

Conference Paper

Russian Society's Civilizational Transit

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Abstract

This paper deals with the issue of specific civilizational process formation in Russia as a new figuration and configuration of the forms of modernity. It is argued that explanations of the dynamics of Russian society are often based on the idea of predestination of the trajectory of its development (path dependency) that is caused either by the universal logic of modernization and globalization or by persistence of the basic cultural program or matrix which is reproduced in social practices. A civilizational transit of Russian society phenomena is discussed within multiple modernities theory as a new perspective that allows overcoming some of the problems with the predominant approaches to Russian modernization. Civilizational approaches to analyses of Russian culture, politics and society have been associated mostly with theories of 'historical cycles' worked out in late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. More recently a considerable attention has been devoted to different versions of 'neoEurasianism'. In addition, the notion of 'clash of civilizations' proposed by Samuel Huntington became prominent in the political discourse in Russia at the end of 1990s. At the same time, the concept of civilization is discussed widely in today's historical sociology. A specific school of 'civilizational analysis' that draws on the ideas of Shmuel Eisenstadt emerged at the end of the 1990s. This perspective has already influenced some new trends in sociology of religion, political sociology and international relations theory. The panel seeks to demonstrate the relevance of a new wave of civilizational analysis for understanding contemporary Russian culture, politics and society.

Keywords: Russian society, civilizational transit, multiple modernities.

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1. Introduction

The turn held in the last quarter of the XX–beginning of XXI century to the analysis of the development of civilization in world history and modern societies denotes a continual breakaway from classical schemes and designs disciplinary socio-humanitarian knowledge. Linear, structuralized, constructivists, phenomenological focus on the construction of certain important aspects of the social changes of different levels are one-sided and even false in their explanation and unproductive in the projections.

Despite the successful of social and human sciences in the last two centuries, we found very unpleasant consequences of the extensive development of social sciences

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and humanities. Socio-humanitarian knowledge lags behind in understanding the complexities of identity, crises and conflicts of modern life at both the regional and global levels.

Firstly, a broad palette and disciplinary nature of social knowledge turned out to be very hard to explain the limiter problems that go beyond the scientific field of a particular discipline. Progress in the emergence and strengthening of a plurality of paradigms and approaches in the social sciences was temporary, and brought another reductionist fashion, replacing each other. Functionalism in general and structural-functional approach, especially in his schemes left without consideration normal, everyday life, cultural specificity of different societies. The deficit of understanding the construction of social reality, the continuous revision of constitution and consolidation of everyday practices, semantic structures of collective and individual experience has stimulated the emergence of a serious opponent in the face of the phenomenological tradition, interpretive sociology. A flaw in the design and specification of continuous dynamic change of social space led to the emergence of social constructionism.

Second, the pursuit of social scientists to give a universal explanation of the socio-cultural processes on the basis of allocation of key concepts, such as the widely understood social structure, culture, institutions, and networks sets a fairly narrow corridor in the description of communities and individual fragments of changing social reality. The principle of multilevel (from macro to micro level) in the social sciences allows only opportunistic remove of contradictions and gaps in understanding the mechanisms and the determination of large-scale change, regional and global transformations, for example, modernization of individual societies.

In other words, the social sciences and humanities were unable to progress profound changes both within individual countries and in the planetary scale. This syndrome is lagging socio-humanitarian knowledge and it can hardly be considered as overcome at the beginning of XXI century. Neither mono- or multiparadigm of the social sciences development, no their disciplinary progress has led to a satisfactory explanatory and predictive potential.

Of course, social sciences and humanities have been an essential element of a holistic societal world and national process. However, their contribution to the economy and management of, various industries at local and regional level was significantly lower in comparison with natural, technical sciences and health sciences. Utility and professional suitability as the socio-humanitarian knowledge and expert reviews in the field of Information Sciences are constantly exposed to criticism and revision. Since the end of the twentieth century, crisis of the social sciences, their weakness and peripherals

periodically ascertained. Overcoming this situation in the social sciences is possible in the way of a new conceptualization of social reality, social processes, including the level of individual and collective action.

Features flow and development of social time by any companies were merely a background, context, explaining institutions, current events, processes, i.e., time was an unimportant factor in socio-humanitarian knowledge. Therefore, the formation of this new domain and perspective of ordering social time, are rooted in the way of its image, lifestyle connected with civilizational analysis of modern societies and their configurations in the form of multiple modernities (modern).

2. Methodology and Methods

An example of the use of the civilizational approach is the study of the transformation of social inequalities in the context of multiple modernities based on the concept of Norbert Elias [17]. Civilizational approach of Norbert Elias [17], S. Eisenstadt and the concept of multiple modernities by J. Arnason [1], P. Wagner [8], can explain the dynamics of social inequalities in modern societies. Social structuration of developed societies is a model for developing societies; as in all their uniquenesses, they use more efficient social mechanisms, institutions and technology of advanced countries.

Configurations inequality in the Russian society at the turn of XX–XXI centuries were formed under the impact of global factors, and under the influence of structural changes, institutional factors, cultural values and traditions, ethnic and religious identity at the regional level. Social and structural changes characterized, on the one hand, available and distributed hierarchy, positions and resources, and on the other hand — the basic elements of civilized order, which include modes of property, power, economic, cultural practices and forms of everyday life. The mechanism of changes in social inequalities in modern societies is actually a way of civilization dynamics.

Civilizational differences of social inequalities in sociology usually do not stand out, but they show the specificity of the institutional, network and architecture of the cultural autonomy of different countries. Social stratification in the Russian society has a number of civilizational differences similar to those in developed and developing countries. Civilizational factor is embodied in the Russian society in a variety of art nouveau, which provides mobility of deepening social inequality and the adaptation of the system to economic crises, political changes. Fields and loci pairing social inequalities in the Russian society: inequality in the field of labor and employment, housing stratification, inequality in access to health and educational resources.

The main trends of changes in social inequalities in modern society, including the Russian society, consist of the mechanisms of inclusion of different social groups in a meaningful solution to their problems of economy, power, property and culture.

Condition and resources transition to multiple Nouveau in different societies were extremely unequal. Some of the most developed countries are naturally built into the flow of new mobility [5, 6]. The transition of leading western societies from the agrarian to the industrial development provoked new forms of economic, legal, political and cultural world order. This process went hand in hand with social emancipation in many bourgeois societies. There was the so-called Echelon hierarchy of countries in their modernization. The search for and acquisition of resources in leading national states led to the justification of policies civilization, especially economic, industrial, military, political arrangement and to the development and implementation of diverse new technologies in various fields. At the same time a new social structure, institutions of power and cultural stratification were formed.

The new social and cultural configuration (civilizational order) industrial societies inevitably were required to ensure the current economic, social and political hegemony, dominance, superiority, both inside and outside the booming western societies in the XIX–XX centuries. This caused strengthening and redistribution of the world colonial system. These social and political steps to approve a new civilizational order were accompanied by the two world wars, political and social revolution in Russia and other less developed countries. As a rule, the real content of the interaction, the collision of different interest groups, elites, newly emerged to the arena of socio-economic and political groups (classes) forced researchers to look for answers to the burning questions of struggle and the current public statements of leading actors. To explain the radical social transformations, structural changes in the type of society in the framework of the prevailing configurations and configurations at the societal and social levels needs changing the conceptual apparatus. These concepts are concepts of civilizational dynamics, civilizational order, order and mode of civilization coexisting modernities of different national states and communities [1].

The concepts of civilizational order and of societies' civilizational transit (dynamic) including multiple modernity, allow to identify: a) complex complicated figurations and configuration at the societal and social levels; b) concrete forms of modernity different groups; relatively isolated social, cultural, religious, economic groups. Civilizational order of society is an established body of forms of social organization and regulation of culture, economy and power. The concept of modernity (modernity) expresses nothing but the time range of the real presence of human groups and communities in a concrete

historical social space. This flow of different events, conditions, actions that fill a unique cultural content defines the current (present) period. The configuration of the present includes a minimized instantaneity of the past and future duration. In modern times, there is a reflection strength of cultural, social and personal time. This social time in various forms of modernity in different societies, firstly, is topologically linked with the space activities of individuals. Thus 'chronotop' individual and collective way of life of generations, the trajectory of their education, employment and consumption were formed. Mode civilized order means the way of social and cultural inclusion of the individual's role in the value-structure, functional and institutional subsystem of society, network relationships, ensuring legitimate access to or pseudo legitimate positions, status, resources for self-realization.

3. Results / Findings and Discussion

An indication of the effectiveness and success of the civilizational transit and regime of Russian society are actions aimed at the creation, reproduction and use of patterns, ideas and things like space of human relations. In a traditional society, because of the scarcity of resources, a simple system of civilization (social and economic) coercion to lifestyle, including participation in production and consumption, dominates. In a postindustrial society, a profound transformation of social, cultural, labor identification dominates. In view of expanding opportunities of civilizational development (soft compulsion) to the individual style of life there are legal resources for selective appropriation and accommodation forms of modernity. This occupies an important place in the process of information-communicative inversion, transformation or sign-symbolic diversity in the private space of ideas, things and relations, in the new forms of social and personal residence time respectively. Civilizational transit of modern society is carried out in two ways. On the one hand, it forces an individual to the standards of consumption, dooming on individual choice. On the other hand, consumer society as the dominant trend in the flow of multiple modernities radically changes the quality and style of the modern individual and collective life. Economic growth posed by new technologies, the organization of labor and production, wide mobility, including growing international migration, a person's individualization create the conditions, resources and methods of consumption, and dynamic configurations of different modes of civilizational order and its transit

One of the key trends of the new civilizational order and transit multiple modernities is a communicative modern world network order. Communications and networks permeate modern societies. It overshadowed such important phenomena as industrialism, nation, mass consumption, the market economy, social and class struggle, the sexual revolution, and even globalization in explaining the specifics of social structures and social action. This thesis emphasizes the fact that the modern world radically changes. Firstly, new facts of culture and society just state their diversity. Thus, the phenomenon of subjectivity, marked in the sociological literature, undermines social peace and destroys the world stable structural picture. The vagueness, mobility and subjective social construct vagueness becomes the standard of social relationships. In our view, increasingly dominant subjectivity puts on a communicative network and form. This is its most important feature, which manifests itself in a complex differentiation of the social inequality network.

Secondly, the process of a person's individualization dominates now. Generalized social subjectivity refusal (i.e. macro-identity in a particularistic existence) in favor of individual and group identity is a unique location subjectively of constructed environment. In other words, at any level the subjectivity are fragmented and segregated. Meanwhile, a process of atomization is not a mass industrial society characteristic. It is rather a process of growing functional differentiation that provide hierarchical equivalent of different segments of society existence.

The lesson of postmodernism as a whole was just to emphasize the rejection of certain crops (institutions, nations, individual, etc.) social segregation. It means the approval of the multidimensional social field and, of course, constructed space actors of their habitat and activity. The semantic revolution such as language, subcultures and identities occurred in the last third of the XX century. It summed up the structural changes in different societies-states. The nation-state as the embodiment of the globalized society gradually loses its functional purpose to be an instrument of violence in order to preserve national identity and becomes a means of communication-network organizations such as actual ethnic and individual actors. Neither the individual nor any social (racial, ethnic and cultural) community has more preferences. They are equal.

Thirdly, subjectivized global world are more and more segmented. This contradictory trend of increasing person's individualization, that ensures the implementation of the network segmentation of social and cultural topos (time and space). Its hallmark is a new type of social integration as a process of intertwining of various forms of communication within a homogeneous cultural environment and intercultural interaction. Modern network organization of globalizing world community is still being formed. The new

network identity seems to be similar to the system of long-established parties, clans, secret societies, alliances and clubs. However, the main difference can be considered as the main ways and means of development. In the past this type of network has a form of self-defense against alien elements. The modern network structures function as the inclusion of other (alien) by mutual adaptation and communication optimization.

Social and cultural vector of modern civilization changes, too. Traditional religious and confessional regulative that existed in everyday culture samples weakened. There is a noticeable shift of the center of gravity dominated by monoculture standards and standards of creativity to diffuse decentered multicultural environment. This shift can be, at first glance, to qualify as a decrease in the level of culture, its massification and degradation.

The dominance of consumption practices (consumerism) replaces the subordinated position of consumer culture. Hypermarket, McDonald's, stadium, the television screen and computer are symbols of modern life. [2, 7]. The identification problem persists. There is a need for a world language, world economy, world government, world religion, international law, the world of science and the world of art, etc. The internal space of national cultures flows into the environment where global and local culture co-exists. We can conclude that the imminent modernization, stagnation and loss of traditional forms of Russian culture and civilization emerge in the beginning of the XXI century [9].

Quasi-natural changes in the socio-cultural and civilizational development of Russian society can hardly elude the global trend [11, 12]. The autonomous existence of socio-cultural types ended with the destruction of the national government, political, and economic boundaries. Economic, financial, migration flows in different regions of the world are the direct evidence of folding a new civilizational order based on mixing and coexistence of different cultures and forms of civilization [16]. In particular, the observed types of regional and global integration demonstrate the dynamic cultural and civilizational exchange.

The emerging global space of human resources (migration, outsourcing, and transnational networks) in business, politics, science and education can be considered as formation of a new socio-cultural and civilizational shift map of the Russian society [13–15]. The main task is to study these new phenomena.

Modern societies are in the grip of permanent transformation, continuous innovation and undulating crises. These facts were noted PA Sorokin in the concept of social and cultural dynamics [18]. Globalization, post-modernization and virtualization recede into the background, because they only aggravate the frantic search for answers to situational and strategic problems [8]. The global nature of the economic and financial

turmoil dramatically increases the cost and risks of taking the political and economic decisions. There has been an obvious failure of civilization as well as quite stable socio-cultural matrix of modern society such as 'risk', 'second modernity', 'consumption', 'knowledge' and 'creative actions' to social order new forms.

There is a powerful transformation of the civilized world order, which will draw into it the largest possible number of participants. The majority of people faces different kinds of transformations such as ecstasy of omnipotence and impotence of political power, fascination with the power of transnational networks and the weakness in the economy and culture, the magic of personal will and lack of will, faith and fanaticism of unbelief. Modern Russia faces all these problems.

Some scholars write about overweighed interpretation of civilization. [3, 4] Meanwhile, Ferguson [10] develops an understanding of civilization as (trans) forming process based on its own socio-cultural grounds. Features of cultural and spiritual situation manifest in the rate, and the nature of the structural change. Political and economic changes in the Russian society is hampered by mental structures, legal and value systems, patterns of behavior and ideologies. In general, the whole range of cultural and spiritual practices accumulated in the Russian society and the authorities, significantly modifies the social structures, institutions, and actions and gives national and regional specificities of social life, economy, law and government.

4. Conclusions

The research has shown that the turn held in the last quarter of the XX–beginning of XXI century to the analysis of the development of civilization in world history and modern societies denotes a continual breakaway from classical schemes and designs disciplinary socio-humanitarian knowledge. Linear, structuralized, constructivists, phenomenological focus on the construction of certain important aspects of the social changes of different levels are one-sided and even false in their explanation and unproductive in the projections.

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In Russia the evolution of civilization is based on co-existing or competitive contemporary forms of sociality and culture. Adequate diagnosis sociological modes of modern Russian society civilized order and assessments of various social, economic and cultural practices is possible only in the broader context of world civilization sociocultural processes.

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