtin, dialogism constitutes a **generalized perspective, a 'model of the world'** that stresses continual interaction and interconnectedness, relationality, and the permeability of both symbolic and physical boundaries. A central element of this worldview is the notion that entities are not preconstituted monads, but are formed in and through their dialogical relations with other things, a process that is ongoing and without ultimate closure or finality."²¹

So, not only the human being but the world as a whole is dialogical in its essence. Dialogism establishes a principally opened and unfinished character of every unity and the world itself. It states that the birth of the meaning begins with the absolute integrity of real, flesh-and-blood human beings and the symbolic exchanges that occur within "the realm of the everyday," as Gardiner says. Rick Bowers defines this feature of dialogism as "a refusal of closure, the celebration of difference."²² A lot of researchers, including those studying everydayness, highly appreciate this part of Bakhtin's philosophy. Moreover, they underline the major role of such interpreted dialogical everydayness in forming the self: "Bakhtin is emphatic that the phenomenon of 'self-ness' is constituted through the operation of a dense and conflicting network of discourses and signifying practices that are themselves bound up with the intricate phenomenology of the self – other relation, within the everyday lifeworld."²³

But here arises the most problematic point in the European receptions of Bakhtin's idea of dialogue. The transmission of his thought from the topic of "being-as-event" to the problem of dialogue, some of the contemporary thinkers entitle as a "linguistic turn" or also as a "social turn" that marks the movement from phenomenology to social theory. The so-called "social turn" is one of the central themes of Michael Bernard-Donals's study *Mikhail Bakhtin: Between Phenomenology and Marxism*.²⁴ This

²¹ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 57.

²² R. Bowers, *Bakhtin, Self and Other: Neohumanism and Communicative Multiplicity*, "Canadian Review of Comparative Literature," vol. 21, 4 (1994), p. 569.

²³ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 57.

²⁴ See M. Bernard-Donals, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Between Phenomenology and Marxism*, Cambridge 1994.

thinkers consider that by the time language comes to occupy Bakhtin's attention, he "begins to adumbrate a more recognizably materialist and historicizing approach to the study of human relations and communicative praxis." As a result, "In such a materialist theory, the focus shifts away from phenomenology as such to the process by which subjects are constituted through their instantiation within wider social factors, particularly the ideological and linguistic superstructure. Accordingly, in his later writings, Bakhtin places the lingual dimension of human life centre-stage with respect to the formation of selfhood and social relations in general, which gives us considerable insight into how subjects are 'positioned' ideologically within particular cultural and discursive formations that are marked by asymmetrical relations of power. This conceptual shift, in turn, sensitized Bakhtin to the importance of sociocultural critique. He contends, for instance, that subordinate social groups can 'dialogize' authoritative or monological discourses and reinscribe them with new meanings, values and significances."²⁵

This statement is very important while inscribing the theory of Bakhtin into common context of contemporary Western thought. But from my point of view such a classification impoverishes and to some extent falsifies Bakhtin's idea of dialogue. Due to an unknown reason the majority of researchers of his heritage omit the notion of great significance. For the Russian thinker the dialogue can never be understood as a mere interconnection between me and another – it is not a duet, it always is trio;²⁶ it necessarily contains the figure of the "third." Though Bakhtin does not give the singular or definite interpretation of this figure, the notion should not be ignored. While dialogue is aimed first of all at the birth of meaning, i.e. at understanding, we must take into account Bakhtin's warning that the third in the dialogue is a guarantee of understanding; he is the ontological background that makes dialogue possible. Otherwise, dialogue may easily degenerate into a monologue. A reduction of the dialogical principle only to sociological dimension simplifies its own content, and at the same time precludes understanding of the origin of social dialogism. To answer the question of where the roots of dialogical forms of social life are, one must refer to deeper ontological foundations.

It becomes obvious in numerous studies of popular culture projection of everydayness in *Rabelais and His World*, or in other words in Bakhtin's

²⁵ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 59.

²⁶ See M.M. Бахтин, *Эстетика словесного творчества*, Москва 1979, pp. 300-301.

theory of carnival. This book is very often interpreted as a description of the “ceaseless ‘battle’ between official (monologizing, centralizing) and ‘unofficial’ (dialogizing, multiform) sociocultural forces,” which are identified with the popular or “folk-festive” culture of the people. For this reason *Rabelais and His World* is often considered to be the most important – the most politically-charged text by Bakhtin.

Though the majority see in this book the confirmation of the victory of dialogical popular culture over the monologism of official institutions, there is another trend, underlying significant ontological features of the everyday. Trying to problematise the “uncritical and naively empiricist” interpretations of everyday life, Bakhtin underlines that “the carnivalesque image ‘brings together, unifies, weds, and combines the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid.’”²⁷

According to Gardiner, “*Rabelais and His World* constitutes Bakhtin’s most thorough-going and radical attempt to demolish the notion of the sovereign, monological subject and its ontological basis in a rigid dualism between subject and object, mind and body, nature and culture, and to replace this orientation with an alternative conceptual and sensory regime that privileges the somatic and the everyday.”²⁸

He confirms bodily intertwining of the self and the other, including the “other” of nature, within what Merleau-Ponty liked to call the overarching “flesh of the world” (Gardiner). He reveals the body as connected with the universe by transgressing its own limits and assimilating the material world: “Here man tastes the world, introduces it into his body, makes it a part of himself, whereby the ‘limits between man and the world are erased.’”²⁹

“‘The popular conquest of the world,’ (...) ‘destroyed and suspended all alienation; it drew the world closer to man, to his body, permitted him to touch and test every object, examine it from all sides, enter into it, turn it inside out, compare it to every phenomenon, however exalted or holy, analyze, weigh, measure, try it on. And all this could be done on the one plane of material sensual experience.’”³⁰

This passage is very close to one of the predecessors of Bakhtin, Russian philosopher Vasily Rozanov, whose influence Bakhtin often underlined.

²⁷ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, transl. by H. Isowolsky, Cambridge – MA 1984, p. 123.

²⁸ M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 66.

²⁹ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 281.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 380.

Describing the human subjectivity as constantly becoming, non-formal and opened, Rozanov states its interconnection with the things via our senses. With the help of senses a man enters the world, eats it, but the world in turn enters a man through the senses too. They are the open gates between the human being and the world.³¹ Thus, understanding the specificity of subjectivity connects the latter with a will that is removed from the level of consciousness to the level of the body. The collective body described by Bakhtin also corresponds to this definition. So the conclusion of Western thinkers that “By promoting a heightened cognizance of the indeterminate, ‘impure’ and ambivalent characteristics of everyday life, Bakhtin alerts us to the very phenomenon of difference or ‘otherness,’ and the moral imperative behind its nurturing and preservation,”³² seems rather problematic. Following Rozanov, Bakhtin refers to everydayness in his aspiration to create a *new otology of human existence* justifying open, active, embodied, unfinalised, dialogical subjectivity, deprived of either epistemological or moral definitions. He argues for a fluid creative character of the world and for it corresponding with the human existence that represents an eternal “play of potencies, the play of embryos.”³³ Everyday life is that very space where this fluid subjectivity is constantly being born, where it is creating and changing the world and itself, and where it produces a response towards a concrete other. This subjectivity is alive, embodied, dialogically unfinalised and free from any form of external finalising, neither theoretical an objectifying glance nor a formal moral obligation.

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³¹ See В.В. Розанов, *Опавшие листья. Короб второй*, in idem, *Сочинения: В 2-х т.*, Москва 1990, vol. 2, p. 449.

³² M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, p. 70.

³³ See В.В. Розанов, *Сочинения*, Москва 1990, p. 250.

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Viacheslav Moiseev

Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, Russia)

The logic of all-unity as a form of reception of Russian philosophy of all-unity in Europe

The logic of all-unity is a modern logical philosophical direction, using the method of logical and philosophical reconstruction for the expression of the main ideas of Russian philosophy of all-unity (RPA). It is known that the process of reception of ideas of Russian philosophy in the West has the additional difficulties associated with elements of high mystical-religious character of Russian philosophy for the European tradition of philosophising. At the same time, one can assume that in this case the matter is not the absolute irrationality of Russian philosophy, but an *intrinsic rationality*, which could be reconstructed, including the methodology of structural means and even expressed in a more understandable invariant language of logic and mathematical structures.

The phenomenon of Russian philosophy of all-unity has already won its recognition in Russian historiography. Today, a large number of texts by philosophers of this direction are re-issued or published for the first time in Russia, and the research literature is already very extensive in this area. Still, however, we apparently can only talk about the predominantly *descriptive* phase of the study of the phenomenon of Russian philosophy of all-unity, expressed in ordering and preferential paraphrase of the main ideas of this school. The next step in this direction should be an *explanatory* period, expressed in a deeper theoretical analysis of the philosophical legacy of Vladimir Solvyov and his followers. In our opinion, the most striking expression of this phase of the explanatory study of RPA is the phenomenon of the *logic of all-unity*.

In general, one can distinguish an intuitive, concrete interpretative and logical components in theoretical knowledge, including philosophy. The logical component can be isolated, purified and demonstrated as a logical theory. Such a procedure, a sort of procedure of logization of theory, can

be used to transform the texts and ideas of Russian philosophy of all-unity. The resulting, more or less purified, logic component of RPA can be termed as the “logic of all-unity.”

In connection with this problem, the distinction of the concepts of “logic,” “philosophical logic” and the “logic of all-unity” is necessary. The logic of a theory is not the theory as a whole, but only the logical component of the theory. Whereas the philosopher operates with various *concepts*, the logician deals with only *structural* components of the concepts. The concept is richer than the structure; it contains its own “mental unconscious,” own feeling and axiology, experiential and concrete interpretation of some sensual material. The structure expresses only the logical component of the concept, the organizational framework of the concept, its universal semantic part. Logization of theory appears in this case as the procedure of extraction of structural core of concepts presented in the simplest case as the unity of a set of certain elements, operations and predicates on these elements. Logic is the result of the extraction of structures. This is the condensed summary of the definition of logic in general case.

Philosophical logic, reconstructing the structure of various philosophical concepts, is distinguished by the type of the structures. Philosophical logic has to deal with the most common structures derived from the most universal concepts.

Finally, the logic of all-unity, as a form of philosophical logic, can be described as the most complete and equilibrium version of philosophical logic.¹

More substantially, the logic of all-unity can be represented by a number of central structures of these concepts explicated from RPA, such as:

1. The concept of “all-unity.”
2. The concept of “subject” (“living being”).
3. The concept of “antinomy.”
4. The concept of “theophany.”

In general, the list of these concepts can be extended, but I shall focus only on the examples in this paper.

For each of the concepts of the philosophy of all-unity, its structure can be formed as a logical component corresponding to the concept.

¹ For distinctions between logic, philosophical logic and logic of all-unity see also В.И. Моисеев, *Логика всеединства*, Москва 2002, pp. 9-37.

1. The structure of “mental manifold” is a result of logization of the concept of “all-unity”

The concept of “all-unity” is central in the Russian philosophy of all-unity. This concept expresses the intuition of synthesis defined on many different principles. Based on this concept, the Russian philosophy of all-unity consciously sets the goal of developing the philosophy and methodology of synthesis as the central philosophical task. This kind of problem is not new in philosophy; it is placed after the occurrence of philosophy itself. Unlike, the synthetic approach of the Russian philosophy of all-unity, in my view, has such a degree of freedom and spaciousness of synthesis that have not been attained in all previous philosophical systems. The base of such spaciousness of synthesis can be expressed also structurally. A “projective” intuition of the synthesis is central in this case, often expressed by Solovyov and his followers.

For example, V. S. Solovyov says in Chapter 3 of *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge* that being (“sushcheye”) determines its logical form “as the form of the body determines the shape of the shadows.”² The ratio of synthesis and its aspects in this case is treated as a relationship similar to the relationship of the body and its two-dimensional projections (see Fig. 1).

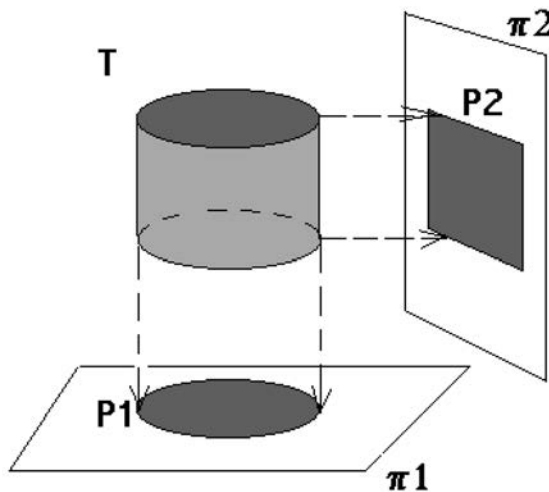


Fig. 1

² В.С. Соловьёв, *Сочинения в 2 томах*, Москва 1990, р. 228.

Each of the projections P1 and P2 is obtained as the result of the projection of one three-dimensional body T on different planes of projection π_1 and 2. The plane of projection appears in this case as a form of some limiting conditions imposed on body T. Each of the projections can be represented as a conditional being of the body under a certain limiting condition. Let the symbol \downarrow denote the operation of projection as a procedure of “taking under the condition,” then for projection P1, for example, it could write: $P1 = T \downarrow \pi_1$ – “projection P1 is the body T, taken under the condition of the plane of projection π_1 .” Although the projections P1 and P2 can be quite different (in our picture, they are the circle and the rectangle), nevertheless they may be formed as a result of the imposition of various restrictive conditions on one source of synthesis (in our example, body T plays the role such “source of synthesis”).

This kind of example of the attitude to the three-dimensional body and its two-dimensional projections can be generalised in a new type of structures. In general, all such structures can be defined as: 1) a set of various sources of synthesis, 2) a set of certain restrictive conditions that can be imposed on every source of synthesis, and 3) many aspects of synthesis (“projections”), derived from a particular source of synthesis under restricting conditions. Aspects of the synthesis are obtained as a result of operation \downarrow which generalised the operation of projection. Such structures were called “mental manifolds.” The structure of “mental manifold” can claim to be a logic component of the concept of “all-unity” in the Russian philosophy of all-unity.³

In general, like different types of space exist in mathematics, there can be various kinds of mental manifolds created by the adoption of certain additional conditions relative to the general definition of the mental manifold. Moreover, now there is a possibility of a more rigorous expression of various synthetic methodologies in different philosophical directions in the form of certain types of mental manifolds. For example, the synthetic method in Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides* can be reconstructed in the form of one type of mental manifold;⁴ the synthetic method of Hegel can be done in the form of another type; syntheses in the Russian philosophy of all-unity can be expressed in the form of a third type of mental manifold, etc. There is a possibility of a more strict comparison of these methodologies and

³ See also V. Moiseev, *Projectively Modal Ontology*, “Logical Studies” 9 (2002), <<http://podelise.ru/docs/16708/index-954.html>>.

⁴ V. Moiseyev *Projective Modal Structures of Plato’s “Parmenides,”* “E-LOGOS. Electronic Journal for Philosophy” 1 (2009), <<http://e-logos.vse.cz/index.php?article=251>>.

concepts by comparing mathematical structures mapped for them. From this point of view, the possibility of a more severe expression of the high spaciousness of the synthetic methodologies in RPA appears, which was discussed above. The general formula of the spaciousness can be expressed as follows: if the methods of synthesis in previous philosophical systems have always assumed a certain *kind* of mental manifold, the synthetic methodology in RPA grows to its formulation in the terms of a mental manifold as the *general* structure. For example, Hegel did not use any relationship of the source of synthesis and its aspects, but always related to the structuring of aspects in the triadic form “thesis – antithesis – synthesis.”

The philosophy of all-unity by Vladimir Solovyov and his followers is far more inclined to impose a kind of methodological *ἔποχή* to identify a particular type of structuring of aspects of synthesis. This structuring is not defined a priori; it is assumed to sufficiently express only the relationship of the generalised projections without an a priori definition of its structure to define all-unity in a general case. This leads to the problem of determining the structure of synthesis as an *a posteriori* problem, empirically receiving its decision only from the study of a particular ontology. Such an approach means using the structures of synthesis at the primary definition of mental manifold in general, not on the basis of any of its specific species. Therefore, the synthesis in RPA is much more flexible, spacious and open to empirical research, not imposing to empiricism some rigid a priori constructions. At the same time, this kind of freedom does not turn into a total uncertainty of the structure of synthesis, always fixing the minimum requirements to any synthesis at the level of the common definition of the mental manifold. Thereby, it is achieving a successful ratio between specific and general approaches, making the synthetic methodology as quite informative, as open to empirical investigation. Various derivative concepts and structures in relation to the concept of “all-unity” obtain similar properties. For example, the “method of bringing of abstract principles to all-unity” (“privedenija nachal vo vseidinstvo”) can be represented as follows – see Fig. 2.

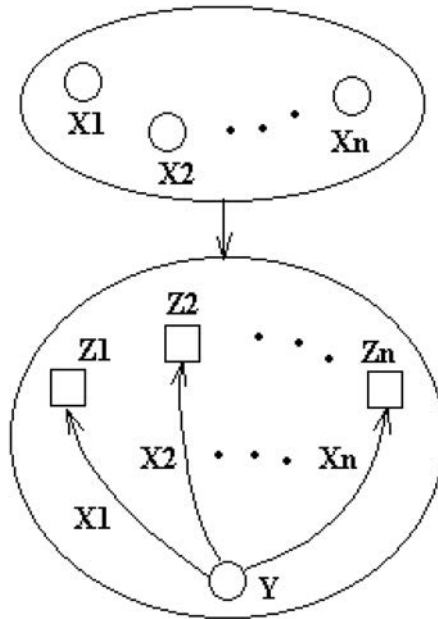


Fig. 2

Previously, there is some set of independent principles X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n . By method of bringing to all-unity, they should be represented as generalised projections, if possible, of a single source of synthesis Y under different limiting conditions Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n . The projections are represented in Figure 2 by arrows going from the source to synthesis Y to conditions Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n . One can also say that the “circles” should be transformed into “arrows.” Thus, for each X_i one need to find such Y and Z_i , that presentation $X_i = Y \downarrow Z_i$, where $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$, would be able. This kind of method can be thought of as the most general expression of the synthetic methodology, regularly carried out by representatives of the philosophy of all-unity for all kinds of principles.

2. The structure of “subject ontology” as a result of logization of the concept of “living being” in the Russian philosophy of all-unity

One of the expressions of the synthetic method in the Russian philosophy of all-unity is not only the bringing of the projections to a source of

synthesis, but to the one which is *who-ness*, i.e. is a living being expressing a sufficiently deep kind of synthesis. In the philosophy of all-unity, “who-being” plays the role of a more primary and strong being compared to the more weak “what-being.” In this kind of philosophy, there is a clear commitment to vitalism. In this regard, we should talk not just about all-unity, but about the *who-all-unity* and the all-unity on living beings (“*who-principles*”). The concept of a “living being” (“subject”) is also one of the central ones for the philosophy of all-unity. However, such a concept, by its universality, is far beyond the concept of a living organism in biology.

Different sorts of historical, social communities are also some sorts of “subjects” in the philosophy of all-unity. It requires much more universality for defining “subject” (“living being”) in comparison with the biological approach. In general, the “subject” is understood in the philosophy of all-unity as some kind of a possible world, ontology, essentially determined in its existence by various manifestations of the “inner world” of the subject, its feelings, perceptions and will. This kind of ontology can be called “subject ontology.”⁵

The concept of the “subject” was developed in the Russian philosophy of all-unity in not as detailed a form as the concept of “all-unity,” and we need not only to structure, but largely to compensate for this concept. In general, an ontology can be represented as some kind of situations, or states of affairs. The subject is able to change the situation on the basis of its physicality, which can be represented as some part of the situations that the subject can change by the direct force of its will, and only through a change in this part can the subject attempt to change the whole situation. Finally, each situation is given to the subject as not neutral, but with some integral measure of well-being, which I refer to with the term of a “degree of itself” of the subject in this situation. From this point of view, all efforts of the subject are aimed at trying to change the situation through its physicality, improving or preventing the fall of degrees of itself.

The unity of 1) ontology as a set of states of affairs, 2) physicality, as a sub-ontology relative to common ontology, and 3) the degrees of itself, defined in the ontology, forms a new type of the structure of “subject ontology,” on the basis of which we can try to structure the universal concept of the “subject” in the Russian philosophy of all-unity.

⁵ See also W. Moiseev, *Logic of Good: Moral Logos of Vladimir Soloviov*, in W. Rydzewski, A. Ochotnicka (eds), *Między reformą a rewolucją. Rosyjska myśl filozoficzna, polityczna i społeczna na przełomie XIX i XX wieku*, Kraków 2004, pp. 67-71.

The union of the structures of “mental manifold” and “subject ontology,” as the mental manifold on subjects, forms a complex structure of “subject (hierarchical) ontology (hierarchical subject),” on the basis of which the concept of “all-unity on subjects” in the philosophy of all-unity can be reconstructed. An advanced stage of implementation of the method of bringing to all-unity is presupposed to assume a representation of the set of principles as generalised projections of various kinds of subject hierarchical ontologies. A mental manifold on subjects plays a fundamental role in the logic of unity, similar to the role of space in geometry.

3. The structure of “L-contradiction” as a result of logization of the concept of “antinomy” in the Russian philosophy of all-unity

Like other supporters of the dialectical tradition of philosophy, representatives of the RPA recognise the need for a kind of dialectical contradictions (antinomies). For such a selection, an important contribution of the philosophy of all-unity is to recognise the essential link of antinomies with various limiting processes.⁶ Trying to express this relationship structurally, one can develop a special technique of determining the limit of a logical sequence of judgments, having the contradiction as its limit. Here is a simple example. Within the theory of numbers, you can write the following statement $\left(\frac{1}{n} = \frac{1}{n}\right)$ and $\left(\frac{1}{n} \neq \frac{1}{n+1}\right)$. Such a statement is a theorem in the theory of numbers for each $n = 1, 2, 3, \dots$. Moreover, the sequence of numbers $\frac{1}{n}$ has the limit 0. We obtain an infinite sequence of statements to which one can also define the limit. The statement, where the places of numbers $\frac{1}{n}$ and $\frac{1}{n+1}$ are substituted by their limits, i.e. 0, is defined as the limit of the sequence of statements. Thus, the limit will be the statement “ $0 = 0$ and $0 \neq 0$.” Such a statement is a contradiction. Now we can take the sequence of statements $\left(\frac{1}{n} = \frac{1}{n}\right)$ and $\left(\frac{1}{n} \neq \frac{1}{n+1}\right)$ as *one object* and build logic for such objects. Sequences of true statements, having contradictions as its limits, will play the role of specific objects like irrational numbers in the set of real numbers in mathematics. These objects are called as “L-contradictions.” The method of constructing logic with L-contradictions can be a kind of logical criterion of demarcation that separates contradictories-mistakes from antinomies. Thus, the concept of “antinomy” in the philosophy of all-unity can find its logical expression in the structure of “L-contradictions.”

⁶ V. Moiseyev, *About Properties of L-Inconsistent Theories*, “SORITES” 17 (2006), pp. 7-16.

4. The problem of logization of the concept of “theophany”

In the Russian philosophy of all-unity, there are two main states of all-unity: the noumenal and the empirical one. The first one expresses the most perfect state of the set of principles, when they are involved in the greatest measure in a synthesis. In the second state, the synthesis is diminished and distorted in various empirical ontologies. The process of expression of the noumenal all-unity in the empirical form can be described with the concept of “theophany.” The structural expression of this concept has already received within the definition of the mental manifold, as a result of the formation of projections under the certain limiting conditions.

In a general case, the limiting factors, or “theophany factors,” can be divided into two classes: 1) diminishing, and 2) are distorted. The first factors only weaken the power of synthesis by degree, not significantly distorting its nature (this is, for example, the above example of two-dimensional geometric projections of the body). In the case of the distortion, the factor is an inversion, a perversion of nature of the source of synthesis. This is, for example, the nature of evil in the world. In developing the theory of theophany in the logic of all-unity, foreshadowed is the development of a deeper kind of “applied logic of all-unity,” which probes into the problem of the incarnation of various syntheses through environments “narrow” for them.

Developing the logic of all-unity in the form of various kinds of structures, we find a completely new interpretation of the Russian philosophy of all-unity. Many of the concepts of this philosophy are only sketched, and the process of structuration can realise their further development. Moreover, the ideas of the Russian philosophy of all-unity appear in this case as a research program, though largely planned, but not completed in its conception. This plan was to create a synthetic philosophy and methodology that can restore the integrity of today’s broken culture. Such work cannot be completed today; it is just beginning and we should continue developing it further.

This problem was formulated and solved to some extent by the author in his books *Logic of All-unity*⁷, *Logic of Good*⁸, *Logic of the Open Synthesis*⁹

⁷ В.И. Моисеев, *Логика всеединства*.

⁸ В.И. Моисеев, *Логика Добра. Нравственный логос Владимира Соловьева*, Москва 2004.

⁹ В.И. Моисеев, *Логика открытого синтеза: в 2-х тт.*, Санкт-Петербург 2010.

and *Man and Society: Images of Synthesis*¹⁰. Some elements of perception of the Russian philosophy of all-unity, based on the ideas and methods of the logic of all-unity have appeared recently. First of all, we are talking about a number of Polish researchers.¹¹ It is to be hoped that in the future the area of distribution of the ideas of the logic of all-unity in Europe could expand and form a basis for a deeper and more trans-cultural perception of the phenomenon of Russian philosophy.

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¹⁰ В.И. Моисеев, *Человек и общество: образы синтеза: в 2-х тт.*, Москва 2012.

¹¹ See e.g. P. Rojek, *Włodzimierz Sołowjow na nowo odczytany* (rec. В.И. Моисеев, *Логика всеединства*, Москва 2002), “Principia” XXXV–XXXVI (2003–2004), pp. 301-345; idem, *София и проблема универсалий*, in В.Н. Порус (ed), *Софиология*, Москва 2010, pp. 178-195; Z. Wiczorek, *Filozofia wszechjedności Sergiusza Hessena*, Kraków 2005; T. Obolevich, *Problematyczny konkordyzm. Wiara i wiedza w myśli Włodzimierza S. Sołowjowa i Siemiona L. Franka*, Tarnów – Kraków 2006.

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Yuliya Serada

National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Minsk, Belarus)

A. Kojève's philosophical heritage in the context of the European intellectual space of the 21st century

The global intellectual space, despite the time coordinates of the 21st century, with its guideline at the transboundary openness and flexibility in all areas of modern societies, is still quite differentiated and fragmented. It is related not only to the factuality of existence of the real boundaries (geographical, national, linguistic, etc.), but also to the existence of such problem as (re)actualization and rethinking of the cultural, intellectual, scientific heritage, which for one or another reason was at the periphery of the modern man's spiritual work.

From our point of view, the philosophical heritage of the Russian emigrant-philosopher A. Kojève, who was forced to leave the revolutionary Russia, deserves special research attention today. This statement is due to several reasons.

Firstly, in terms of Kojève's actual impact on the European philosophy development in the 20th century in general, as well as his potential value to the contemporary European and world intellectual space.

Secondly, from the perspective of the specificity of historico-philosophical, anthropological, social and philosophical ideas which were developed by the philosopher. Thus, his original anthropological version of Hegelianism was the catalyst of a new wave of interest in Hegel's philosophy; besides, it set new research perspectives on the subject philosophy, especially in its existential and phenomenological approaches.

Thirdly, it should be noted that the very personality of Kojève, who even after obtaining a French passport preserved his Russian passport data (Aleksandr Vladimirovich Kozhevnikov) without change, seems to the researchers of his ideas very extraordinary one, and his biography still generates a lot of questions and still continues to be a precedent for many disputes, especially the ones concerning not only his philosophical but

also political views. There are different opinions on Kojève's ambiguous role in the French government. He is often called the "éminence grise," as Kojève's specific activities were not public, but it is documented and well-known that he actively participated in a number of important political decisions of France, as well as in the development of the mechanisms of "Common Market," etc.¹ In 1990 the only up-to-date biography of Kojève, written by French researcher Dominique Auffret, was published.² However, although it presented new evidence and interviews with people who sufficiently knew the philosopher, this edition only partially covered some milestones of Kojève's life and career, and received rather critical evaluation by his widow, because the author of book took liberties with the private data that he received from her.³

Anyway, Kojève's life factography tells us that he is a significant figure for the intellectual space of Western Europe, as well as for the world intellectual space. The researcher combined the original thinker's talent with absolute disinterestedness in the academic career and active social and political activities. From his young age, in different years he had to endure more than one arrest (in Russia, Poland, France), and also the threat of execution and death from typhoid. In 1918, he was first arrested in revolutionary Russia: Kojève spent several days in the cellars of the VCheKa. As noted by the Russian philosopher A. Rutkevich, "according to Kojève's reminiscences, some of his basic ideas, which became central to his philosophy, came to his mind in these cellars in particular."⁴

As regards Kojève's intellectual legacy, nowadays it is not fully studied and systematized. A number of his manuscripts have not been published, and about the existence of many of them even his close friends did not know. The reflective evaluation of his philosophical work stages is not given either, especially evaluation of the first one, when the philosopher wrote in Russian and taught lectures on Russian religious philosophy at the École Pratique des Hautes Études.

The comprehensive issues of his oral presentations, manuscripts, published writings prove that Kojève was a thinker of wide interests. So, we

¹ Kojève's role as a Soviet agent: "Europe's Greatest Traitor," "Daily Telegraph," 2 October 1990; M. Price, *The Spy Who Loved Hegel*, <<http://linguafranca.mirror.theinfo.org/0003/kojeve.html>>.

² D. Auffret, *Alexandre Kojève. La philosophie, l'Etat, La fin de l'Histoire*, Paris 2002.

³ А.М. Руткевич, *Alexandre Kojève, русский философ*, "Человек" 5 (1997), p. 90.

⁴ А.М. Руткевич, *А. Кожев и Л. Штраус: спор о тирании*, "Вопросы философии" 6 (1998), p. 80.

can say that the philosopher developed some aspects of Russian religious philosophy (philosophy of “absolute unity”), contributed to the formation of tradition and development of French neo-Hegelianism, pursued the philosophy of law, historical and philosophical issues (in particular, I. Kant’s philosophy), political philosophy and also examined some problems of art.

If we directly refer to Kojève’s philosophical and anthropological conception, its relevance is primarily based on the fact that its subject matter is man as such, man as a real existence in history. Its task is to describe the whole “essence” of man as a free historical individual, in other words, describe all the possibilities related to man’s action. In contrast to nature’s processes, human action links up with Nothingness. A man who performs action, does not express his will to be (to maintain his being), but his own will not to be (in terms of his desire to be different). It should be noted that by building his own conception, Kojève follows Hegel’s thought, but he interprets him in his own way.

According to Kojève, Hegel’s anthropological views mainly concentrate upon thinking about death, which is the basis of his philosophical system. Therefore, we can speak about a kind of transition in understanding of Hegel’s legacy to his philosophy of death, the transition which was made possible thanks to Kojève’s interpretation. This transition is well-founded for Kojève, because in Hegel’s works it is possible to reveal the idea that the foundation and the source of human reality and human empirical existence is Nothingness, which manifests and reveals itself as abnegative or creative, free and conscious Action.

Kojève explains his – the author’s – position in the interpretation of Hegel’s phenomenology as follows: “The unconditional acceptance of the fact of death or human limb is the foundation of Hegelian thinking... According to this thought of Hegel’s, only through voluntary receiving death threat in struggle, which takes place for reasons of purely prestigious nature, does Man for the first time approve himself in the natural World; only accepting the thought about death and revealing it in his discourse, does Man in the end attain absolute Knowledge or Wisdom, thus completing History.”⁵

In Kojève’s interpretation, Hegel’s philosophy of death is represented a phenomenological, metaphysical and ontological description of a man as a free historical individual. To describe a human being in such a way means to describe him as the end in himself in terms of ontology; as spatial and temporal creature – from the metaphysics point of view; and as

⁵ А. Кожев, *Идея смерти в философии Гегеля*, Москва 1998, р. 147.

a mortal who is always aware of his mortality, taking death in some cases voluntarily and self-consciously, or denying it in the myth of immortality – from the phenomenological point of view.

In his effort to expand and specialise man's essence through the prism of Hegel's philosophy, Kojève relied on a simple distinction between a human being and a natural being. In other words, it is referred to as Hegel's man and the Greek man (or man of ancient tradition).⁶

Hegel describes a man as a free historical individual, who "belongs to this world" and therefore is aware of his finitude. Man is essentially different from natural being, which in its essence "is given," "static" and "identical" to itself. "Identical" means that if a natural being will metamorphose radically outside, it is destroyed. The human being, in contrast, can go beyond the limits of his "inherent nature" (identity), while remaining what he or she is, i.e. man.⁷

If summarised, Hegel's man is a free, historical individual, who is a mortal, finite being. He is different from nature in his thinking and in his activities. He creates his own world – a world of History. A human being can become a natural being in the case when he ceases to deny what is given as well as himself in the quality of what is given. In other words, when a man ceases to create new things, keeping only the identity with himself, he returns to his starting point, given to him by nature. In this context, Kojève's views represent a different approach to the issues of man's self-determination (currently important in contemporary intellectual space), and to finding new strategies of his self-identification.

In opposition to Hegel's variant, the Greek man is a natural (identical) being, who doesn't have freedom, history, or individuality. Like an animal's life, his empirical existence is completely determined by the natural topos, which he constantly occupies in the fixed Cosmos. It must be added that for Hegel human death and the animal limb are irreducible acts, as only a human being is a mortal in the strict sense, i.e. limited in time. This point should be further clarified.

In one passage from early Hegel (1795), which is dedicated to the analysis of Love, we can clearly find that man's death is really his death; it is that which entirely belongs to him; it is that which he is able to know, want or reject. Natural being's death exists only for a man who is aware of it: the very finite natural being has no idea of his limbs. In nature, death is nothing

⁶ Ibidem, p. 140.

⁷ Ibidem, pp. 166-167.

but givenness, whereas for man, it is also the result of a free and conscious action. He knows that he must die. "Man is essentially different from an animal just because *he is mortal*."⁸

Hence, the above means that the natural being's "disintegration," which set a limit of its empirical existence – it is a pure and simple, according to Kojève, "annihilation," i.e. destruction, disappearance. Man's death is a "dialectical" removal, which "cancels" man, keeping and raising him to a new level. In other words, in this case, we can state that in Hegel human death has a dialectical character, i.e. the identical, natural World is contrasted with the historic World of creation (the active and negate creation), and with death, which is always conscious, voluntary and sometimes desirable.⁹

No less important in Kojève's interpretation of the death idea is Hegel's thesis that human death is a "manifestation" of freedom, individuality, and the historicity of Man. From our point of view, it is this idea that Kojève put in as the foundation of his own understanding of human essence. This statement requires some more detailed consideration. For the sake of clarity, it is proposed to analyse the triple nature of man, taking separately each of these elements in its relation to human death.

So, the human death and freedom.

From the beginning, it should be noted that Negativity (Being-for-itself) is the ontological foundation of freedom. Let us make clear what Hegel understood under that category – "the essence of the negative, or adverse Being, which is determined by the category of Negativity, is in 'not being what you are and being what you are not.'"¹⁰ The existence of Negativity is a specifically human existence. It exists in the form of real negation of natural identity, i.e. what has been given. In human terms Negativity is freedom, realised and manifested as action. It may be noted that every man can be defined as "creative Action," i.e. if an animal only lives, living Man acts, and by reason of his effective action, he "discovers" his humanity and "manifests himself" as a genuine human being.¹¹ We may say that Negativity is human freedom, which can be and exist only as the negation of what has been given, that is, natural. Freedom in this sense is not a choice between two "givens:" it is the negation of what has been given in general (it can be both natural and social world) in order to be abolished in favour

⁸ Ibidem, p. 123.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 110.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 47.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 77.

of what does not exist, thus realising what has never been given. It is legally acceptable, in this sense, to say that freedom, which is implemented as a dialectical or denying action, is a creative work. It is a creation of the new, which until now has not existed in the world. In other words, the creative act is action which denies givenness; it is an action of active changes. At the same time, Negativity on its own is Nothingness, which can “find itself” as death. In this sense, it turns out that if, on the one hand, freedom is Negativity, and on the other, Negativity is Nothingness and death, there is no freedom without death, and only a mortal being can be free. Death is the last and authentic “manifestation” of freedom. In this respect, death, which is considered as a conscious and voluntary death, stands out as the highest manifestation of freedom and independence from what has been given.

The following refers to death and individuality.

Identity (Being-in-itself) is the ontological basis of Individuality. The latter has already been mentioned in connection with the difference between the human being and the natural being. Overall, we need to focus on the following: first, according to Kojève, identity is the fundamental ontological category, which is used to refer to Being itself as all that is. Actually, anything is identical to itself and different from all others, which allows thinking (scientific and common) to identify and disclose its specificity. Identity as a man’s starting point allows him to remain the same, eternally identical to himself. Thus, Identity becomes manifested in man as his, in the broadest sense, animal side, i.e. as all that he was given from birth or that was inherited by him. It is not only his body, but the character, tastes, habits, etc. Therefore, this given or innate human “nature” defines his singularity, his explicit difference from all that he is not. It is in this respect that the identity is the ontological foundation of individuality. It is also important to note that individuality is established by death. One can really rightly speak, if we in this case assume that the individual can only be, being free; and free can only be a mortal being. With the example of communication between the state and the citizen, Hegel emphasises the priority role of the first, because “only in the State the human individuality is manifested and realised, because only the State makes into the particular universally recognised value and reality.”¹² And further, “a citizen who refuses to risk his life for the benefit of the State, loses (...) his universal recognition. Finally, it turns out that just because he can *die*, a man is ca-

¹² Ibidem, p. 182.

pable of being an *individual*.”¹³ From the above it can be concluded that the Individuality contemplates and includes death.

Finally, we should turn to the consideration of the relation between death and historicity. So, if Negativity is the ontological foundation of freedom, then such a basis for historicity is Totality (synthesis or Being-in-and-for-itself). Kojève says that Totality is the third fundamental and universal ontological category: Totality is the unity of Identity and Negativity. It is neither nothing more nor less than the establishment through negation.

At the “phenomenal” level of human existence, Totality “is opening” as historicity. Kojève emphasises indivisibility, the interrelation of historicity and freedom, as history understood as unpredictable creative evolution that exists only because of free individuals’ actions. On the other hand, freedom is only realised through the creation of a specifically human, that is historical World. Throughout history, man is free to create himself. Looking at it in a different way, man can be free only to the extent that he/she is a historical (social, public) being. In this respect it should be noted that history takes place, where, on the one hand, there is a tradition and historical memory, and on the other – the formation and resistance to tradition. All this, in its turn, presupposes the existence of a number of substitutive generations that come into the world to die. In this sense, the life of children always involves the death of their parents. “By teaching the child, parents prepare their own historical and human death, passing from the present to the past voluntarily.”¹⁴

Thus, history is a Man’s “dialectical removal,” who “denies himself” (as what is given), while “keeping himself” as a human being, and progresses in this keeping self-negating. In Kojève’s understanding, it is a “dialectical movement” which includes and assumes the finitude of what “moves,” i.e. the death of those people who create History.¹⁵ Put it another way, History is made possible due to the fact that man can never exhaust all his life possibilities because of his finitude and temporality. Therefore, they might be implemented by others.

So, starting out from Hegel’s idea of death, Kojève attempted to create his own philosophical conception, which was aimed at understanding the fact of the existence of finite being in the world.

If in some way we try to structure and systematise the above-mentioned, it is necessary to highlight some significant points.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 183.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 175.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 176.

A man who is aware of his mortality, may move towards it voluntarily or overcome his/her given existence. This means that man's possibilities conquer all his conditions (the reality of existence); and his possibilities are not determined by these conditions. This also means that man is able to realise only a limited number of his infinite possibilities. In this sense, man always dies in a determinate sense anticipatorily (which of course justifies his desire for eternal life), i.e. he does not have time to completely exhaust all the capabilities of his being. Man always dies "violent" death, because this death precludes him from doing something that he has not yet done.¹⁶

Thus, to be a man means to have an opportunity and ability to die. Ultimately, it follows that "the true being of man" is his death, which is considered a conscious phenomenon. The understanding of death as a free, voluntary and risky act of human life suggests that man's death is a suicide. So, awareness of himself as free (i.e. mortal) is given to man at the risk moment. It is in the borderline situation between life and death that man finds his/her true existence. Combining the idea of historicity, freedom and individuality, Kojève comes to the statement that human life can be considered *a delayed suicide*.¹⁷ Suicide in this perspective of interpretation cannot be understood physically or biologically; it is historical. As stated above, man creates history, "dialectically abolishing" what is, and creating what is not. In his development man denies given-Being, in which he is born and dies as a historical humanity, and negating this he commits suicide. In other words, man negates (destroys) what is by his finitude; dying himself, he kills the whole world – Nothing absorbs Being.

Today, more than ever before, researchers are taking up thinking about the problem of current global transformations and the attendant metamorphosis of man himself, his/her essence, his/her present and future world. In this respect, Kojève's ideas can offer some guidance in the search for survival strategies of the so-called "last man," the man who is permanently looking for himself, because today – in the dynamic world – he has to be different than he was yesterday. In this sense the following requirement is chosen as the campaign slogan of modernity: "You have to be an individual." What exactly does that mean for a man? Above all, this means that the modern individual is practically not able to find the wholeness and establishment of his life; he is bound to crossing borders and permanent search

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 125.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 192.

for his Self, to making futile attempts to define his “global” personal goals and shifting the vector of individualisation in the sphere of public life. But in this case, the circle is closed, as man finds himself in the “society of individuals,” in the space of fragmented social structures and isolated subjects. This is facilitated by the idea of world plurality and its actual representation in different areas and aspects of contemporary society. In turn, it should be noted that the an individual’s positioning of his own independent status does not indicate his privileged position over the society as such. In this situation, we are not speaking about new forms of social atomism, but it is rather a minimum of two-way transformation of the individual (as a social subject) and society (as a relatively stable system, which is capable of producing more new adaptive forms of its reproduction). However, in terms of social and philosophical analysis, the dilemma is compounded by the fatal duality of the individual: the personal and individual level correlated with the social and historical ones. This kind of individual and social constellation marks the appearance of new tendencies (including radically contradictory ones) in the development and building of the relationship between the social system and man that requires detailed consideration in the context of contemporary social theories.

Thus, Kojève attempts to answer the question of how and why being may be implemented not only as the natural world, but also as Man and the historical world. Therefore, history has a direction and the end. Numerous social insecurities and challenges, the historical reconstruction of society models and types of development in their totality indicate, on the one hand, that there is certain logic in human history. *Per contra* Kojève speaks about the end of history as the end of man. In his understanding man is not a simple “exemplar” or some representative of the natural kind, which could be easily replaced by another representative. Man is a being of his own kind. But at the same time, he possesses a kind of absolute, universal values. His Individuality is characterised by precisely this universal value attributed to something totally unique.¹⁸ It is important to say that Individuality manifests itself as the active implementation of a specific human desire for recognition. Man is truly humane (i.e. free and historic) only to the extent that he is recognised by others and as much as he recognises them as such. “Man by necessity exists as the recognised and as a recogniser.”¹⁹ In this context, the main ideas of Kojève, who speaks with

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 96.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 97.

“Hegel’s lips,” are relevant, especially in the social and philosophical studies of the self-identification phenomenon of contemporary man and his struggle for recognition in societies of the 21st century. In this sense, we can speak about the so-called dual perspective for the individual: focus on himself as a problem of personal self-identification, and the forwardness to express him to the outside world as a problem of constructive integration into the social system with the prospects of a harmonious coexistence. In other words, a present-day man is finally “snowed under” with the tasks of solving the issue of self-determination, but he also recognises the basic needs of his active/passive involvement in limiting the realities of social order as one of its main actors. Society, which is formed under the pressure of qualitative transformations in the macro-social scale, sets up increased requirements in terms of active steps to the human dimension of being: selecting behaviours in unpredictable and rapidly changing circumstances, constructing personal values and identity structures.

Finally, we note that the analytical consideration of social structures and the subjects of today’s societies allows, among others, defining the tendency which seems, in the context of social and philosophical reflection of self-identification strategies, the most important. The point is that an individual’s experience of social oppression and insecurity, which is actually not directly localisable, entails a change in the paradigm of human action, his autonomy and his place in the structures of the social system. And in this respect we can say that Kojève was “if not the maker, then, at least, a consistent supporter of real work on society, and not of a permanent justification of social reality.”²⁰ In this context, Alexandre Kojève’s philosophical heritage is relevant material for building the reflective analytics of self-determination and self-understanding processes of an individual not only in concrete societies (communities), but also in the general cultural and transnational contexts.

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²⁰ И. Фомин, *Послесловие переводчика*, in А. Кожев, *Идея смерти в философии Гегеля*, p. 207.

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Andrey Maidansky

Belgorod State University (Belgorod, Russia)

The Dialectical Logic of Evald Ilyenkov and Western European Marxism

The Western mind on Russian soil – in this way one can succinctly define the archetype which expressed itself in Ilyenkov’s works. From his childhood he was strongly attracted by western European, mainly German, culture. His heroes were Spinoza, Hegel and Marx, and as regards music – Richard Wagner.¹ His favourite reading was Orwell’s *1984*.²

The philosophy of Ilyenkov inherits its range of problems from the Western philosophical classics and is saturated throughout with its *logic*. In Russian philosophy the spirit of archaic collectivism always predominated. Historically, it took two main forms: Orthodox religiosity (which found its philosophical idealisation in the concept of *sobornost’*) and communitarianism (*obsshinnost’*). In this respect Ilyenkov was a non-typical Russian philosopher, an outsider. Not surprisingly, he was at odds with the official Russian version of Marxist philosophy, known as “Diamat.”

Western philosophy owes its best achievements to following Spinoza’s precept: not to mock, lament, or execrate, but to understand. Russian philosophy disregarded this imperative, and cultivated an emotional perception of the world to the detriment of logical reasoning. So, V. G. Belinsky “smells the odour of blood” in the most abstract constructions of the German idealism. The theory of cognition was no more than the maidservant of religious ethical or social political doctrines.

¹ “There was not a single day when he did not listen to Wagner, even while he was typing,” his wife remembers. “Before going to sleep, instead of novels, he read the scores of Wagner’s operas” (Г.В. Лобастов (ed), *Э.В. Ильенков в воспоминаниях*, Москва 2004, p. 10).

² Ilyenkov called this novel, forbidden in the Soviet Union, a “masterpiece.” And he translated it from a German edition for personal use.

From the very beginning of his philosophical studies Ilyenkov was rowing against the stream. His life's work was *Logic* (he liked to write this word with a capital letter), interpreted as a science about the laws of the world of ideas, or "dialectics of the ideal". His first attempt to present such an understanding of the subject matter of philosophy ended badly. In Spring 1955 Ilyenkov and his friend Valentin Korovikov were expelled from Moscow University. The Diamaticians christened them "gnoseologists." But, to everyone's surprise, some influential defenders were to be found in Europe. Palmiro Togliatti, the leader of the largest Western Communist party – the Italian one, and Todor Pavlov, Director of the Institute of Philosophy and President of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, "expressed their astonishment about the indictment and persecution of these young teachers in MGU, for they shared the same view as to the subject matter of philosophy."³

Ilyenkov's very first article *Towards the Dialectics of Abstract and Concrete in the Scientific Theoretical Cognition*⁴ was immediately translated into Italian.⁵ The official initiative came from the Italian Society for Cultural Relations with the Soviet Union. In his letter to the editorial board of "Voprosy Filosofii," the Secretary of the Society Dr. Umberto Cerroni informed them that the Italian philosophers G. Della Volpe, L. Colletti and G. Pietranera wished to get to know other works of Ilyenkov and to enter into correspondence with the author.

The Finnish researcher Vesa Oittinen links the "special enthusiasm" (as Cerroni put it) of the Italian Marxists in respect of Ilyenkov's works to their hopes for destalinisation of the land of the Soviets, and also to their search for allies in their fight against interpreting Marxism in the spirit of "existential humanism," which started after the publication of Marx's Paris manuscripts of 1844. However, the divergence of opinions appeared to be substantial. Philosophers of Della Volpe school expressly wanted to develop a non-Hegelian version of Marxist philosophy. Such a position is extremely difficult to reconcile with Ilyenkov's Hegelian stance, which, far from abandoning dialectics, strives to make it the main tool of a reformed Marxism. So, both the Della Volpe school and Ilyenkov moved

³ В.И. Коровиков, *Начало и первый погром*, "Вопросы философии" 2 (1990), p. 68.

⁴ Э.В. Ильенков, *О диалектике абстрактного и конкретного в научно-теоретическом познании*, "Вопросы философии" 2 (1990), pp. 42-56.

⁵ E. Ilenkov, *Dialettica di astratto e concreto nella conoscenza scientifica (Questioni teoriche)*, "Critica Economica" 3 (1955), pp. 66-85.

away from the Diamat, but, unfortunately, they went in different directions, these two critical currents of Marxist philosophy being mutually exclusive. The “Italian affair” seems to have been paradigmatic for Ilyenkov’s reception in the West in the sense that even those who would have been expected to embrace his ideas with sympathy, that is the representatives of Western Marxism, do not in general seem to have known what to do with him.⁶

Among Western Marxists, **Georg Lukács was closer than others to Ilyenkov’s stance.** The latter wrote an enthusiastic review, co-authored by his two students, on Lukács’s book about young Hegel.⁷ They translated this book into Russian, and soon a chapter concerning economic views of Hegel from the Jena period was published in “Voprosy filosofii.” Sometime earlier they wrote a letter to Lukács asking his permission to publish their translation and inquiring about the correlation between the concepts of *Entäußerung* and *Entfremdung*.

A few months later, in Autumn 1956, the Hungarian uprising took place. Since Lukács was the Minister of Culture in Imre Nagy’s government, it became impossible to publish his works in Russian. Ten years later Ilyenkov and his disciples made another attempt at translating Lukács’s *Young Hegel*, but that second translation also could not appear in print in Ilyenkov’s lifetime.⁸

Not so long ago a participant in that project, Professor Sergey Mareyev, wrote a monograph about the history of Soviet philosophy, drawing a line of “creative Marxism” from Lukács to Ilyenkov.⁹ Indeed, there is much in common between them in understanding the categories of dialectics. Both philosophers were considered to be Hegelians and resisted the vulgar stream in Marxism, and were at the receiving end of vicious attacks. But their philosophical principles, starting already with their views on the subject matter of philosophy, were considerably different.

Lukács’s philosophy always went far beyond the scope of logic and the theory of cognition. The late Lukács declared it openly. “During the last

⁶ V. Oittinen, *Foreword*, “Studies in East European Thought,” vol. 57 (2005), p. 228. He discussed this issue in detail in his lecture “Ilyenkov’s *Italian Affair*” at Ilyenkov Readings 2004.

⁷ See Г. Зейдель, Э.В. Ильенков, Л.К. Науменко, *Георг Лукач, “Молодой Гегель и проблемы капиталистического общества,” “Вопросы философии”* 5 (1956), pp. 181-184.

⁸ See Г. Лукач, *Молодой Гегель и проблемы капиталистического общества*, ed. by Т.И. Ойзерман, М.А. Хевеши, Москва 1987.

⁹ С.Н. Мареев, *Из истории советской философии: Лукач – Выготский – Ильенков*, Москва 2008.

centuries, the theory of cognition, logic and methodology predominated in philosophical thought, and this predominance has not passed into history yet," he lamented, appealing to Husserl, Scheler and Heidegger in order to prove the "ineradicability of appealing to ontology to resolve the problems of the world (*Unausrottbarkeit des ontologischen Herantretens an die Weltprobleme*)."¹⁰

Ilyenkov abhorred any "ontology." He regarded as improper and false the very distinction between ontology and gnoseology. Its root is a concept of disparity between laws of thought and being, as if reality is refracted in the "mirror" of intellect, to use Francis Bacon's metaphor. Ilyenkov himself stood for the materialistic principle of the "identity of thought and being." The relation of *thought to reality* was always nothing else than an ideally expressed relation of *reality to itself*, and not of reality "in general," which is the subject matter of ontology, but the concretely historical reality – "social being."

Under the guise of "general laws" of *being* philosophers depict either abstract schemata of their own, historically limited *thought*, or the existing schemata of contemporary scientific thought. In the former case the philosopher cannot advance any further than "egological" speculations, and in the latter case he turns into a gigolo, living off the ideas of others and imitating the forms of thought of physicists and mathematicians with all their illusions and prejudices.

The science of economics, "the critique of political economy" – is Marx's "ontology of social being." For Marxists, looking at social being through the "glasses of a philosopher" is a step backwards, the descent from the concrete to the abstract, retiring from the "science of history" to the sphere of "ideology." In the eyes of Ilyenkov, ontology is a pathology of dialectics. The healthy (= materialistic) dialectics is "thought about thought" – Logic, and nothing else. In this respect Ilyenkov is a direct antagonist to Lukács.

Della Volpe, in parallel with Ilyenkov, elaborated the "positive science" of logic¹¹ in which there is no place for deducing the concrete from "general laws of being." The bad manner of substituting ontological speculations for concrete scientific research leads to the "transformation of Marxism into metaphysics, and that is typical of the most part of contemporary

¹⁰ G. Lukács, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins. Prolegomena*, in idem, *Werke*, vol. 13, 1: *Halbband*, ed. by von F. Benseler, Darmstadt 1984, p. 7.

¹¹ G. Della Volpe, *Logica come scienza positiva*, Messina 1950.

dialectical materialism,” as Lucio Colletti noted in his Foreword to the Italian edition of Ilyenkov’s first book.¹²

That book was written in 1956, and its initial title was *The Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Scientific Theoretical Thought*. But Ilyenkov’s “credit history” – his reputation as a heretic, his expulsion from MGU and dissemination of Lukács’s ideas on the eve of the Hungarian events – complicated the publication of his book extremely. And of course its text was for any Diamatist like a red rag to a bull. The Director of the Institute of Philosophy, where Ilyenkov worked, academician P. N. Fedoseyev, having read the page proof, ordered the destruction of the type-setting.

Shortly thereafter, the manuscript appeared in the West, at the Milan publishing house Feltrinelli. Without asking the permission of the author? Ilyenkov asserted so, but at that time it would be reckless temerity to confess to sending the book abroad, still more so to the publishing house where *Doctor Zhivago* had been printed a few years before. To do that would have meant to wreck one’s life forever.

According to A. V. Potyomkin, Ilyenkov’s friend from student days, it was an Italian Arrigo Levi who stole *The Dialectics*. He was the Moscow correspondent of *Corriere della Sera*. At a later time Levi became a laureate of prestigious journalistic awards, Knight Grand Cross of the *Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana*. It is hard to believe that such a man could have stolen the manuscript to publish it without permission. The more so that Ilyenkov continued to be on friendly terms with Levi for years.¹³

Having found out about the coming Italian edition, Fedoseyev flew into a rage. Ilyenkov was branded a “Pasternak of philosophy,” obstructed at a Party meeting and, finally, bed-ridden for a long time in hospital. But his book was rushed into print to forestall the Italians. By that time Ilyenkov, under pressure from the Institute management and a dozen reviewers, had rewritten his work and pared it down approximately by a third, having removed the most “Hegelian” passages and all his criticism against formal logic. Also, he added certain matters and changed the title to *The Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Marx’s “Capital”* (Moscow: Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1960).

¹² L. Colletti, *Prefazione*, in E.V. Il’enkov, *La dialettica dell’astratto e del concreto nel Capitale di Marx*, transl. by V. Strada, A. Sandretti, Milano 1961 (ristampa 1975), p. XXII.

¹³ In the Potyomkin archive there remained a photo of 1964: Levi goes on a hiking trip in the vicinities of Moscow in company with Ilyenkov. See <www.caute.tk/ilyenkov/arch/avp1964a.jpg> (the last two men on the photo are Levi and Ilyenkov).

Next year, 1961, the Italian translation came out at last. The author of the *Foreword*, Lucio Colletti, was not so well-known in those days (he was the same age as Ilyenkov, born 1924). Three years later, in 1964, he left the Communist Party and finally became a radical critic of Marxism *à la* Karl Popper.¹⁴ But in the 60s Colletti was still trying to cleanse Marxism of the harmful effect of Hegelian dialectics.

In his verbose *Foreword* (52 pages!) he expounded his views on dialectics and Marx's theory of value. From attacking Hegel he moved to scathing criticism of the "archaic and contradictory metaphysics" of Diamat, illustrated by the example of Soviet philosopher Mark Rosenthal's work on the logic of *Capital*. Only at the very end does Colletti find four pages for commenting on Ilyenkov's book. The assessment is rather benevolent: "One could not fail to notice the seriousness and originality of Ilyenkov's research, despite the somewhat scholastic linearity of his speech."¹⁵

Colletti expresses the hope that Ilyenkov is not alone, and that his book is a first swallow of a "young Soviet school of Marxism", performing the "restitution of serious analysis of Marx's works."

Among these authors of the young generation Ilyenkov, for various reasons, seems to us the most interesting. First of all, because his book poses a problem of the "logic" of *Capital* that did not receive due regard in the whole Marxist literature, including the Soviet one. Secondly, because his study embraces the very topics which have consistently been elaborated for a long time by the line of development of theoretical Marxism in Italy: the topic of determined, or historical, or concrete, abstractions in the works of Marx.¹⁶

Colletti means the line drawn by his teacher della Volpe. The latter opposed the determined or historical abstractions in Galileo and Marx (*astrazioni determinate o storiche*) the genesis of which Marx explored in the famous Introduction to *Grundrisse* to Hegel's generic abstractions (*astrazioni generiche*). Ilyenkov called these abstractions "concrete abstractions." If formal abstraction grasps only *likeness, uniform features* of things, then concrete abstraction fixes the *concrete interconnection* of things as moments of a single whole. Due to these higher abstractions, facts which are separated from the beginning "grow together" as it were into an "organic unity," a "totality."

¹⁴ On the evolution of Colletti's views see O. Tambosi, *Perché il marxismo ha fallito. Lucio Colletti e la storia di una grande illusione*, Milano 2001.

¹⁵ L. Colletti, *Prefazione*, p. LVI.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

Theoretical comprehension of every historical epoch demands its own special assortment of abstractions, expressing the simplest social relations of the given epoch. In *Grundrisse* such abstractions were called “practically true.” In this way, as Della Volpe put it, Marx managed to “make philosophical logic the experimentally-historical science.”¹⁷ Della Volpe and the early Colletti regarded Marx’s reform of logic as a *disavowal* of Hegel’s dialectics, whereas Ilyenkov treated it as a *materialistic reconsideration* of the dialectical method of ascending from the abstract to the concrete, discovered by Hegel. This is in line with Marx’s own words. Marx “openly avowed myself the pupil of that mighty thinker” in the Postface to the second edition of *Capital*.

Ilyenkov partly agrees with Colletti’s criticism of Hegel: dialectical formulae should not be transformed into “a priori schemata,” substituting for the study of concrete processes and real phenomena. This original sin of idealist dialectics is shared with Hegel by the *coryphaei* of the Diamat (Ilyenkov mentions three names: Plekhanov, Stalin and Mao Zedong). As a consequence, Marxist dialectical *logic* degenerates into *ontology* – the sum of examples and syllogisms, in which this or that “general law of dialectics” serves as a major premise, while empirical facts and data of the “particular” sciences serve as minor premises.

Colletti’s anxiety is quite understandable. The idealist dialectics is actually fraught with such disagreeable effects as a haughty and slighting attitude of the mind, having been charmed by such dialectics, towards the world of the real things altogether, towards the world of empirically given facts, events, phenomena.¹⁸

The *matter of logic* must not displace by itself the *logic of matter*, as young Marx remarked at Hegel’s expense. Both Ilyenkov and Colletti understood and emphasised that in every possible way. Here, they made common cause with each other, standing shoulder to shoulder against Hegel and Diamat. That is why Colletti considered Ilyenkov as a confederate and “one of the least Hegelian” Soviet philosophers, regardless of the fact “that he (though it sounds paradoxical) demonstrates excellent knowledge of the *Major Logic*.”¹⁹

¹⁷ “(...) Fare della logica filosofica una scienza storico-sperimentale” (*Galvano Della Volpe Opere*, Roma 1972–1973, vol. 4, p. 553).

¹⁸ Э.В. Ильенков, *Вершина, конец и новая жизнь диалектики (Гегель и конец старой философии)*, in idem, *Философия и культура*, Москва 1991, p. 123.

¹⁹ L. Colletti, *Prefazione*, pp. LVII-LVIII.

Yes, Ilyenkov still did not fully break off with Diamat and Hegel, Colletti maintained. In his book there remained preserved some unextirpated remnants of Hegelianism. First and foremost, it is a statement about the objective reality of contradictions. At this point Colletti disagreed with Ilyenkov fundamentally and irreconcilably. The latter, for his part, appraised the absolute prohibition of contradictions in scientific thought as an atavism of the formal, Aristotelian-scholastic logic.

“In the end it always turns out that an attempt to construct a theory without contradictions leads to the piling up of new contradictions that are still more absurd and insoluble than those that were apparently got rid of. (...) The dialectical method, dialectical logic demand that, far from fearing contradictions in the theoretical definition of the object, one must deliberately search for these contradictions and record them precisely – to find their rational resolution, of course, not to pile up mountains of antimonies and paradoxes in theoretical definitions of things.

And the only way of attaining a rational resolution of contradictions in theoretical definition is through tracing the mode in which they are resolved *in the movement of the objective reality, the movement and development of the world of things ‘in themselves.’*”²⁰

In the contemporary Western scholarship one can meet with a rather high appraisal of *The Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete*. For instance, in the article *Ilyenkov* at *Biographical Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Philosophers*, the renowned expert on Soviet philosophy James P. Scanlan states that it “became a kind of handbook for the rising generation,” and its author achieved a reputation for being “the most influential Soviet interpreter of Marx’s dialectical method in the post-Stalin period.”²¹

The author and editor of monographs on classical German philosophy Nectarios G. Limnatis (Cyprus – Hofstra University, USA) mentions that Ilyenkov gave rise to studies of dialectics in the *Capital*. His work was continued later in German literature (R. Bubner, H. J. Krahl, F. Kuhne, R. Meiners, G. Quass, J. Zelený), and in the English-speaking and French literature (M. E. Meaney, F. Moseley, T. Smith, H. Uchida, R. Fausto) during the past two decades. Time has confirmed Ilyenkov’s stand in his controversy with Colletti: “The Hegelianism of Marx’s *opus magnum* is now universally acknowledged.”²²

²⁰ E.V. Ilyenkov, *The Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Scientific Theoretical Thought*, transl. by S. Syrovatkin, Delhi 2008, pp. 243-244.

²¹ St.C. Brown, D. Collinson, R. Wilkinson (eds), *Biographical Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Philosophers*, London 1996, p. 362.

²² N. Limnatis, *German idealism and the problem of knowledge: Kant, Fichte, Schel-*

Besides, in Limnatis's opinion, Ilyenkov presents "by far the best interpretation of contradiction in the international bibliography," as well as "the best, most extensive, yet sadly unappreciated treatment" of the concepts of abstract and concrete in Hegel.²³

In the middle of the 1960s Ilyenkov took part in the Hegel congresses at Salzburg and Prague, and received an invitation to the symposium *Marx and the Western World* at Notre Dame University. The Soviet officials did not let him go to the USA, but his (truncated, as usual) text was, nonetheless, sent and printed in the collection of the symposium papers.²⁴

In all of the three reports Ilyenkov speaks about the alienation created by the social division of labour, and about the conditions for its elimination. Alienation under socialism exists, and continues, Ilyenkov insists. The form of property, established by the socialist revolution, is only a "*formal-juridical* negation" of private property. In other words, the property, belonging to the socialist state, is "public" only formally, in the purely juridical respect. While actually, in economic practice, the socialist form of property continues to be *private*.

The real overcoming of alienation is a process of transformation of private property "into the actual property of *each individual, each member* of that society." And it does not boil down to monopolisation of private property by the *state* as "the impersonal organism, opposing each and every individual it is composed from."²⁵

Such passages had no chance of passing censorship, so they were deleted from Ilyenkov's American paper. The organisers of symposium were informed that the author could not arrive because of his "hospitalisation."

From the text of the Prague paper *Hegel and "Alienation,"* one can see that Ilyenkov carefully watched the heated debates on this topic among European philosophers. However, his attempts to take part in those debates failed: the manuscripts in which Ilyenkov replied to Colletti's criticism, argued against Adorno and Marcuse, or went for the popular Polish philosopher Adam Schaff, were not published in Ilyenkov's lifetime.²⁶ Cen-

ling, and Hegel, Dordrecht 2008, pp. 351-353.

²³ Ibidem, pp. 109, 299.

²⁴ E.V. Il'enkov, *From the Marxist-Leninist Point of View*, in N. Lobkowicz (ed), *Marx and the Western World*, London 1967, pp. 391-407.

²⁵ Э.В. Ильенков, *Маркс и западный мир*, "Вопросы философии" 10 (1988), p. 106.

²⁶ See his articles *The summit, the end and the new life of dialectics, Hegel and "alienation," Concerning the "essence of man" and "humanism" in Adam Schaff*, in *Философия и культура*.

sors tightly blocked his efforts to initiate a dialogue with the European philosophical community.

In any event, Ilyenkov could hardly fit into the general trend of evolution of the Marxist thought. Most likely, he would have remained an outsider in the West too. The Western trendsetters in Marxism either rejected dialectics in favour of formal logic or tried to accommodate dialectics to formal logic; they removed dialectics from nature and restricted its sphere of applicability to “social being.”

For Ilyenkov, formal logic was the science of the symbolic forms of expression of thought. In the field of language the laws of formal logic work perfectly. “But speaking is not thinking, – otherwise the greatest talker should be the greatest thinker.”²⁷ Ilyenkov liked to quote these “somewhat rough, but completely fair” words of Feuerbach. Dialectical logic teaches us to *produce thoughts*, and formal logic teaches only to *express thoughts correctly*. If dialectics is a method of cognition of things, then formal logic knows about real things no more than arithmetic knows about the number of stars in heaven.

In the 1960s, along with a galaxy of young French Marxists – P. Macherey, A. Matheron, E. Balibar, B. Rousset, **inspired by Louis Althusser**, Ilyenkov begins to devise the theme of Spinoza as a precursor of Marx. Both Althusser and Ilyenkov appreciated Spinoza for his endeavour to *think concretely*, and both criticised Hegel’s dialectics for the “mystifying” of relationship between the abstract and the concrete, the ideal and the real. But French Marxists searched in Spinoza’s texts for an antidote for Hegelian dialectics, whereas Ilyenkov inscribes Spinoza’s name into the history of dialectical logic along with Hegel and Marx.

In the West, since 1980s, the wave of popularity of the psychologist-Spinozist L. S. Vygotsky has grown. Ilyenkov shared and developed Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory of the formation of personality. Most of his late works were devoted directly to the problems of psychology and pedagogy,²⁸ starting from the general notions of psyche and personality and up to the methodology of education of deaf-blind children. Among the European scholars who know and appreciate Ilyenkov’s works, psychologists

²⁷ “Aber Sprechen ist nicht Denken, – sonst müßte der größte Schwätzer der größte Denker sein” (L. Feuerbach, *Sämtliche Werke*, Leipzig 1846, vol. 2, p. 199).

²⁸ A collection of Ilyenkov’s texts on these matters has recently appeared (see “Journal of Russian and East European Psychology,” vol. 45, 4 (2007)), and the extensive manuscript *Psychology* was translated into English not long ago (“Russian Studies in Philosophy,” vol. 48, 4 (2010), pp. 13-35).

are the majority. References to Ilyenkov are constantly found in works on the “cultural-historical theory of activity,” especially in the Finnish researchers of Yrjö Engeström School (Helsinki University, Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research). However, the level of understanding of Ilyenkov’s ideas by Western psychologists is not very impressive for now.

At the end of the 20th century in Cambridge and Helsinki two volumes discussing Ilyenkov’s works, appeared.²⁹ An appraisal prevails in them from the standpoint of analytical philosophy, about which Ilyenkov himself spoke contemptuously, attacking it with remarkably coarse expressions. Nevertheless, in these books Western philosophers commenced a sufficiently serious and deep dialogue with Ilyenkov and with his followers in Russia. That dialogue was continued on pages of journals “Studies in East European Thought” (2005, vol. 57) and “Russian Studies in Philosophy” (2010, vol. 48), devoted to Ilyenkov’s legacy, and at the annual Ilyenkov Readings, visited periodically by scholars from the European countries, mainly from Germany and Finland.

In the West, the most authoritative experts on Ilyenkov today are Vesa Oittinen (University of Helsinki) and David Bakhurst (Queen’s University, Canada). The noted British Marxist philosopher Sean Sayers (Emeritus Professor, University of Kent) makes much of Ilyenkov’s works.

Ilyenkov receives barely a mention in the existing literature on Soviet philosophy. Nevertheless, he is the most important and original Soviet philosopher of the post-war period. He develops a Hegelian and dialectical interpretation of Marxism which is of enduring relevance and interest.³⁰

Under contract to Brill publishing house, two new volumes on Ilyenkov are being prepared for print. One of them comprises English translations of his works about Hegel, and another one contains the English translation of the author’s full version of *The Dialectics of the Ideal*³¹ and a new portion

²⁹ D. Bakhurst, *Consciousness and Revolution in Soviet Philosophy: From the Bolsheviks to Evald Ilyenkov*, Cambridge 1991; V. Oittinen (ed), *Evald Ilyenkov’s Philosophy Revisited*, Helsinki 2000.

³⁰ S. Sayers, *Review of Bakhurst, D. Consciousness and Revolution in Soviet Philosophy*, “Canadian Slavonic Papers”, vol. 34, 1-2 (1992), p. 176.

³¹ This work had been published partially in English already during Ilyenkov’s lifetime (see *The Concept of the Ideal*, in A.N. Leontiev (ed), *Philosophy in the USSR: Problems of Dialectical Materialism*, transl. by R. Daglish, Moscow 1977, pp. 71-99), while the author could not have seen it printed in his native language. And three posthumous Russian publications of *The Dialectics of the Ideal* also appeared with abridgements, not too considerable though.

of commentaries on the same topic. Thus, today we see a not so quick but consistent advancement of Ilyenkov's ideas in the West.

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Janusz Dobieszewski
The University of Warsaw (Warsaw, Poland)

Russian Issues in Alain Besançon's Perspective

This paper is written for a special occasion. Firstly, it was written upon receiving an invitation to a conference, with a very specific, though spacious enough, theme. Secondly, it is a response to the Polish publication (appearing almost immediately after the French original)¹ of Alain Besançon's most recent book *The Holy Russia*.² It was natural to fuse these two events together.

But this does not mean that the present paper is occasional or accidental. The conference and Besançon's book provide an opportunity to collect, express and organize a discussion of a certain problem with a long history, both objective, related to an area of contemporary intellectual debate, and subjective, connected with a certain type of exploration and examination conducted by the author of the present paper. In relation to the above mentioned problem, Besançon is a highly appropriate person; he is an important and internationally renowned author, and very popular in Poland, present both in the scientific and journalistic discourse. He is a very representative figure, one may even say remarkable, because of his peculiar perception and interpretation of the "Russian issue" in its various aspects, which is precisely the object of our interrogation. His perspective is radical (extreme right), stringent, perhaps even dogmatic, unsympathetic to any remnants of the pro-soviet and post-soviet sentiments, to any attempts at finding a nuanced view of the history of the USSR and Communism, which attitude (considered by Besançon to be clearly erroneous, naïve and imposed by the political correctness) appears only too often, according to the French thinker, in the contemporary liberal and leftist circles.

¹ A. Besançon, *Sainte Russie*, Paris 2012.

² A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, transl. by Ł. Maślanka, Warsaw 2012.

Thus, this paper will be an attempt to present (and to evaluate in some way) Besançon's views regarding Russia. This idea is in fact even more confined, as it really concerns Besançon's statements on and analyses of the Russian thought, or more precisely, philosophy. However, the nature of his views and his texts (and possibly also the objective nature of the Russian thought) does not permit us to leave aside Russian history (especially the political history, including the most recent period), Russian ideologies, and their European contexts. We will focus our attention on the *Holy Russia*, referring to Besançon's earlier works as well.

Our intention of taking a closer look at the Russian thought (and philosophy in particular) in Besançon's take is not an easy task, since that thought is heavily implicated in the historical and political context, not merely in the factual sense, but also in its entire systematic outlook. On the one hand, this invests it with a value and historical gravity, but on the other it deprives it of its autonomy, of its own logic, threatening to turn it into a subservient sphere in relation to other fields. At the same time, the sphere of thought is in no way merely a sideline of Besançon's analysis of Russia or some periphery of his vision of the Russian historical process. To the contrary, the interpretative key in these studies and approaches is the ideological nature of the Soviet regime, as well as the gnostic nature of the Russian Empire (especially in the wide historiosophical view of this Empire). The ideology is understood here as a particular kind of gnosis, and Russia as the still underdeveloped, still sprouting form of USSR, which obviously makes the concept of Russian-Soviet integral unity central to Besançon's idea. Gnosis is such a worldview that proclaims existence of a hidden reality beyond the visible one, a secret dimension that is both deeper, more perfect and redemptive. There are two worlds (or one world radically dualized): the ideal, mystical, yet metaphysically more real, and the natural, visible, yet superficial and dependent world. As long as the hidden sphere retains its transcendental nature, its eschatological distinction, infinity and ideal exemplarity in relation to the natural world, a state of religious and vital dissatisfaction, creative and motivating for men, is retained, a state representing the existential truth and human development; when this ideal world begins to become instantiated, nearing the forms and shapes of the real world, when it is made immanent, we begin to be dealing with a fiction, an imitation in the perception and understanding of the world,³ and its utmost form is ideology. When this higher world and

³ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Russia's Religious Education]*, transl. by E. Szot-Sobstel, "Znak" 9 (1981), p. 1216.

the relations between the higher and the lower world will be presented, as Besançon puts it, “not in its mythological robes, but clothed in supposedly true history,” we are “transferred from the gnostic thought into the sphere of ideological thought,”⁴ which “promises temporal salvation” on terms of metaphysical and political conversion, which would be in accordance with the cosmic order (and the laws of history).⁵ The history of Russia and the USSR – both real, and spiritual and intellectual – were highly vulnerable to this kind of gnostic and ideological falsity.

The beginnings of Russian history and sources of the Russian spirit should be sought, in Besançon’s opinion, in the religious structures of Byzantium. This Byzantine foundation was, of course, modified by the historical circumstances, but it retains its stability and remains a valid explanation for the understanding of Russia.⁶ This Byzantine motif is supported by Besançon with another theme, this time more native to Russia, and growing in importance with time: “the art of lying is as old as Russia itself.”⁷ This opinion – expressed, it seems, in the fervor of argument – should be probably understood as follows: there is some specific lie, a politically-metaphysical lie or perhaps an ontological lie,⁸ which grows out of the constant contrast between the Russian aspirations (be it religious, historical or political) and Russian reality, and this contrast is ingeniously negated (meaning, Russia’s belatedness).⁹ In comparison to this all “European” lies would not qualify as such and thus Besançon’s phrase would be in some way justified.

Let us direct our attention to the Byzantine issue, a matter, as it shall be seen, not very distant from the issue of the ontological lie. Although Besançon is of the opinion that with regards to the dogmatic matters the Orthodox and the Catholic churches represent the same type of Christianity, “the guarantor of which is the Catholic Church,”¹⁰ still there is a marked difference in the “laying out of the accents”¹¹ between the teachings of both

⁴ Ibidem, p. 1215.

⁵ A. Besançon, *A Century of Horrors: Communism, Nazism, and the Uniqueness of the Shoah*, transl. by R.C. Hancock, Washington 2007, p. XV.

⁶ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, pp. 17, 37.

⁷ Ibidem, p. 11.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 36.

⁹ A. Besançon, *Czy Rosja należy do Europy [Is Russia a part of Europe]*, transl. by J.M. Kłoczowski, in idem, *Świadek wieku. Wybór publicystyki z pierwszego i drugiego obiegu [The Witness of the Age: A Selection of Journalism in the Original and Secondary Circulation]*, ed. by F. Memches, Warszawa 2006, vol. I, pp. 238-239.

¹⁰ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 17.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 18.

religions. The scribes of the past represent the process of Christianization of Russia as follows: “Russia was a latecomer to the Christian faith, yet there was such a fervor, such an earnestness in that act, that it now sees itself as the most blessed, as Christ’s own beloved.”¹² Yet in reality – as Besançon writes – the people lived in practical paganism, practicing a superficial Christianity, far removed from dogma,¹³ and most importantly, a Christianity characterized by a strong anti-Latin attitude, present as early as in Byzantium, which turned into hatred and disdain of the West after the sacking of the Constantinople by the crusaders in 1204.¹⁴ In Russia this attitude took its permanent shape as a nationalistic exhibition of the western threat, as an equation of the Orthodox Christianity with Russianness, finally as an accepted or imposed subservience of the church to the Tsar’s power.¹⁵ Thus, the isolationist idea of the Holy Russia became a messianic endorsement of the Russian state imperialism. As a side comment, Besançon writes in the accusatory tone that “no other country in the world – with the exception of the Holy Land – dared to call itself ‘holy,’” though he quickly amends this statement, clarifying not too convincingly, perhaps, that there had been The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, “but in that case the adjective ‘holy’ did not relate to a particular nation, as in the case of ‘Holy Russia;’”¹⁶ it is a pity that the author who is an expert on the Polish issues did not correlate the suspect aspirations of the “Holy Russia” with the aspirations of “Poland as the Christ of Nations.”

The peculiar nature of the Orthodox religion, the above mentioned diverging emphasis, (diverging from its Catholic application), applies as well to another topic, which is much more essential, at least in the theological dimension. While in the western Christianity the path of mystical life and the unity with God attained therein is both lengthy and strenuous, to the extent that it is viewed “with suspicion and generally left to the ‘specialists,’”¹⁷ in Orthodox religion – according to Gregory Palamas – ‘unearthly’ light may be granted to man and man may perceive it not only as it was first perceived by the apostles; man may fill his body and soul with it. He thus becomes an energized God.”¹⁸ The spirit of mysticism is communicated in

¹² Ibidem, p. 39.

¹³ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Religious Education in Russia]*, p. 1197.

¹⁴ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 18.

¹⁵ Ibidem, pp. 37-39.

¹⁶ Ibidem, pp. 38, 46.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 22.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 25.

Orthodox religion in the liturgy and in the icon (and generally the Russian people were liturgized rather than catechized¹⁹), this mysticism is open to all, allowing man a possibility of “germination of deification”²⁰ at the very least, opening a real chance of representing the other world, “which is to come after the bodily resurrection.”²¹ Yet, this predominance of mysticism in Orthodox religiosity appears to Besançon more as a defect and a limitation of this religion, than a hallmark of its religious adequacy and authenticity: “when the magnetic field of mysticism is too strong, it rips man out of this world,”²² and at the same time distorts his situation in this world. While in the state of mystical contemplation the Orthodox man attains ecstasy of participation in some higher spectacle, he is possessed by a feeling of “psychedelic excellence,”²³ “delicious sensation of ‘sweetness’ of his church,”²⁴ he may feel himself to be better than the “‘lukewarm’ foreigner.”²⁵ Yet, firstly, it is easy to mistake the religious emotion (subjective) for “the grace of engaging love” (objective),²⁶ and secondly, and this seems even more important for Besançon, this mystical overdeification of life “in essence does not require its moralization;”²⁷ ethics (and, further, law) in the face of the mystical prize become “less essential.”²⁸ At this point, Besançon does not hesitate to express an accusation, which may be justified by the poetics of journalism, but does shock by its superficiality and sounds too brass, too stereotypical, which may be compared perhaps only with Tyutchev’s famous “Russia cannot be understood with the mind alone:” according to our author, in Russian Orthodox religion “the moral attitude [in relation to the temporal world] is perceived as less important than the ability to be emotionally touched and moved to tears.”²⁹ This be-

¹⁹ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Religious Education in Russia]*, p. 1197.

²⁰ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 28.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 33.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 28.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 34.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 29. In another passage Besançon formulates analogous to the discussed yet differently expressed opposition between “mysticism” and “exaltation,” where mysticism is objective, amorous, passive and based on grace, while exaltation is subjective, self-determining, narcissistic. Exaltation here appears as a substitute mysticism, degenerated and democratized, a surrogate mysticism (A. Besançon, *O wzniosłości chrześcijańskiej [On Christian Exaltation]*, transl. by H. Woźniakowski, “Znak” 6 (1997), pp. 18-21).

²⁷ Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 23.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 30.

littling of the ethical dimension and exaltation of the mystical one also causes the easy temptation of seeking after the solution for all possible problems and overcoming of all possible obstacles through the divine inspiration pouring out from the other world: “mystical impatience leads us to think that everything may be learned without study.”³⁰ Thus the mystical approach is accompanied by the conviction of superiority of some mysterious reality, which allows one to relativize, upturn, screen off the events of the real world. Thus fiction, illusion becomes armed with quasi-substantial reality, allowing one to freely manipulate the natural world, oscillate between the reality and unreality (pseudo-reality) – according to the demands of the moment.³¹ Precisely this mental, spiritual and political figure derived from the religious structures of Byzantium and ancient Russia becomes in Besançon’s view the repetitive and constantly recurring mechanism of Russian history, both real and intellectual. This is the meaning of the ontological lie, the most spectacular and recognizable embodiment of which is the double definition of truth in the Russian language: as *правда* or as *истина*, where one meaning may contradict the other, one may be replaced by the other, become the stuff of the endless falsifications, lies, illusions, fictions and later manipulation, coercion and violence, the greatest achievement of which, according to Besançon, is the Russian ability and skill to “lie sincerely, from the whole heart.”³²

At the same time Catholic Christianity assigns an incomparably larger and intrinsic role to moral life, furthermore requiring for it “to remain within the boundaries of law;”³³ it maintains the balance between the two worlds, striving not to confuse them and therefore achieving a focused humility and discipline towards eternity, as well as civilizational and political efficiency towards the temporal world. Compared with the healthy and creative Catholicism, the Orthodoxy appears in Besançon’s writings as a sickly, destructive religion, or at least with leaning towards destruction and sickness, and this tendency grows when we move from the Byzantine to the Russian form of Orthodoxy. All this allows Besançon, without actually accusing the Orthodox religion of heresy, to still define it as “the most fanatical religion,”³⁴ heavily “burdened by the pagan magic” and “panic

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 35.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 12.

³² Ibidem, p. 36.

³³ Ibidem, p. 21.

³⁴ A. Besançon, *Czy Rosja należy do Europy [Is Russia a Part of Europe]*, p. 243.

disgust towards everything that is foreign,”³⁵ resulting in the commonness, especially among the peasants, of the “pre-Christian sacredness,” though posing as Christian, retaining the ancient superstitions, practices, fears.”³⁶ The famous sentiments of the Orthodox intelligentsia, most vividly expressed by Dostoyevsky in his “beauty would save the world” are, according to Besançon, a call which is “impressive, but empty.”³⁷

Besançon apparently sees the 18th Century as the best and the most promising period in the history of Russia – an attempt to build an enlightened despotism, in its essence analogical to the form of government dominant in Europe of those times; some elements of this rationalistic political attitude were already present in Russia earlier. Even before Peter the Great’s epoch, writes Besançon, “understood literally, the doctrines of the Russian state were not exceptional in themselves. The King of England Henry VIII had similar views.”³⁸ Even the fact that “tsars viewed the Church as means to an end of strengthening autocracy” was not “especially innovative. In those times Tudors in England thought likewise.”³⁹ Peter the Great replaced the Patriarchy by the “Holy Synod made after example of the Lutheran Synod, that is, a body comprising of the spiritual and secular officers, who were delegated by the ruler to administer the Church matters.”⁴⁰ In general the system introduced by Peter the Great “for all its ruthlessness bore resemblance to the solutions established elsewhere.”⁴¹ The measures taken by the Russian rulers toward Europeanization, rationalization and enlightenment resulted in the 18th and then in the 19th Century in the evident, even ground-breaking achievements in, for instance, education: “Russian University was one of the greatest successes of the tsarist regime. There was no real university in France up to the end of 19th century, while in Russia there were many of them.”⁴² During the Napoleonic wars and after their victory therein “the Russian officers would make a favorable impression. This meant that the shaping of the nobility after the European style so ardently desired by Catherine, succeeded. The transplanted organ had been

³⁵ A. Besançon, *Tezy o Rosji minionej i obecnej* [*On Russia Past and Present*], transl. by W. Dłuski, in idem, *Świadek wieku* [*The Witness of the Age*], p. 255.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 257.

³⁷ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś* [*Holy Russia*], p. 30.

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 41.

³⁹ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji* [*Russia's Religious Education*], p. 1199.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 1200.

⁴¹ A. Besançon, *Czy Rosja należy do Europy* [*Is Russia a Part of Europe*], pp. 214-215.

⁴² A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś* [*Holy Russia*], p. 82.

assimilated into the organism;” what’s more, “Russian nobility became capable of independent evaluation of the state’s condition.”⁴³ If we accuse the Russian rulers of ruthlessness, lack of any principles, lack of the moral foundation in their political moves, “Prussia and Austria in 18th Century acted quite the same, guided by the same Machiavellian principles.”⁴⁴ All in all it might actually appear that “in 19th Century Russia finally built the complete *ancien regime* in the European style,”⁴⁵ that “it should soon arrive at its final destination, namely the European civilizational community.”⁴⁶ Yet, such view of the westernization processes begun in the 18th Century Russia would have been both one-sided and false, a view represented by the westernizers, but concealing a contrary, much more powerful and imposing tendency in the 19th Century Russia.

This tendency was a result of the laborious westernization process, and of the fact that Russia, nevertheless, failed to achieve it. The nature of Westernization or modernization of Russia was “authoritarian and cohesive,”⁴⁷ and thus quite shallow (even though, especially at first, quite spectacular), and as such it was devoid of appropriate social reserves. Secondly, the process of modernization was characterized by fervency and violence without consistency, patience; it was unmethodical, ignoring the long distance and difficulty of the road ahead towards the civilizational reformation, motivated by the belief in some kind of “shortcut.”⁴⁸ Thirdly, during the modernization process in Russia the feeling of envy of Europe was mixed with the hatred of the European order.⁴⁹ Modernization process directed, or even monopolized by the government, was destined to result in the growing role of the propaganda motif (the ontological falsity) and (Imperial) isolationism. The intensification of these two negative and repressive tendencies resulted in the Slavophilism.

Curiously, in Besançon’s perspective Slavophilism was a decomposing copy of the events and phenomena in Europe, a copy which only later claimed to be entirely separate, rooted in the remotest past, counter-European and anti-Latin religious, intellectual, spiritual and socially-political

⁴³ Ibidem, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁴ A. Besançon, *Imperium rosyjskie i panowanie sowieckie [Russian Empire and the Soviet Rule]*, in idem, *Świadek wieku [The Witness of the Age]*, p. 156.

⁴⁵ A. Besançon, *Tezy o Rosji minionej i obecnej [On Russia Past and Present]*, p. 257.

⁴⁶ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 93.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 52.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 62.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, p. 34.

tradition. Russian belatedness, the deficiencies and defects which were being laboriously fought against with both success and failure, now were represented as advantages, signs of Russia's holiness;⁵⁰ in the Slavophilism's view Russia became firstly separate, and secondly superior quality of civilization and culture. The radical or even desperate self-criticism present in the European historiosophical contemplation of the times favored this development: "just read French or English diaries: you will find constant censure of the old continent."⁵¹

Contrary to its own legend, the Slavophilist project did not grow out of the ancient Russia, Byzantianism or the Fathers of the Church – out of Orthodox faith understood one way or another as authentic, and the only authentic Christianity. In Russia at the beginning of 19th Century the lively, deep religious tradition was dead and shriveled.⁵² Slavophilism was, writes Besançon, "the unsophisticated copy of the romantic German nationalism,"⁵³ growing out of the German tradition of pietism, out of the German idealistic philosophy, in which the German spirit was simply replaced by the Russian spirit, acquiring the shape of nationalism with strong isolationistic tendencies, which were the effect of the belatedness, of the cultural and civilizational poverty of Russia, presented as its greatness and superiority, as Russia's depth and truth. Slavophilism was built on the typical gnostic scheme: "reality is not limited by reality, because above it there burns another mystical reality, which is the transfiguration of the first."⁵⁴ This approach turned Russia into an object of worship and turned regular mundane events and phenomena into sacral rites by relating them to that superior, mysterious, almost esoteric dimension of higher reality, to the Russian idea (in which, as Solovyov and Bierdyaev explain, one is not dealing with the real Russia, but with God's intentions for Russia). According to Besançon, Slavophilist thought revolves around a few obsessive and nationalistically distorted issues, it is "rather monotonous,"⁵⁵ superficial ("schellingianism out of the prefaces"⁵⁶); besides, it is tempting because it seeks to replace the difficult civilizational labor with the mystical shortcut, making the entire European culture contemptible – it is, to put it neatly,

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 65.

⁵¹ Ibidem, p. 84.

⁵² A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Russia's Religious Education]*, p. 1204.

⁵³ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 64.

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 61.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 75.

⁵⁶ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Russia's Religious Education]*, p. 1205.

a “provincial gnosis,” referring to “fictional reality, fictional history, fictional religion and fictional politics.”⁵⁷ Obviously, Slavophilism does not proclaim this fiction in a straight forward way, but it places around its head a halo of universality, traditionalism and transcendentalism, which simultaneously obliterates Slavophilism’s European roots and radically distances Russia from the historical developments in Europe. Let us repeat: Slavophiles find in this matter a highly dependable ally in the philosophies of crisis, twilight of civilization, defeat, disaster, end of Europe, blossoming from the beginning of 19th Century in the West.⁵⁸ Placed in direct opposition to this biased, but based on facts vision of Europe is the mythicized, idealized vision of Russia as actuality, or, in any case, factuality within reach, right next to us – gnostically – beneath the quotidian layer. The degree of tangibility of this expected reality, the attempts to make it immanent in increasing number of ways, allows us to speak of “moving out of the realm of gnostic thought into the realm of ideological thought.”⁵⁹ Let us again repeat that Slavophiles infused their nationalism, particularism and isolationalism with the appearances of universalism. They strove – as Besançon states – to hide “their gnostic scheme under the cloak of Christian tradition,”⁶⁰ the most ancient, the truest, the most authentic Christian tradition, lost or defaced due to the prevalent powers of the historical process. Slavophiles delighted in referring to the Church Fathers, were surprisingly deft in dealing with this, skillful in “rooting themselves in theology”⁶¹ (and “Orthodox theology is quite subtle”⁶²), adept in taking root in the “religious heart of Russia.”⁶³ They spoke of Russia using the universalistic terminology, of the Russian idea using the terminology of eternity, of Russia’s interests in terms of salvation of the humankind – “God has a Russian face, and Russia – God’s face.”⁶⁴ And at the same time, Besançon points out, the patristic tradition does not achieve here either harmony or balance, is prejudiced, best described as gnostically motivated, which is manifested in the excessive attention to issues of apophatism and apocatastasis.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ Ibidem, pp. 1206-1207.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, p. 1212.

⁵⁹ Ibidem, p. 1215.

⁶⁰ Ibidem.

⁶¹ Ibidem, p. 1217.

⁶² A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 26.

⁶³ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Russia’s Religious Education]*, p. 1216.

⁶⁴ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 77.

⁶⁵ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Russia’s Religious Education]*, p. 1210.

The religious, universalistic halo that surrounds the Slavophiles' nationalistic idea was a religious forgery, but it was still enchanting, it was, as Besançon puts it, "contagious," initiating, for instance, the "French Slavophilism."⁶⁶ And the grandest consummation of this aspect of the Slavophilism (which in no way negates its defects and its artificial nature) was the Russian Silver Age and its consequences: "There is nothing more enchanting, more seductive than the all-embracing religious philosophy of the Russians."⁶⁷ Russian literature transmuted the "Russian truth" with such "power of persuasion that the West could simply become disoriented and accept it uncritically."⁶⁸ Yet, for the most part the Russian religious thought, in Besançon's opinion, "in the end loops up into various kinds of Christian gnosis."⁶⁹ The peculiar religious revival brought about by the Slavophilism was in its essence, according to Besançon, merely "a depraved religious ideology."⁷⁰

The thesis stating that Slavophilism has European, or more precisely, German roots, is not an unusual perception; it is a view found convincing and attractive by many; Andrzej Walicki's entire theory, put forward in his work *Within the Circle of Conservative Utopia*, is based on this concept. It appears even earlier in Fiodor Stiepun's excellent, extensive article *German Romanticism and Russian Slavophilism*. But in these assessments there is a certain motif entirely ignored by Besançon, often described as "the privilege of backwardness." This thesis states that the western ideas have an inspiring, invigorating influence on Russia in its new historical, social and cultural contexts and conditions, transforming this environment; but that on the other hand this very environment affects these ideas in a creative way, enriching them, universalizing them, even at times enabling them to find a revival and a new life. Romantic and idealistically-philosophical ideas of universal synthesis, religious revival, universal transformation, originating especially in Germany, are quickly abandoned, mocked in Europe, and it is the Russians, as Stiepun shows, who take upon themselves "the materialization of the stuff of dreams of the Western European civilization," who discover that "while remaining faithful disciples of the West who continue its grandest traditions, they may be justified in expecting

⁶⁶ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, pp. 116-117.

⁶⁷ A. Besançon, *Solżenicyn i Zachód [Solzhenitsyn and the West]*, in idem, *Świadek wieku [The Witness of the Age]*, p. 107.

⁶⁸ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, p. 69.

⁶⁹ Ibidem, p. 78.

⁷⁰ A. Besançon, *Edukacja religijna Rosji [Russia's Religious Education]*, p. 1219.

great achievements from Russia.”⁷¹ Thus the European ideas reveal their true universalistic power, because they exist beyond their western origin; thus Russia as if authenticates its affinity with the universal culture of Europe – such conclusion seems to follow naturally from Stiepun’s analysis, and this conclusion remains unaffected by the fact that, just as German Romanticism, Slavophilism degrades into a “dark, culturally hostile nationalism” – these are two forms of the “paradoxical nature of every Romanticism,”⁷² and not some exceptional quality or fault attributed to Russia. This universalistic, and at the same time comparatively discrete (though not anti-European) Russia’s cultural horizon granted it a predisposition for astute diagnosis of the European world. It also made possible a quest for some kind of synthesis of the individualistic principle (threatened with atomism due to its single-sidedness) combined with synthesis of the community principle (in its single-sidedness threatened with collectivism or totalism). Later this becomes articulated in various forms of the theory and practice of *Narodnichestvo*, as well as in the subtle religious and metaphysical explorations, and also in the socio-ethical writings of Vladimir Solovyov. Besançon rather ignores this direction of development of the Russian thought in his studies of Russia; apparently he seems to think that this would entail some form of surrender in relation to the false and dangerous Russian spirit.

The culmination of the Russian history, of its isolationistic nationalism, closely connected with the unhealthy gnosis pervading its spirituality, is found, according to Besançon, in the Bolshevik Communism. While Russian and Soviet Marxism was frequently described by Besançon as gnosis,⁷³ the following definition would be more consistent and appropriate: “Leninism is not a gnosis. The most apparent change is the exclusion of the mythical and religious elements”⁷⁴ in favor of distinctive historical and social vision. Besançon endows this vision with a highly distinctive nature, which explains the claims of Soviet Communism to full, immanent and immediate self-realization in the social sphere. He writes: “In 1917 the Communist party had a clear idea of the shape the society would spontaneously adopt

⁷¹ Ф. Степун, *Немецкий романтизм и русское славянофильство* [*German Romanticism and Russian Slavophilism*], “Русская мысль,” vol. 3 (1910), pp. 74-75.

⁷² Ibidem, pp. 76-77.

⁷³ A. Besançon, *Lenin*, in idem, *Świadek wieku* [*The Witness of the Age*], p. 31; idem, *Leninizm metafizyczny* [*Metaphysical Leninism*], in ibidem, p. 56; idem, *Święta Rus* [*Holy Russia*], p. 86.

⁷⁴ A. Besançon, *Leninizm metafizyczny* [*Metaphysical Leninism*], p. 64.

as soon as the 'bourgeois' government was overthrown, and the 'proletarian' government was established."⁷⁵ Let us leave aside the misgivings we may have regarding the uncritical tone of this sentence; first and foremost we are concerned here with trying to characterize the logic and coherence of Besançon's arguments. Thus the very tangibility, precision, ideological quality, and not merely the gnostic quality of Leninism or Soviet Communism, make it a fiction, an illusion, a lie in the degree qualitatively greater than the Slavophilist or Russian Nationalist lie. The Communist lie goes farther than mere oscillation between the given reality and mystical one (a postulated reality), in which that higher reality remains mysterious, undefined, detached and generalized, calling for an interpretation and leaving a margin of freedom and interpretational diversity. Gnostic perspective places the higher reality into the eschatological dimension or into the future, though the distance between these qualities and temporality and the present may drastically diminish (as religion becomes gnosticised in Orthodox faith and gnosis becomes ideologized in Slavophilism). However, the Communist lie "is based on the attempt to convince one that the utopia has been materialized."⁷⁶ It exists not a motivation for action, not as a near or distant perspective, but as a fact. And because the Russian reality contradicted the most basic principles of the doctrine (beginning with the economic realities, through social layering, and ending with the public institutions), the Bolshevik government had to focus on falsification of the social consciousness, and it could well use in this remodeling of the consciousness the instruments of power which were tried and proven in the gnostic and early ideological (Slavophilist) ontological lie. The energy of the Soviet Communism was directed not at the transformation of the reality, but at the insertion of fiction into the human consciousness, at making the utopian ideology (or ideological utopia) the substance of the human consciousness and thus bringing it into reality – a reality of their perception of the world, not a reality of the world. This required a universal acceptance of the ideology, and a negation of the actual reality, which is precisely the key to understanding the Soviet Communism. "Ideology imposes fiction which postulates that there is also another reality, a private reality, (...) that it exists 'in actu,'"⁷⁷ the pseudo-reality is the actual real-

⁷⁵ A. Besançon, *Krótki kurs sowietologii* [*A Short Course of Sovietology*], Paris 1976, p. 5.

⁷⁶ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś* [*Holy Russia*], p. 11.

⁷⁷ A. Besançon, *O trudnościach zdefiniowania systemu radzieckiego* [*On the problems of defining the Soviet system*], in idem, *Świadek wieku* [*The Witness of the Age*], p. 90.

ity, and this idea must become internalized in the consciousness of the members of society through mass reeducation and terror, to such an extent that the individual would not be able to “anchor itself in the real world,”⁷⁸ being doomed and self-condemned to the ideological narrative. The Soviet power and regime is not nationalistic or proletarian (if any, such qualities are secondary); in its sources it is the ideological regime.⁷⁹ Imaginary, fictional reality of the utopia or ideological project pretends to be real, and at the same time paralyzes the actual reality, and, what’s especially important in this context, Besançon “tries to demonstrate how this ideological super reality does not simply float above the real world like some kind of smoke or haze, but actually persists at its very heart as its immanent unreality,”⁸⁰ as Nothing. “The biggest error of the West,” Besançon explains, “was in the belief that Socialism existed and had a form of being particular for itself, a substance analogical to our world;” while “Communism was simply a non-existence,”⁸¹ though a non-existence that was aggressive, imposing itself over reality, consuming it like a parasite, proclaiming “catching up” and “overtaking,” announcing the Moon-themed reports, enforcing mobilization and enthusiasm for fiction presented as reality. It was necessary “for people to deny the reality and confirm the super reality through voting, applause, wide smiles;” the all-powerful ideology “remained a wraith searching for a body,” and this could result only in “building up a fiction,”⁸² in verbal reality. In Besançon’s perspective, the Communist lie consists not in the fact that one reality disguises the other, but in the fact that the reality is being disguised by an unreality, by a Nothingness.

As a non-existence, the Soviet Communism in fact was at a standstill, not moving forward in the real world, concealing this under the continually concocted fiction of ideology. A non-existence cannot have a history, it is beyond time. Perhaps only the struggle of the Nothingness with Being, with Reality, with History may have its history. This allows Besançon to state that “in its essence the [Soviet] regime did not change since the 7th November 1917,”⁸³ and what’s more, that “after Stalin’s death the system

⁷⁸ Ibidem, p. 91.

⁷⁹ Ibidem, p. 94; A. Besançon, *Imperium rosyjskie i panowanie sowieckie [Russian Empire and the Soviet Rule]*, p. 165.

⁸⁰ P. Sujeta, *Rosja i komunizm, czyli dlaczego istnieje raczej Nic niż Coś [Russia and Communism, or why there is rather Nothing than Something]*, “Kultura niezależna” 19 (1986), p. 35.

⁸¹ A. Besançon, *Święta Ruś [Holy Russia]*, pp. 98-99.

⁸² A. Besançon, *Krótki kurs sowietologii [A Short Course in Sovietology]*, pp. 50-51.

⁸³ Ibidem, p. 21.

found its Balance that was far more perfect than at any other moment of its history. In its essence it remained untouched.”⁸⁴ Besançon keeps this opinion despite Gorbachov, Yeltsyn and despite Putin, whose politics the French thinker describes as Neo-Stalinism.⁸⁵ This expression of Besançon’s fundamentalism represents itself as something rather unconvincing and counterproductive, both in the light of the historical events, and in the context of Besançon’s own theories: he did, after all, describe the Soviet regime as an ideocracy. Meanwhile, it seems that after 1956 the ideological regime not only became weaker, but actually retreated into the background, in comparison with the pragmatic or geopolitical aspect. Certain ideologically motivated ways of behavior of the members of society degenerated into empty rituals, devoid of any enthusiasm. Exaggeration or even demonization of the Communist ideology, though quite convincing and theoretically creative for a certain period of development of the Socialist system, becomes a liability when we deal with another period, an obstacle in proper understanding of the cultural, social and political events, connected with the collapse of the USSR. However, one has to admit that a defense of such position may be quite elegantly executed by either Besançon or his followers. An argument in his favor would be the suddenness and imperceptibility of the Soviet Union’s downfall. It may in a way imply the superficial connection between the Communism and daily life, its fictionality, unreality, lack of its outposts in the real, practical life. As Besançon writes, the machine of the state “threw in a towel and fell apart. The Empire vanished in a single moment.”⁸⁶ Ryszard Legutko, apparently sympathizing with Besançon, makes an interesting observation: “although he resisted for a long time admission of the downfall of the USSR, this very downfall in many ways confirmed his diagnosis (...). The USSR regime did not transform itself, either by way of evolution or revolution. One day the USSR disappeared, and despite its gigantic power, this downfall was almost inaudible.”⁸⁷ In this context I would like to repeat my comment on the fate of Soviet Marxism during the period of the collapse of the Soviet Union, expressed in one of my articles: “once the Stalinism has been

⁸⁴ A. Besançon, *O trudnościach zdefiniowania systemu radzieckiego* [On the problems of defining the Soviet system], p. 94.

⁸⁵ A. Besançon, *Polityka skutecznych szantaży* [Politics of efficient blackmail], in idem, *Świadek wieku* [The Witness of the Age], p. 247.

⁸⁶ A. Besançon, *Tezy o Rosji minionej i obecnej* [On Russia Past and Present], p. 263.

⁸⁷ R. Legutko, *Gnoza polityczna: Besançon i Voegelin* [Political Gnosis: Besançon and Voegelin], in J. Skoczyński (ed), *Gnoza polityczna* [Political Gnosis], Kraków 1998, p. 24.

established, the Soviet Marxism began to resemble more the medieval scholastics than, as proclaimed, the lively dialectical thought from under the ensign of Marx or Hegel – due to its schematic nature, doctrinal stiffness, tendency for splitting hairs, and its simultaneous inclination to pass the banal commonplaces for the scientific sublimities. This was a tendency growing and remaining essentially unchanged even after Stalin's death. It was obvious that this insufferable intellectual situation was sustained only through the artificial, cohesive and interfering external element (the political element), that once it was abandoned, the whole mastery construction of the Soviet Marxism would collapse – without anyone regretting it, without so much as even a pretense of tragedy – would collapse as a house of cards.”⁸⁸ However, I did assign an actual role to the aspects outside ideology, as well as to the inner evolution of the USSR and Soviet Marxism.

Let us remark in closing that even though Besançon's view of the political and intellectual history of Russia and the USSR is critical, demanding and rigorous, and even though the fall of the Soviet Union did not change that view all that much, still it does not follow that the outlook for Russia is inescapably bleak, pessimistic or disastrous. Russia faces a choice: to follow the road of continuous imperialistic nationalism based on orthodox messianism, endlessly making territorial claims, or to decide to “accept in good faith the status of an ‘average empire,’”⁸⁹ just as it has been done by Spain, France or England. Besançon is highly sympathetic to the second possibility.

For the Russian thought that would also not be – as it seems – an unfavorable perspective.

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⁸⁸ J. Dobieszewski, *Współczesny renesans rosyjskiej filozofii religijnej. Perspektywy i zagrożenia [Contemporary Renaissance of Russian Religious Philosophy. Perspectives and dangers]*, in A. Bezwiński (ed), *Musica Antiqua Europae Orientalis XIV. Acta Slavica. Tradycja chrześcijańska Wschodu i Zachodu w kulturze Słowian [Christian Tradition of the East and West in Slavic Culture]*, Bydgoszcz 2006, pp. 11-12.

⁸⁹ A. Besançon, *Tezy o Rosji minionej i obecnej [On Russia Past and Present]*, p. 301.

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Tomasz Homa

Jesuit University Ignatianum in Cracow (Cracow, Poland)

Solzhenitsyn-esque inspirations in the philosophy of European dissidentism of the latter half of the 20th century. Philosophical-cultural sketches

The latter half of the 20th century in Central and Eastern Europe was the time of the birth of dissident thought searching for social and political formulas capable of facing up to the doctrine as well as the binding forms of Leninist-Stalinist versions of Marxism in their totalitarian and post-totalitarian shapes. Possible conditions for these formulas, as well as their more or less crystallised propositions were worked out by thinkers and activists of the democratic opposition in the Eastern Block countries; by the people striving to rebuild the subjectivity of the individual and the society, as well as the areas of autonomous activity which are due to them, and which constitute the basic attributes of the civil life – the prerogatives consistently destroyed by the totalitarian and post-totalitarian system.

Within the circle of thus articulated dissident thought, we will also be dealing with the consideration of philosophical nature, though its expression forms and the appropriate language will usually take on the form remote from university treatises and disputations, namely the essayistic, theatrical and columnist form.

In the present sketch, not intending to take up an analysis of the philosophical aspects of all the trends of the Central-European dissident thought of the 1970s, which differently formulated both the issue of the subjectivity of the individual and society as well as the issues of the space of civil involvement in the sphere of public life – the problems which are the subject of our research – yet coincident with the issue of the role and import of ethical dimension – and within it particularly *truth* – and with the activities aimed at changing the social-political status quo, we intend

to make the subject of this sketch an attempt at capturing, in a comparative manner, some of the aspects of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's thought, which seem to have made an inspirational contribution to the development of the European dissident thought of the latter half of the 20th century within the above-delineated scope of our research.

Among these, we will in particular reckon the issues concerned with *living within the truth*, the issue of *acceptability of the Western society from the viewpoint of liberal-democratic system solutions as a model for the Eastern Bloc societies*, according to which they might be reformed, as well as the issue of *the new anthropological turn*, and the idea of *self-limitation* within the context of the changes called for. In this sketch, we will undertake a tentative analysis of only the first two issues of the above-addressed ones, that is the issues of *living within the truth*, and *the acceptability of the Western society model*.

1. Lie versus living within the truth

In the appeal *Live not by Lies*, published on 12 February 1974, picturing the atmosphere of social helplessness in the face of the totalitarian system in the USSR at the beginning of the 1970s, and pondering over the logic of *violence* and its nature, which ruled that system, Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: "When violence intrudes into peaceful life, its face glows with self-confidence, as if it were carrying a banner and shouting: 'I am violence. Run away, make way for me – I will crush you.' But violence quickly grows old. And it has lost confidence in itself, and in order to maintain a respectable face it summons falsehood as its ally--since violence lays its ponderous paw not every day and not on every shoulder. It demands from us only obedience to lies and daily participation in lies – all loyalty lies in that."¹

At the same time, in the very same appeal, reflecting on the popular helplessness- and passivity-marked conviction that in the Soviet system of power based on violence and lie, "gags have been stuffed into our mouths. Nobody wants to listen to us and nobody asks us,"² he challenges a thus formulated opinion that paralyses all civil activity, and takes a different view on this issue; namely, the view whereby there is a possibility of overcoming both the *helplessness* marked by the sense of powerlessness, as well as

¹ A. Solzhenitsyn, *Live not by Lies*, <<http://www.douban.com/note/218292096/>>.

² *Ibidem*.

the civil passivity justified by it, owing to the existential *willingness to be honest*. To his understanding, everyone “who wants to be honest” is a man who – while heeding this axiologically-articulated *willingness*, which is an existential response to and advice on the universally declared *helplessness*, and which renders him a *powerful man* with the power of that very *willingness* – is called, as thus *endowed with power*, to go beyond the passivity circle of *us* who are weak and helpless in the face of *their* totalitarian omnipotence. He is called to the *going beyond*, the stake of which as well as the aim of which will be a possibility of recovering the lost human face, staunchness, pride and enthusiasm.³ A factor that makes this kind of undertaking possible, and which causes a breach in the seemingly closed circle of passivity and helplessness; a breach that paves the way for the freedom of living within the truth will be, in his opinion, a *choice* – a spiritual self-defining act of decisions, which come to be expressed in the sphere of private and public life in the undertaken steps leading towards “either truth or falsehood: Toward spiritual independence or toward spiritual servitude.”⁴

Hence, in the text under analysis, while formulating the *key to liberation*, which Solzhenitsyn expresses with the statement that “our path is *not to give conscious support to lies*,”⁵ he concurrently questions the passivity that justifies the lack of civil action and that has a dehumanising effect, for it loses the “human face,” and calls people to the liberating and soul-defending⁶ as well as collective and unanimous joining those who “live with truth.”⁷ He does it, arguing that “this opens a breach in the imaginary encirclement caused by our inaction. It is the easiest thing to do for us, but the most devastating for the lies.”⁸ The path “most moderate of all methods of resistance,” and at the same time the most dangerous in its effect on the system.

In the context of searching for Solzhenitsynesque inspirations, capable of being traced in the philosophy of European dissidentism of the latter half of the 20th century, the above diagnosis:

a) by revealing *the correlatedness of violence and lie* in the statement that “violence has no other shield but falsehood, and falsehood can hold out only thanks to violence,” and articulating *the essence of their mutual*

³ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

reference, that is the constitutive necessity of their simultaneous, mutually supporting co-existence and co-action – the necessity that is the *sine qua non* of their standing,

b) by bringing to light *the dialectic of continuous co-presence* of these, according to which “violence lays its ponderous paw not every day and not on every shoulder. It demands from us only obedience to lies and daily participation in lies,”⁹ as well as its *aim* and concurrently *the criterion of effectiveness*, namely “subservience,”

c) by recognising the Achilles’ heel of a thus constructed system of subservience in the above-mentioned *lies*, since it is in it – in Solzhenitsyn’s opinion – that one should discern “the most perceptible of its aspects,”¹⁰

d) and finally, by bringing the Author of the appeal *Live not by lies* to formulate, on the basis of the above reflections, a conception of liberation from the violence- and lie-based Soviet system of subservience by the manifold expression of both private and public “personal non-participation in lies,”¹¹ will become a key inspiration for one of the main strategies of civil action characterising the European dissident thought of the 1970s, that is for the strategy of “living with truth.”

This strategy is expressed, in a way representative of the dissident movement that rejects both forcible and dilatory solutions, by Václav Havel in his 1978 essay entitled *The Power of the Powerless*, whose central theme is constituted by Solzhenitsyn’s very idea of *living within the truth*. Stil, the echo of this idea seems to reverberate, among others, in Leszek Kołakowski’s reflection reaching as far back as 1975, which is included in the text *On Ourselves* (1975), and which distinctly states that “if all of a sudden the majority of people stopped lying and helping the lie, the system would vanish into thin air in the blink of an eye.”¹²

In Havel’s approach, Solzhenitsyn’s idea should be both elaborated and developed. Indeed, the author of *The Power of the Powerless* elaborates it, taking into account its political dimension. It is thus, for in his opinion, “in the post-totalitarian system (...) living within the truth has more than a mere existential dimension (returning humanity to its inherent nature), or a noetic dimension (revealing reality as it is), or a moral dimension (setting an example for others). It also has an unambiguous *political* dimension. (...) In the post-totalitarian system, truth in the widest sense of the word

⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² L. Kołakowski, *O nas samych*, in idem, *Kłopoty z Polską*, Warszawa 1983, p. 32.

has a very special import, one unknown in other contexts. In this system, truth plays a far greater (and, above all, a far different) role as *a factor of power*, or as *an outright political force*.¹³

At the same time, this idea has its inherent community-creative aspect developed. This is because, the moment that living within the truth ceases to be only an individual negation of living within the lie, it becomes, in Havel's opinion, "the point at which something is born that might be called the *'independent spiritual, social, and political life of society'*"¹⁴ and ultimately takes on the shape of civil society. It becomes a community, wherein having shed make-believe living within the lie, one can actually "become proud and responsible members of the polis, making a genuine contribution to the creation of its destiny."¹⁵

Nota bene, it is noteworthy that Solzhenitsyn's "simplest and most accessible *key to our liberation*," which so inspires European dissident milieus, namely the "personal non-participation in lies,"¹⁶ will make its own contribution not only to the development of the European dissident thought, but also to the development of the issue of civil disobedience, which goes beyond the boundaries of Europe, and which is one of its alternative forms. Indeed, this kind of "non-participation," as a publicly articulated civil attitude founded on the *inner act of freedom*, which in turn consists in a *personal decision to refuse to agree to* "say that which we do not think," and, as a result, in *the refusal to participate in the reign of lie allied with violence*, in accordance with the principle "let them embrace everything, but not with any help from me,"¹⁷ seems to be a kind of civil disobedience.

Indeed, it is to this interpretation of the principle of personal non-participation in lies that the Author himself seems to authorise, stating that "this is our path, the easiest and most accessible one which, given our inherent cowardice, is much easier – it is dangerous even to say this – than the sort of civil disobedience Gandhi advocated,¹⁸ as well as presenting a catalogue of ways of evading lies.¹⁹

¹³ V. Havel, *The Power of the Powerless*, <http://robinlea.com/pub/The_power_of_the_powerless/The_power_of_the_powerless.html>.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ A. Solzhenitsyn, *Live not by Lies*.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ Cf. ibidem.

¹⁹ Cf. ibidem.

2. Democratic West *versus* Totalitarian East

Taking into consideration the second of the issues present in Solzhenitsyn's thought, and mentioned in the introduction, that is the issue of the acceptability of the Western society from the viewpoint of its liberal-democratic system solutions, as a *model* for Eastern Bloc societies, with the aid of which they could be reformed, and analysing this issue from the perspective of the possible influence of Solzhenitsyn's solution of this dilemma on the European dissident thought, it should be noted that such reflections as the one by the Russian thinker are also present in Václav Havel's views on the same issue. Their reception can be traced in his reflections, which exerted their influence particularly on the Czech and Polish dissident milieus. For them, as Adam Michnik observed, Havel was a symbol and one of the spiritual architects of "a certain kind of thinking and lifestyle, generated by our part of the continent (...). This part that Timothy Garton Ash calls *Europe of the Middle*."²⁰ Let us quote the main premises of both these stances.

2.1. Alexander Solzhenitsyn's reflections

On 8 June 1978, at a Harvard University alumni meeting, Alexander Solzhenitsyn concluded his speech on his experience of the Western world and the spiritual crisis afflicting it by stating the following: "On the way from the Renaissance to our days we have enriched our experience, but we have lost the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility. We have placed too much hope in political and social reforms, only to find out that we were being deprived of our most precious possession: our spiritual life. In the East, it is destroyed by the dealings and machinations of the ruling party. In the West, commercial interests tend to suffocate it. This is the real crisis. The split in the world is less terrible than the similarity of the disease plaguing its main sections."²¹

According to Solzhenitsyn this disease is that which he earlier calls *a common foundation stone* of both "stale humanism" of the contemporary

²⁰ A. Michnik, *Polityka i marzenie*, in V. Havel, *Thriller i inne eseje*, transl. by P. Godlewski, Warszawa 1988, p. 3.

²¹ A. Solzhenitsyn, *A World Split Apart. Text of Address by Alexander Solzhenitsyn at Harvard Class Day Afternoon Exercises, Thursday, June 8, 1978*, <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/arch/solzhenitsyn/harvard1978.html>>.

Western world – an epigone of the Renaissance-Enlightenment rationalistic humanism,²² and of “any type of socialism,” as well as of communism, defined by Marx as naturalised humanism, namely: “endless materialism; freedom from religion and religious responsibility (...); concentration on social structures with a seemingly scientific approach. (This is typical of the Enlightenment in the Eighteenth Century and of Marxism).”²³

Solzhenitsyn concludes this kind of diagnosis of the one and the same *disease* that afflicts both the West and the East, and which deprives man both in the East and the West of his inner life with a dramatic observation: “At first glance it seems an ugly parallel: common traits in the thinking and way of life of today’s West and today’s East? But such is the logic of materialistic development.”²⁴ Hence, as he asks himself the rhetorical question whether he would “indicate the West such as it is today as a model to [his] country,” the West with its social and political understanding, the West whose most representative form of expression is Western democracy with its typical legal-procedural mode of action, he unhesitatingly answers: “No, I could not recommend your society in its present state as an ideal for the transformation of ours,”²⁵ arguing that “t is true, no doubt, that a society cannot remain in an abyss of lawlessness, as is the case in our country. But it is also demeaning for it to elect such mechanical legalistic smoothness as you have.”²⁶

The meaning of the latter statement seems to be well supplemented with his reflection on: a) the rationalistic humanism-based formula of the existence of Western society, which he calls *legal form*, and which in statutory law is the only criterion of the normativity of individual and collective activity, and on b) its consequences for the human being and the society.

In the said reflection, he emphasises the fact that “a society without any objective legal scale is a terrible one indeed,” but with no less determination does he claim that “a society with no other scale but the legal one is not quite worthy of man either.” It is not, since the *legalism* that governs it unavoidably creates “an atmosphere of moral mediocrity, paralyzing man’s

²² The characteristic trait of rationalistic humanism, according to Solzhenitsyn, is anthropological reductionism stripping man of Transcendence as a result of the absolutisation of his autonomy, affirmation of Matter and disparagement of the Spirit, which turn such a conception of human being into “the center of everything that exists.” Cf. *ibidem*.

²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

noblest impulses.”²⁷ Still, he sees the ultimate reason justifying his refusal to hold up the Western society as a model on the basis of which one should reorganise the social life of one’s country in the fact that this society appears to be powerless and helpless in the face of its real problems, namely various forms of evil that are destructive to it.²⁸ He expresses it, laconically summing up his experience as an outside observer of the Western society with the following statement: “Life organized legalistically has thus shown its inability to defend itself against the corrosion of evil.”²⁹

2.2. Václav Havel’s reflections

A few months later, Václav Havel makes a statement in a similar vein, reflecting in Chapter 20 of his essay entitled *The Power of the Powerless* on the *crisis of the contemporary technical civilisation as a whole*, in the face of which man stands helpless, as someone who “have no idea and no faith, and even less do we have a political conception to help us bring things back under human control.”³⁰

Starting out with the Heideggerian analysis of this phenomenon, and stating that “the intellectual, moral, political, and social misery in the world today: all of this is perhaps merely an aspect of the deep crisis in which humanity, dragged helplessly along by the automatism of global technological civilization,” at the same time he advances a thesis that “The post-totalitarian system is only one aspect – a particularly drastic aspect and thus all the more revealing of its real origins – of this general inability of modern humanity to be the master of its own situation. The automatism of the post-totalitarian system is merely an extreme version of the global automatism of technological civilization. The human failure that it mirrors is only one variant of the general failure of modern humanity.”³¹ That is why in his opinion “this planetary challenge to the position of human beings

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Cf. *ibidem*. According to Solzhenitsyn, among the various aspects of evil thus conceived one should reckon: law or information manipulation, loss of civil courage, legalism of action accepted by the Western society and based on the criterion of its operation, that is the *legal form* that acts *only* on statutory law, thus having no other norms apart from it, and in this sense being also a kind of hostage to human arbitrariness, passion and irresponsibility.

²⁹ A. Solzhenitsyn, *A World Split Apart. Text of Address by Alexander Solzhenitsyn at Harvard Class Day Afternoon Exercises, Thursday, June 8, 1978.*

³⁰ V. Havel, *The Power of the Powerless.*

³¹ Ibidem.

in the world is, of course, also taking place in the Western world, the only difference being the social and political forms it takes.”³² To Heidegger’s understanding – as Havel points out – in the Western world this crisis takes on a form of *the crisis of democracy*.

Sharing this kind of Heideggerian diagnosis of the crisis of the contemporary technological civilisation, in the opinion of the author of *The Power of the Powerless*, “there is no real evidence that Western democracy, that is, democracy of the traditional parliamentary type, can offer solutions that are any more profound.” It is quite the opposite, for in the democracy thus conceived Havel sees an essentially inherent paradox in which “the more room there is in the Western democracies (compared to our world) for the genuine aims of life, the better the crisis is hidden from people and the more deeply do they become immersed in it.”³³

Hence, taking all the above into account, Havel deems the following statement well-founded: “It would appear that the traditional parliamentary democracies can offer no fundamental opposition to the automatism of technological civilization and the industrial – consumer society, for they, too, are being dragged helplessly along by it. People are manipulated in ways that are infinitely more subtle and refined than the brutal methods used in the post-totalitarian societies. But this static complex of rigid, conceptually sloppy, and politically pragmatic mass political parties run by professional apparatuses and releasing the citizen from all forms of concrete and personal responsibility; and those complex focuses of capital accumulation engaged in secret manipulations and expansion; the omnipresent dictatorship of consumption, production, advertising, commerce, consumer culture, and all that flood of information: all of it, so often analyzed and described, can only with great difficulty be imagined as the source of humanity’s rediscovery of itself.”³⁴

The above statement, essentially inferred from the Heideggerian reflection on the crisis of the contemporary technological civilisation, seems to be significantly of a piece with the Solzhenitsynesque analysis of the Western society; the analysis which in its own way reveals the crisis that afflicts it, and whose characteristic symptoms, according to the author of the *Harvard University alumni meeting speech*, are: the observable disap-

³² Ibidem.

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Ibidem.

*pearance of civil courage*³⁵ and of an individual's *accountability* to God and society.³⁶

Havel characteristically makes the Solzhenitsynesque analysis a part of his own conception of "automatism" of the contemporary technological civilisation, commenting on his address at the Harvard University alumni meeting with the following words: "In his June 1978 Harvard lecture, Solzhenitsyn describes the illusory nature of freedoms not based on personal responsibility and the chronic inability of the traditional democracies, as a result, to oppose violence and totalitarianism. In a democracy, human beings may enjoy many personal freedoms and securities that are unknown to us, but in the end they do them no good, for they too are ultimately victims of the same automatism, and are incapable of defending their concerns about their own identity or preventing their superficialization or transcending concerns about their own personal survival to become proud and responsible members of the polis, making a genuine contribution to the creation of its destiny."³⁷ Hence, taking into consideration the above analyses of the spiritual condition of the contemporary civilisation and its social-political solutions, Havel – despite seeing the undoubtedly positive aspects of the *traditional democracy* from the viewpoint of the reconstruction of the essential aspects of the civil spirit eroded by the totalitarian system – will not award it a status of an adequate and long-lasting solution capable of facing up to the diagnosed spiritual crisis of both the Eastern and Western society. He will do it in line with the Solzhenitsynesque idea of the necessity of an anthropological turn.³⁸ He writes: "to cling to the notion of traditional parliamentary democracy as one's political ideal and to succumb to the illusion that only this tried and true form is capable of guaranteeing human beings enduring dignity and an independent role in society would, in my opinion, be at the very least shortsighted."³⁹

³⁵ Cf. A. Solzhenitsyn, *A World Split Apart. Text of Address by Alexander Solzhenitsyn at Harvard Class Day Afternoon Exercises, Thursday, June 8, 1978.*

³⁶ Cf. *ibidem.*

³⁷ V. Havel, *The Power of the Powerless.*

³⁸ Cf. A. Solzhenitsyn, *A World Split Apart. Text of Address by Alexander Solzhenitsyn at Harvard Class Day Afternoon Exercises, Thursday, June 8, 1978.*

³⁹ V. Havel, *The Power of the Powerless.*

3. Instead of conclusions

Conceived by Havel, and shared by the milieu of “Charter 77,” the ethical civil society, whose essence would be characterised by being, or rather becoming *the space of self-discovery* in the social dimension, as well as the inherent *culture of living within the truth*, as D. Gawin observes, was originally intended to be “a conscious alternative to both *totalitarianism* and the unauthentic and alienation-generating *Western liberal democracy*.”⁴⁰ It was to be an alternative, within the framework of which a human being by way of *existential revolution* could “discover himself” and “take possession of his lost self,” and as a result, in the political order, could “become proud and responsible members of the polis, making a genuine contribution to the creation of its destiny.”⁴¹ He could become a citizen who, having rediscovered himself in the truth and having become free, as V. Tismăneanu remarks, has thus regained his due and inherent essence – being a genuine subject of politics.⁴²

Concurrently – which is in keeping with Józef Tischner’s opinion – he has also discovered the road to his humanity. Indeed, as the author of *Thinking In Values* observes, “the humanity of man emerges and remains in direct relation to the inner freedom of which he feels capable”⁴³ – the freedom whose original form Alexander Solzhenitsyn expressed encapsulating it in the principle of living within the truth.

Transl. by Łukasz Malczak

⁴⁰ D. Gawin, *Europejskie społeczeństwo obywatelskie – projekt obywateli czy eurokratów?*, in P. Gliński, B. Lewenstein, A. Siciński (eds), *Samoorganizacja społeczeństwa polskiego: III sektor i wspólnoty lokalne w jednoczącej się Europie*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 28-29. Emphasis mine – T.H.

⁴¹ V. Havel, *The Power of the Powerless*.

⁴² Cf. V. Tismăneanu, *Wizje zbawienia, Demokracja, nacjonalizm i mit w postkomunistycznej Europie*, transl. by H. Jankowska, Warszawa 2000, p. 296. For more on this subject see T. Homa, *Filozoficzno-kulturowe koncepcje obywatelskości. Studium historyczno-hermeneutyczne. Wybrane ujęcia europejskie*, Kraków 2013.

⁴³ J. Tischner, *Myślenie według wartości*, Kraków 1982, p. 413.

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Andrei Rostoshinsky
Voronezh State University (Voronezh, Russia)

The Semiotic Concept of the Russian heraldic system at the end of the 20th century and its reception in the West. Sources, History, Problems of Modernization, Prospects

The purpose of this article is to clarify the semiotic meaning of the Russian state symbols and their stages of development, as well as to designate a cognitive semiotic problem: whether there is a situation in Russian thought connected by “analogy of types” with ancient Indo-Aryan history of replacement of an archetype of harmony and justice by an archetype of conflict. It will be much easier to achieve this objective if we start by recounting the history of this subject from the very beginning to the present.

Right after the break-up of the Soviet Union, the new state power eliminated the old one and started creating a new democratic system. These changes appeared in symbols and heraldry. Participants confirmed that the Heraldic Council used only historical principles while choosing new symbols.

In order to grasp the meaning of symbolic and historical heritage we should resort to the diachronic and synchronic analysis: “it is better to understand the Russian mental categories considering historical and cultural aspects.”¹ These digressions are important for us because they explain the overall situation concerned with the choice of the state symbols made by the Council. So, the flag and the coat of arms came back to reality from Peter I’s times.

¹ Cf. А. де Лазари, *Польские исследования об идеях в России*, in Т.В. Артемьева, М.И. Микешин (eds), *Философский век. Альманах*, vol. 17: *История идей как методология гуманитарных исследований*, part 1, Санкт-Петербург 2001, p. 86.

Flag

There is no information about the significance of colours in the Law on the flag; they are only identified. At first, in 1991, Alexis I's flag was chosen: gules-azure-white. Shortly afterwards, the colours were rearranged: white-blue-red, in the abbreviated form *бесик* ("the little devil").²

The flag of three colours was granted by God's favor to the Christian kingdom of Alexis I, who was a very religious person, and interpreted Christian values: the name of the middle stripe "azure" contained obvious Christian connotations.³ The associative synchronic analysis presents an obvious allusion to the text from the Old Testament which is about colours of two covers of God's mansion – the tabernacle of Testament (Ex 35:7). Icon painters dress up the Savior in the same colours (Heb 9:12).

However the idea of Peter I, who modernised the patrimony in the fashion of a secular state, and chose the name "blue" (in the spectral order – "indigo") in the well-known drawing, which was more suitable for the civil country. Whether it was made consciously or unconsciously, it was chosen and became the fact of the Russian history.

In terms of philology, the difference lies in the use of secular vocabulary, popular linguistic system for the designation of heraldic, in fact, sacred colours; in relation to semiotics, this choice set a new trend in the interpretation of the worldview. Peter I chose the word of the secular chromatic system, meaning the origin of a new trend in society. The new name and shade expressed the new organisation of state power, which strove to become more independent of the Church.

In relation to synchrony, it is necessary to note that during Alexis I's reign the secular colour palette was not denominated.⁴ The idea about the division of the spectrum into seven colours appeared in the scientific world somewhat later due to Isaac Newton. We can suppose that only by the reign of Peter I, Newton's discovery had become known in Russia.

We specially chose this example to bring out the important phenomenon in semiotics known as a diglossia: when two planes of expression are related to one plane of content.⁵ The word "azure" from the biblical con-

⁶ See *Флажная терминология*, <<http://www.vexillographia.ru/termin.htm>>.

⁷ See А. Лазарев, *Семиотика флага*, in А.И. Иванов (ed), *Семиотический цикл*, Воронеж 2012, pp. 5-33.

⁸ See В.И. Шердль, *О названиях цветов*, "Филологические записки" 2 (1884), pp. 2-32.

⁹ See Л.В. Щерба, *О понятии смешения языков*, in idem, *Языковая система и речевая деятельность*, Ленинград 1974, pp. 60-74.

text of “*being God-inspired brings the absolute truth,*” helps to perceive “spiritual” or the “highest sense” of the text or the sign, while the word “blue” opens only “historical,” i.e. literal and “the lowest” sense.⁶ In this case, we see an example of use of vocabulary that related to two different linguistic systems which are different from each other with “internal features;”⁷ one stripe expresses two ideas: “azure” has a spiritual, sacred nature, “blue” has a secular, popular nature. **If we consider such a phenomenon as diglossia (bilingualism),** it is more correct to refer the term “azure” to the vocabulary of heraldic and iconographic systems, sacred in fact, but since the times of Peter I it has become more popular to say “blue” in the secular state.

In general, the issue of bilingualism can't be considered well explored and widespread in Russia in the 1990s. In some groups, the idea that one word can belong to two associative fields is surprising and sounds novel even today. But the main difference between heraldry and semiotics is that common objects have various interpretations in various systems.

In terms of symbolic views on explanations of the meanings of colours there is no common opinion. At the time the national flag, which has been officially deprived of any religious connotations, represents the secular state. Still, neo-monarchists try to identify the blue colour with the monarch, as is the case of the Chinese Qing dynasty.

Coat of arms

Judging by a known note, Peter the Great also chose a historical explanation of a symbol of the state: “This has the beginning, when Vladimir the monarch Russian...”⁸ (However, in iconography it is accepted to represent the Grand Duke Saint Vladimir with a sword in his hand).

Before Peter I's times, an image of a rider was associated with the sovereign: “representation of a sovereign riding a horse.” But the tsar named the horseman by a spear, according to the military rank: in those times St

¹⁰ See Р. Пиккио, “Слово о полку Игореве” как памятник религиозной литературы Древней Руси, “Труды отдела древнерусской литературы,” vol. 50 (1997), pp. 430-443.

¹¹ See И.М. Желтов, Система языкознания по Гейзе (ученик школ Гегеля и Боппа), “Филологические записки” 4 (1864), p. 276.

¹² Г.В. Вилинбахов, Государственный герб России. 500 лет, Санкт-Петербург 1997, p. 43.

George the warrior was considered to be a rider.

Peter I remained a Christian in spite of his desire for the creation of a secular state and cancellation of patriarchy, etc.⁹ At that time the idea of the Lord was at the front in people's minds. Secular sciences had not started developing in Russia yet. (Actually, at the times of Peter I, mythology and semiotics did not exist as individual sciences).

The contemporaries' idea of the triumph of good over evil in "George's miracle with the Serpent" looked similar to the fight of Yahweh from the Old Testament who was "often represented as the War God, the fight was fair if the triumph of good brings punishment and release;"¹⁰ and also the triumph of Christianity over paganism,¹¹ the victory of homeland defenders over unjust aggressors:¹² "there is no doubt that the first Christian victimisations, the Tatar attacks and even the appearance of False Dmitry echo in our national legends, and were even quite often represented in the mythical characters of magicians and winged monsters."¹³

Over time, a scientific breakthrough was made in the comprehension of

¹³ Peter I, according to contemporaries (see К. де Бруин, *Путешествие через Московию*, Москва 1873), was rather a devout person, and treated spiritual mentoring of some pastors respectfully, in particular, St Mitrofan of Voronezh, whom he honoured very much (see митрополит Киевский Евфимий [Болховитинов], *Историческое, географическое и экономическое описание Воронежской губернии*, Воронеж 1800). Stories about recasting of bells to guns were especially popular as anticlerical myths, because the Church first of all justifies defensive wars (see Е.В. Калмыкова, *Образы войны в исторических представлениях англичан позднего Средневековья*, Москва 2010).

¹⁴ Ш. Айзенштадт, *Пророки. Их эпоха и социальное учение*, transl. by Т. Гвоздюкевич, Москва 2004, p. 39.

¹⁵ St. George's idolatrous victory needs to be distinguished from the serpent fighter motif of obvious pagan origin. Also "St Patrick's apostolic feat in eradication of a poisonous nest of heresies and paganisms in Ireland was transmuted into a legend of how this saint exterminated all snakes on this island" (Н.И. Кареев, *Мифологические этюды*, "Филологические записки" 2 (1873), p. 66).

¹⁶ Cf. A.N. Uzhankov: "In Christian tradition it was accepted, according to the Testament, to distinguish unfair aggressive and fair wars in protection of the motherland. In *Tale of Bygone Years* there is a mention of Noah's sons drawing lots, and their vow not to break the boundaries between each other's lands: the earth must be protected; it was strictly forbidden to take the field. The author of *The Tale of Igor's Campaign* compares Igor's unfair campaign (1186 AD) against the Polovtsians, and also the Bible (Jer 2, 17) compares the aggressive campaign of king Zedekiah against Babylon (586 B.C.) with Vladimir's II Monomakh liberating campaign (1110) in protection of the principality. Vityi, through the voice of Sviatoslav III Vsevolodovich – the prince Kiev, calls an aggressive campaign unfair, and only the defensive one – fair (see А.Н. Ужанков, *Загадки "Слова о полку Игореве"*, <<http://www.tvkultura.ru/issue.html?id=120048>>).

¹⁷ Д.О. Шеппинг, *Этюды из народных сказаний*, "Филологические записки" 2 (1884), p. 66.

“the serpent fighter:” since the 19th century, due to discoveries in linguistics and mythology, the heraldic rider achieved two planes of content: the Christian, who was triumphant over idolatry, and the folk character that was made from the archetype of the pagan myth.

In the 18th century the Indo-European origin of this motif was not known. Vedic literature started to be translated into the European languages only at the end of 18th – the beginning of the 19th century. At that time scientists did not know about any Indo-European mythology or archetypes, and had no idea about such concepts and terms. The discovery of the linguistic affinity in the family of Indo-European languages was comparable with Copernicus’ discovery¹⁴ and played a special role in the comprehension of the heraldic motif. This discovery produced a new scientific methodology – comparative studies and at the same time comparative mythology from which psychoanalysis and its operational base later developed. The Voronezh magazine “Philological Notes,” edited by Alexei Khovansky played an important role in the formation and development of comparative linguistics in Eastern European science.¹⁵

In the first half of the 20th century comparative linguistics, mythology and psychoanalysis were especially devastated in the USSR, and repressions concerned this area of knowledge; in the second half of the century only the most “desperate” official scientists dealt with mythology. There aren’t many of them and those were hard days for such scientists. Their attitude and works were heavily criticised.

It was a new milestone in the history of the Russian horseman when academicians V. V. Ivanov and V. N. Toporov in their theses defined the serpent fighter idea as “the main myth.”¹⁶ Whereas in the 19th century academician N. I. Kareev believed that the main issue was the origin of the whole existence that stemmed from the marriage of binary opposition – the sky and the earth, at the end of the 20th century the “incessant abuse” of Heavenly Effect and Earth power was defined as “the main myth.”¹⁷ In

¹⁴ М.М. Шапиро, *Новый взгляд на современную систему сравнительного языкознания*, “Филологические записки” 2 (1874), п. 2: “Transition from Ptolemy’s system to that which put the sun in the centre of our planetary world, is hardly more amazing than the discovery of the family of Indo-European languages, which connected in common bonds such remote peoples as the inhabitants from Ceylon to Iceland.”

¹⁵ See С.Н. Прядкин, *Памяти А.А. Хованского*, “Филологические записки” 1 (1900), pp. 1-47.

¹⁶ See В.В. Иванов, В.Н. Топоров, *Исследования в области славянских древностей*, Москва 1974.

¹⁷ See преп. Никодим Святогорец, *Невидимая брань*, Почаевская Лавра 2010.

other words, in the 19th century the concept of the serpent fighter was interpreted only as a conflict idea of “the main myth,” in the second half of the 20th century this motif began to qualify the position of “the most important myth;” this thought became the leading one in the Russian semiotics. One can say, in the early 1990s the choice of heraldic symbols was made while the view of “the solar drama” as “the main myth” was being formed in the Russian semiotic science.

The King-of-Arms of Russia George V. Vilinbakhov, however, denies direct influence of semiotic ideas of Ivanov and Toporov on making the decision to choose heraldic symbols: they did not use psychoanalytical data while selecting the sign, the data of the official analysis are unknown. Anyway, the fact attracts attention: the idea of the serpent fighter became “the main myth” and became realised in scientific, semiotic literature and in heraldry.

We suppose that the idea of one of the “dialectic laws” could cause a shift of concepts.

In the 19th century Friedrich Engels described unity and the conflict of opposites as one of “the basic dialectic laws” in his doctrine, an anti-Christian one, in fact; if Hegel – inspiring the “absolute idea” – represented dialectics as the knowledge tool, Marx represented it as the instrument of interclass fight. (In Russia this law worked the most successfully).

The methodical development of N. K. Krupskaya and L. M. Kaganovich, who were masterminds behind atheism and carried out the fundamental ideological revolution in the 1920s–1930s, instilled this idea in Soviet people’s minds: “every lesson, as a rule, is the expansion of materialism, natural-historical materialism,” “it is not antireligious propaganda, but the penetration of antireligious propaganda units into natural-scientific and public areas, which is not the same.”¹⁸ This “dialectic law” was fixed so strong in the heads of the Soviet citizens that there was no doubt about its actual reality.

This short semiotic review was necessary for us in order to understand the historical content of symbolic heritage and the content of heraldic ideas during the various synchronic periods.

Thus, both in Peter I’s times and now, making a choice is not connected with research into analytical psychology, linguistics and semiotics. These

¹⁸ В.А. Шевченко, “Необходимо ударить, кого следует, чтобы делу не мешали.” *введение антирелигиозного воспитания в советской школе в 1928–1929 годах*, “Российская история” 1 (2009), pp. 86-96: “It is necessary to strike the proper person who gets in the way of business.”

are subjects of modern times; they were undeveloped in Soviet Russia, and that is why it was an unconscious choice. Moreover, people who chose new symbolism had undergone the influence of the powerful ideological impact.

The idea to connect the terms of an archetype and the coat of arms could hardly come to civil servant's mind. The main King-of-Arms admitted that the associative, semiotic analysis wasn't carried out while choosing a new heraldry: the heraldry and semiotics are formally different sciences. The Heraldic Council was guided by the scientific historical principle, so they chose Peter I's symbols. Thus, at the end of the 20th century, Russia had the same experience in symbolism as it was in the 18th century. There was one essential distinction: in Peter I's times symbolism reflected the secular character of power; in present, it is a return from atheistic to a sort of Christian, religious values.

The "Christian" image was not so appropriate for the multi-faith state, and the Heraldic Council found an original solution to this "religious problem:" in the Law¹⁹ on the state coat of arms the horseman wasn't denominated; the figure of the horseback rider lost a nimbus, having turned into a secular person. However, in spite of the fact that there is no exact definition in the blazon, most Russians and Europeans see the similarity between the symbol of St George and the Moscow coat of arms.

So, in the 19th century the obvious pagan origin of the serpent fighter was found: numerous researches²⁰ on the mythological context of "the solar drama" revealed the ways of penetration of heathen ideas into apocryphal stories and iconography, and thus they found out how mythological dualism went into religious dualism and then into the philosophical one.

In this way, we can see how the notorious idea of the serpent fighter influenced the development of Indian religious views: "The triumph of Indra [an archetype of the warrior serpent fighter] over Varuna [an archetype of the judge-Pantocrator] is underestimated by researchers of the history of Indian religion. Meanwhile, this fact was fraught with consequences and predetermined all further development of Indian religious views."²¹

²³ See *Федеральный конституционный закон от 25 декабря 2000 г., No 2-ФКЗ "О Государственном гербе Российской Федерации,"* <<http://constitution.garant.ru/act/base/182788/>>.

²⁴ See А.И. Кирпичников, *Святой Георгий и Егорий Храбрый. Исследование литературной истории христианской легенды*, Санкт-Петербург 1879; А.Н. Веселовский, *Св. Георгий в легенде, песне и обряде: разыскания в области духовных стихов*, Москва 2009; Д.О. Шеппинг, *Этюды из народных сказаний*.

²⁵ Н.С. Трубецкой, *Религии Индии и христианство*, Москва 2000, p. 5.

We can't claim that the historical choice of the Russian coat of arms in the 20th century was influenced by Ivanov and Toporov's theory, but we are only stating the fact of such a coincidence, because the analogy to the "cosmogonic solar drama" is "so strongly evident that you will arrive at the notion of how often in a historical epoch a person uses unscientific approaches which are peculiar to a primitive era of mythical thinking."²²

As it has already been said, the initial form of culture was mythology that used the language of art to treat universal laws, that is represented the "philosophy that acquired characteristics of art," or as Karl Marx defined it, as a "unconsciously artistic" way of development of the world by man, carried out by the national imagination.²³ "Mythological thinking is universal, has supranational features and a common symbolical system, which is confirmed by numerous 'vagrant' motifs noticed in different epochs and cultures."²⁴

The serpent fighter motif can be considered one of such "vagrant motifs," one of the examples of manifestation of the "general" in the "specific:" "All people of the Aryan tribe had national and local legends about epic heroes' fights against dragons and fiery snakes, whose images became the embodiment of all that was hostile, harmful and deathful."²⁵

The distinction between the "general" in the religious, mythological consciousness and the rational, philosophical is – according to Hegel – the following: in the first case, the language of feeling available to everyone regardless of an education level expresses the "general," and in the other, the "general" in discourse language. The central characteristic of the "general" is the same both in religious-mythological areas and in philosophical knowledge, but, in the latter case, only specially prepared people are ready to solve the problem concerning the formation of the theory of the general.²⁶

In recent times, more or less adequate associative and structural analysis of the serpent fighter motif has been carried out by Khovansky's Foundation, at the same time the approximate structure of the negative and positive stereotypes connected with the serpent fighter motif has been made.²⁷

²⁶ Cf. Н.И. Кареев, *Космогонический миф*, "Филологические записки" 2 (1873), pp. 1-10.

²⁷ See М.С. Каган, *О двух формах воплощения идей*, in Т.В. Артемьева, М.И. Микешин (eds), *Философский век. Альманах*, vol. 17, pp. 5-28.

²⁸ Л.Л. Геращенко, *Мифология рекламы*, Москва 2006, p. 47.

²⁹ See Д.О. Шеппинг, *Этюды из народных сказаний*, pp. 71-86.

³⁰ See Е.Н. Ростошинский, *Идея сохранения как начало мировоззрения*, in Т.В. Артемьева, М.И. Микешин (eds), *Философский век. Альманах*, vol. 17, pp. 126-131.

³¹ See А. Лазарев, *Рассуждения о модернизации культурных кодов*, Воронеж 2011, <<http://vtn-id.ru/simbol.htm>>.

Plato's idea of analytical build-up of associative links is demonstrated in the well-known semiotic dialogue *Cratylus*. However, in the 19th century philologists considered Plato's associative examples to be "unscientific:" "his interpretation didn't have the signs of science."²⁸ In modern science Ferdinand de Saussure (*Course in General Linguistics*) established that it is necessary to detect and build up associative links. He discovered the concepts of the "plane of content" and the "plane of expression." In terms of semiotics and linguistics, the "plane of content" is related to two "planes of expression" in bilingualism. In other words, in the theory of image management²⁹ every subject can have a number of associative or stereotypical meanings,³⁰ a set of stereotypes:³¹ positive (St+) and negative (St-). (We mean W. Lippman's term "stereotype"³² "as a selective, inaccurate way of reality perception, leading to its simplification and generating superstitions."³³)

Such issues as the symbolical meaning of the State Emblem and definition of the structure consisting of a dominant feature³⁴ and stereotypes connected with the symbol are, of course, beyond the bounds of heraldry and must be studied by semiotics, analytical psychology and PR-theory.

Using these disciplines as auxiliary, we can understand what we actually deal with, except the obvious positive stereotypes which are used in the structure of the image rider of the Russian coat of arms:

- 1) the triumph of good over evil,
- 2) defence of the motherland,
- 3) landscape organisation (meaning of the name Γεώργιος – "farmer" "organises terrestrial nature in order to do humanity good").³⁵

This is a list of St+.

²⁸ И.Ф. П-ий, *Современный взгляд на происхождение языка*, "Филологические записки" 1 (1862), p. 53.

²⁹ In the early 1990s it would not be correct to mean a high level of science development in the image management theory; experts in this area appeared in Russia by 1995, the skills of image management began to be formed only by the second half of the 90s.

³⁴ See И.Л. Викентьев, *Приёмы рекламы и public relations*, Санкт-Петербург 2001, p. 37.

³⁵ Dilettantes in the PR-theory tend to operate only with St+, trying turn a blind eye to the "undesirable connotations," i.e. St-.

³⁶ See W. Lippmann, *Public opinion*, New York 1922.

³⁷ See Т.Б. Рябова, *Стереотипы и стереотипизация как проблема гендерных исследований*, "Личность. Культура. Общество," vol. 5, 1-2 (2003), pp. 120-139.

³⁸ See А.А. Ухтомский, *Доминанта*, Санкт-Петербург 2002.

³⁹ See Д.О. Шеппинг, *Этюды из народных сказаний*, pp. 71-86.

The list of St- looks less attractive. However, we have to admit that the definition of negative stereotypes structure is not a pleasant task, but necessary and real for diagnostics. Let's make a short list of St-, these data are results of the recent practical researches:

1) The positive stereotype of the Christian state connotes St-; it is a sign of a multi-religious state, connected with interfaith and interethnic conflicts, the Tatar Yoke.

2) The structural, compositional analysis revealed St- inside of religion: in Christian consciousness a spear is one of Christ's Passion tools, canonically, but at the same time irrationally connected with the idea of an unfair court.

3) The comparative structural analysis of known riders in heraldry: the "Moscow rider" armed with a spear, and "Pahonia" – the horseman armed with a sword – a symbol of justice and the highest forms of power revealed the St-, connected with a problem of the Russian justice: the halls of court sessions decorated with state symbolism which raises irrational doubts whether it is possible to administer justice. Russia doesn't seem to be an *a priori* justice centre for Europe: if in Europe the symbol of independent administration of justice is a knight armed with a sword, the "Moscow rider" is a symbol of dictatorship of the Supreme power: a spear, being a symbol of aggressive military activity, designates the middle-level soldier who fulfils orders, whereas a sword is a Christian symbol of the imperial power founded on justice.

4) This tool is one of the symbols of aggressive expansion and world supremacy, besides the fact that the Holy lance is associated with the idea of unfair justice. As a result, Russia comes in one of the last positions (the 147th of the 153rd)³⁶ in peacefulness ratings, though it hasn't carried out acts of aggression for more than two decades.³⁷

5) It is noteworthy that the "Russian horseman" was on Ivan III's seal, stamped by the Sudebnik of 1497, which put serfdom in force and legalised torture as a means of interrogation. Actually, the rider became the historical symbol of serfdom and aristocracy as a form of government.

6) The comparative analysis of symbols, considering a binary opposition as a universal way of the world description,³⁸ against the background

⁴⁰ *Россию признали одной из самых воинственных стран мира*, <<http://top.rbc.ru/politics/25/05/2011/595521.shtml>>.

⁴¹ **The participation in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict appeared like an act of aggression** under the influence of the emblem.

⁴² See Н.С. Трубецкой, *Классификация оппозиций*, in idem, *Основы фонологии*, transl. by А.А. Холодович, Москва 1960, pp. 74-86.

of Yin-Yang revealed obvious disharmony, as well as the armed and violent pressure of “top” upon “bottom.”

7) The motif which is about a murder of rare species can't be normally taken in by the “greens.” Of course, such a coat of arms can't cause the protest of Green Parties. Incidentally, a dragon is a positive character in many cultures. We can't dream of global intellectual leadership in the century of environmental problems if we have such symbolism.

8) It is curious to note that the name “Moscow” looks like “punch in the jaw” gesture in sign language.

9) While studying the process of conflicts that occur, it becomes clear that the image of the “solar drama” on the Russian coat of arms is the ideographic image of the archetype of conflict, or an archetype of conflict disambiguation. So the serpent fighter signifies a gene or a meme³⁹ of conflict and identifies a conflict type of consciousness.⁴⁰

Here we have only presented the short list of St-, which Russians, Europeans and people all over the world deal with. Now we cannot say that the structure of St- is realised both in Russia and in Europe.

Reception in Europe

Europe equally accepted the national and religious aspect of the Russian symbolism; the West respectfully treated historical intensions of the Russian scientists who chose the common archaic motif of Indo-Europeans. It is necessary to understand that if we are describing the Russian coat of arms, we are dealing with an Indo-European archetypical symbol; the archetype of contentious serpent fighter is our common property. The prototype of this archetype is lost in the mists of prehistoric Indo-Aryan times. This sign is very natural to Europe (according to Marx, “the consciousness is a reflection of nature”) historically, mythologically and philosophically. Furthermore, this art image appeared in the Eastern Christian hagiography and iconography from West Europe.⁴¹

Concerning the reception of “new” heraldic ideas, we can say that they were equally accepted by Russians and Europeans. Heraldic knowledge ac-

⁴³ See R. Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford 1989.

⁴⁴ See Н.Н. Коростылева, *Основы гендерного конфликтогенеза*, Воронеж 2003, p. 44.

⁴⁵ See Н.А. Соболева, *Очерки истории российской символики. От тамги до символов государственного суверенитета*, Минск 2006, p. 55; В.Р. Мединский, *О русском пьянстве, лени и жестокости*, Москва 2008, p. 298.

tually belongs more to the *sacrum* than *profanum* area. This field of knowledge cannot be considered popularised either in Europe or in Russia.

Now we cannot say that irrational connotations of the Russian heraldic thought were realised in Europe at a popular level: Soviet Russia, which used to be unfriendly because of atheism and etc., has undergone significant changes. In spite of the external adequacy of symbols, Europeans still do not like it.⁴² In order to clarify the hidden causes of hostility it is necessary to do research on the St- structure.

The analysis of St- structure reveals a number of hidden causes of hostility:

1) aggression, 2) injustice, 3) unfriendliness...

The St- group is connected with an aggressive promotion of state symbolism,⁴³ to say nothing of the totemic image of a bear.⁴⁴

Actually, the “serpent drama” on the shield of the State Emblem represents “a funny mix of stereotypes acquired during centuries-old intellectual development.”⁴⁵ We should also deal with this “hotchpotch;” this punch cocktail has dimmed collective consciousness.

It is obvious that symbolism has a powerful impact on the collective unconscious, and, according to a PR-theory, the greater potential invested in image promotion is, the stronger the passing influence of St- is.

According to a simple historical analysis, Russia, while dreaming of a happy democratic future,⁴⁶ chose historical symbols which are not connected with good periods of the Russian history. The subject of Ivan III’s serfdom Sudebnik is especially disagreeable.

The abstract image of the Russian citizen who has a seal of feudalism on the passport, contains a set of negative stereotypes; in other words, the negative stereotypes connected with state symbolism are automatically associated with citizens, though, in fact, it does not concern the content of the “plane of expression,” but the “plane of content” and the influence of St-.

As illustrated by the Russian history, we can observe a unique phenomenon when the *democratic* state at the end of the 20th century accepted

⁴⁶ See A. de Lazari (ed), *Katalog wzajemnych uprzedzeń Polaków i Rosjan*, Warszawa 2006.

⁴⁷ In this aspect only the USA and some countries in Africa that have chosen AK-47 as the emblem can be compared with Russia.

⁴⁸ See A. де Лазари, О.В. Рябова (eds), “Русский медведь:” *История, семиотика, политика*, Москва 2012.

⁴⁹ К.Г. Юнг, *Человек и его символы*, transl. by В. Зеленский, Москва 1998, p. 94.

⁵⁰ We specially do not name the people who made a choice of heraldic symbols here to show a level of interpretation of historical processes higher than natural-scientific.

aristocratic or even *feudal* symbols. As a result, we can see how an oligarchic and a sort of aristocratic social system, the “imperial power” in general,⁴⁷ is being formed in Russia.⁴⁸

Of course, symbolism only conventionally influences the existing social system; we cannot deny the important role of symbolism in visual images which reproduce well-known concepts and paradigms in the mass mind, in the formation of a special public opinion, in the “promotion of certain ways of interpretation of social reality.”⁴⁹ Otherwise, why then won’t we forbid certain symbols and promote others?

We can state the fact that the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which provides for democracy, is in collision with the tradition expressed in the state symbolism.⁵⁰ Moreover, the “Moscow rider” is in principle represented as a symbol of collision,.

In terms of semiotics, the serpent fighter motif is semantically appropriate for the expression of the most modern trend in atheistic natural science, in the vanguard of that *now* – a *collider*. The conflict sign is good for a collider whose etymology is related to the word “conflict” (Latin *collisio* – “collision”). The LHC can be decorated with a symbol like that, which expresses the main idea of this project and the myth: as a result of collision the access to a power source or water source, which is called *prima materia*, is given.

In parallel, the conflict resolution related to humanities and social sciences is developing like Engels’s ideas. The conflict resolution does not study a potential of gender and social contradiction, but a potential of gender and social collision.

Now in the Russian conflict resolution the concepts of “collision” and “contradiction” are identified. The identification occurred via the word “conflict” which beat both Russian words in active speech:⁵¹ one borrowed word replaced at once some words that have similar meanings but not the same. Intellectual show hosts ask the question: “why is first word following the word ‘culture’ – ‘conflict’?” The Commissioner for Human Rights

⁴⁷ See Г.В. Вилинбахов, *Государственный герб России*, p. 25.

⁴⁸ See И. Войцех, *Путин вживается в роль “хорошего царя,”* <<http://www.utro.ru/articles/2013/02/11/1100369.shtml>>.

⁴⁹ See Т.Б. Рябова, “*Настоящий мужик:*” национальная мужественность как символическое измерение президентства в современной России, in I. Massaka (ed), *Symbol w polityce*, Торуń 2012, pp. 42-60.

⁵⁰ See А. Лазарев, *Коллизия традиции и конституции*, in А.И. Иванов (ed), *Семиотический цикл*, pp. 63-64.

⁵¹ М. Кронгауз, *Русский язык на грани нервного срыва*, Москва 2001, p. 105.

considers that the most important problem of Russian society is an ability of Russian people to turn any disagreement into a bitter conflict. “We start at once looking for enemies instead of honourable opponents, – declared V. Lukin – A civil war begins with a civil fuss and mutual detestation. ‘Who is not with us, that’s against us’ is an extremely antichristian principle.”⁵²

It is obvious that “the concept of unity and a conflict of opposites” implanted in Soviet children’s minds was translated into the idea of a struggle between heaven and earth on the universe plane. There was no place for Jesus Christ in this system. In the secular Indo-European consciousness, Christian history is accepted as fiction – a religious myth less plausible than the story about the Buddha. In world of science the New Testament history is not even considered to be an antithesis to the Big Bang theory.⁵³ It is commonly accepted to write “god” with a small letter, and “Big Bang” with capital letters in scientific texts.

As counterintuitive as this might seem, there are many more images of a serpent fighter motif than images of Jesus Christ in the ornament of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow, which means dual faith which has been known since ancient times in Russia: “The old paganism continued to exist along with the new belief; it had an effect on Christianity: ‘We are called Christians, but live as badly as pagans do.’ It seems, pagan gods really exist, fight against the new belief and do not want to let go. Some pagan features passed to Christian saints.”⁵⁴

It is evidently shown in the temple ornament: by name – Christians, in fact – “Georgian.”⁵⁵ the Savior is in mind, the serpent fighter of pagan origin is in soul – “spirit of contention,” an archetype of conflict paraphrased in the well-known “dialectic law.”

⁵² А. Сидельников, “Мы сразу же начинаем искать врагов,” <<http://www.utro.ru/articles/2013/03/29/1109944.shtml>>.

⁵³ Only in the East thoughts of the Universe “breath,” phases of alternate broadening and compression are known. The animists, representing the Universe as a live matter, logically suggest the analogy of a microcosm and macrocosm; what is above, that is below: if breath is below, breath is above. Harmony is the main criterion of creative art: The Universe lives eternally, and it did not appear once in a one-off explosion. The grammar of liturgical language contains the forms that describe timeless conditions; in secular Russian, for example, such grammatical forms do not exist: allegedly, the Universe is not eternal; it came into existence after the explosion, impressed by that idea, the monkey turned into a human being!

⁵⁴ Н.В. Тулупов, П.М. Шестаков, *Очерки и рассказы для первоначального знакомства с историей*, Москва 1909, p. 58.

⁵⁵ See А. Лазарев, *Мифология грузинского кризиса*, Воронеж 2008, <http://vrn-id.ru/georg_myth.htm>.

It is necessary to note that dual faith is a phenomenon much more widely spread than Christianity, whose monotheist idea does not consist in that “Jehovah – both Indra and Vritra, that only he does work of all the other gods, and over everything; he does absolutely other things, for example, he does not fight against a fiery dragon during thunderstorm. Amidst thunders and flashes of lightning he announces to mankind 10 (X) precepts which forever remain pillars of any moral and human communication (Steinthal, in “*Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie*,” I, 344).”⁵⁶

Such an understanding of the problem means a possible correction and modernisation of the symbolic and heraldic structure, due to the development of heraldic thought in Russia in the 21st century.⁵⁷ In our opinion, a symbolic modernisation aimed at a civil, democratic society is necessary. It cannot work without a delicate participation and help of European thought.⁵⁸

This is a real issue because of a lack of popular research in this area. Meanwhile, some items must be investigated: state symbolism as well as the structural and semiotic analysis will enable us to discover the hidden regularities to which the person unconsciously submits.

Research is necessary in order to exempt consciousness of Europeans and Russians from uncontrolled irrational influence. After all, we can say that the symbol of conflict manipulates the collective unconscious not only in Russia, but also in Europe, and in the whole world.

Such research is especially important as long as atheism exists. There are no other modern achievements of this kind in Russia besides the successful bolstering of the image budget.⁵⁹ Only Khovansky’s Foundation carries out analytical research in this area.

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⁵⁶ Н.И. Кареев, *Мифологические этюды*, p. 43.

⁵⁷ See A. Лазарев, *Рассуждения о модернизации культурных кодов*.

⁵⁸ In principle, it is normal for Russia to copy Western trends, and the best ideas have been recognised in Russia only following the West. Also, in the European fashion, the horseman got to Russia with James Voraginsky’s *The Golden Legend*.

⁵⁹ Ростуризм занялся ребрендингом имиджа России, <<http://news.rambler.ru/11134414/photos/>>.

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