

METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE POSTMODERNISM PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY IN THE CONTEXT OF VALUE FOUNDATIONS BENEATH THE HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to reveal the essence of postmodernist explication of value foundations beneath the historical consciousness based on the analysis of methodological principles underpinning the postmodernism philosophy of history. The paper relies on the dialectical and axiological methods, and the method of multivariant explication. The conclusion has been made that the meaning of elimination of the traditional value of history for culture in the postmodernism philosophy consists in recognition of risk as an integral element of social being. This leads, on the one hand, to a situation of anomie, and, on the other hand, to a renewed value structure of the society, characterized by such axiological determinants as creative individualism, antifunctionalism, anti-utilitarianism, and multiculturalism.

Keywords: history, universalism, purpose, postmodernism, value, meaning of history, periodization.

1 Introduction

The new millennium has put humanity at risk of total self-destruction. The destructive effect of anthropogenic factors on the cultural heritage of humankind is amplified by the decrease in awareness of the role of cumulative processes of historical and cultural development. For analyzing the causes of this phenomenon it is worth referring to the methodological foundations of the philosophy of postmodernism, which explicate the historical process reflected in the consciousness as a certain value. Moreover, the problem of the value of history in the modern world is as urgent as it is painful. After all, modernity is characterized by pessimism with regard to the unconditional belief in the progressive development of society that prevailed in the past. Such pessimism is a consequence of modernization processes associated with the impending "third wave", emergence of the post-industrial information civilization and the inevitable crisis of industrial civilization. Historiographers, as well as scholars focusing on the cultural philosophy in the modernist paradigm, still defend the view of history as a process of humanity transition from a less perfect state to a more perfect one, a process that is natural, necessary, linear, goal-oriented, and therefore having a certain meaning. However, new systems of argumentation are now used to justify this view of history. According to one of them, the historical process is a progress from the worst to the best in certain spheres, related to the aspects of social reality. The evolution of certain forms of political life, economy, social structures is progressive in nature. In this case philosophers see the value of history in justifying, legitimizing and even sacralizing the institutions of modernity, as well as their fundamental principles, by giving them the weight of "lasting being". The second group of modernist philosophers dealing with the problems related to the value of history see the progressive nature of historical development in that throughout the history a certain "symbolic capital" is accumulated. It is the embodiment of those axiological constants of society, under which influence it is constituted, unified, and which its members are ready to defend. Both the first and the second viewpoints are aimed to ensure the freedom of society from the influence of contemporary reality, to set the foundation for the ideology based on the material of history as a value matrix which aims to ensure the firmness of modernity, its stability in time. But contemporary cultural practices show that destabilization in the form of immanent risk in various spheres of activity undertaken by social organism in the era of globalization. The alternative point of view, which originated and was methodologically substantiated in the bosom

of postmodernism philosophy of history, in accordance with these realities, on the contrary, sacralizes history as a process of destabilization and risk. In this regard, the analysis of the cultural and philosophical reflection on gaining security through risk in postmodernism philosophy seems absolutely necessary for the study of the value foundations beneath the contemporary historical consciousness.

2 Literature Review

Since the logical structure of this paper originates from the antithesis of the methodology for history cognition within the framework of modernism and postmodernism, we find it necessary, first of all, to identify the methodological specificity of modernism. Against this background, it becomes easier to identify and comprehend the methodological features specific to the antipode of modernism, i.e. the postmodernism. Development regularities pertinent to the philosophy of history of modernity have been identified and analyzed in the works of Russian authors who specialized in the study of methodology and techniques of research of the past. These are the works of Yu. O. Azarova (2012), who conducting an analysis of the theoretical positions of French postmodern theorists convincingly proves that the deconstruction of historical sources contributes to the radicalization of historical consciousness; A. S. Panarin (1999), who saw the arbitrary and subjective nature of the interpretation of history within the postmodernist philosophy of history; R. O. Rzaeva (2014), who identified the crisis of metanarrative interpretation of the historical process; A. S. Kolesnikov (2013), who explained the uniqueness of the postmodernist interpretation of historical reasonableness; V. P. Shalaev (2008), who suggests a trend towards further subjectivization of interpretation of the historical process in the era of postmodernism.

Among the researchers who devote their efforts to exploring the methodology of history of postmodernism are such prominent foreign historiographers as P. Bourdieu (1991) who viewed the historical metanarrative only as a means of forming "the habitus", or the basis of social activity; J. Baudrillard (Shestakov, 2015) who pointed to the irrelevance of historicism to modernity; G. Deleuze, F. Guattari (1983) and J. Scott (1996) who methodologically justified the attention of historians to separate versions of "microhistory"; J. Derrida (1972), whose deconstruction method led to the historical process losing its value hierarchy and unambiguous meaning; M. Foucault (1969, 1971, 1975, 1979, 1984, 1994) who assumed the historical relativity of interpretation of the historical process and the dependence of this interpretation on who is holding the power; F. Furet (1984), who conducted a political study of historiography and revealed a certain "repressiveness" in rendering distinct meaning to the history; A. Hanson (1984), I. Hacking (1999) and J. Tanke (2002), who postulated the orientation of the value-based interpretation of the historical process to the modern culture.

As concerns the domestic researchers who focus on the similar problems and, in particular, postmodernism in its historiographical perspective, special mention may be of the works of D. V. Smirnov (2014), who postulated the loss over time in the interpretation of the postmodernists of such attributes as univocacy and unidimensionality; V. I. Strelkov (2014), who proved the post-Hegelian nature of the postmodernist interpretation of the meaning of history; Gritsanov V. A., Abuschenko V. L. (2008) who thoroughly analyzed the contribution of the most prominent French representatives of postmodernism to substantiating the meaning of the historical process; Yu. A. Shestakov (2015a, 2015b, 2016) who believes that the postmodernist methodology of historical science appreciates the meaning of history in relation to modernity in the

possibility of breaking free from the past determining the new formations.

3 Research Methodological Framework

The purpose of this research is to reveal the essence of the postmodernist explication of the value foundations beneath historical consciousness based on the analysis of the methodological principles underpinning the postmodernism philosophy of history. The research objectives were as follows: First, to describe the features distinguishing the general approach of postmodernists to the value aspects of historical consciousness. Second, to analyze the views of the postmodernism philosophy toward the concept of historical universalism. Third, to reveal the specificity of the postmodern views toward the orientation of history, its periodization, as well as toward the purpose and dynamics of the historical process. The purpose and objectives of the research predetermined its methodological framework.

The methodological basis of the research was constituted by:

- Dialectical method according to which the historical consciousness has been explored in development and in interaction with the phenomenon of value, as well as in the context of categories of the universal, the particular and the singular;
- Axiological method that proved useful in revealing the value and meaning components of the historical consciousness;
- Polyvariant explication method that is based on the postmodernism postulates allowing multivariant interpretations of the historical process reflected in the historical consciousness, justification of independence from the cumulation of history and recognition of risk as an attribute of modern culture and social development.

4 Results and Discussion

Traditionally the value of history has been seen in the fact that history is able to consolidate modernity as a natural derivative, the result of a linear historical process, to justify it teleologically. Modernity, which makes society fluctuative, exposes its institutions and fundamental principles to danger through various manifestations of randomness, stochasticity, irregularity, alternativeness, is explicated by such a type of historical consciousness as an enemy invasion. The only protective shelter from it is the fortress called history. Postmodernism analyzes the past with the goal of destabilizing a situation of modernity to the greatest extent possible, thereby liberating the creative potential of personality. This goal of the postmodern philosophical-historical thought is accomplished "by searching for and analyzing archaicism as a manifestation of randomness, alternativeness and discreteness, and, therefore, historically infinite process of creation" (Shestakov, 2015, p. 28).

This methodological approach to the problem of the value of historical process is the dominant axiological component of postmodern historical consciousness. It determines an exceptional view of history in postmodernism philosophy as concerns the basic philosophical and historical categories, in the framework of which historical consciousness traditionally prompted problematization in the cognition of the essence and value foundations of the historical process.

The universalism of history, for example, is one of such categories. One of the core ideas of those philosophers of history and cultural philosophers, who study the historical process based on the methodological paradigm of postmodernism, is antagonism against the universal history common for all of mankind. This idea derives from an absolute rejection of any metanarrative as explanation of the meaning of historical process. This, in turn, is based on the thesis undisputable for postmodernism philosophers about the preordained artificial character of any knowledge. Any categories relevant to the justification of truth, in their view, "are not to be found outside their only canon: tradition and usage" (Hacking, 1999, p. 60).

Michel Foucault (1969), who studied the "history of the systems of thinking" (p. 9), who saw in history numerous forms of rationality, not necessarily even isomorphic (Foucault, 1994, p. 450), called for a critique of any metanarrative "to explore the extent to which the work of thought on its own history can free the thought from its tacit assumptions and allow it to think differently" (Foucault, 1984, p. 15). Foucault argued that those in power use knowledge as a means of controlling society and, therefore, had an opinion that an absolute rejection of the "will for knowledge" was crucial, even calling for a kind of "stupidity" to be shown in sociocultural practices (Foucault, 1971, pp. 160-161). His formula postulating the relativity of all knowledge, due to the relativity of any power holders structuring the metanarrative "epistemes" and discursive practices based on them, sounds like "other power means other knowledge" (Foucault, 1975, p. 227). The philosophy of postmodernism asserts the artificial nature of social reality, consolidated and sustained by various metanarratives (Foucault, 1979, p. 334). The key place among these metanarratives is taken by the historical metanarrative, which is supposed to justify the existing order by the force of tradition (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 292). However, this traditionalist metanarrative, according to postmodernists, has nothing to do with the objective truth because, for example, according to A. Hanson (1984), "Traditional culture is increasingly recognized to be more an invention constructed for contemporary purposes than a stable heritage handed on from the past" (p. 896). The litmus paper for distinguishing the "real" tradition from the "artificially constructed" is the meaning of tradition in culture. Although artificial tradition includes elements of the original culture, due to its artificiality, it becomes a means of manipulation, enrichment, gaining undue privileges by the holders of various powers (Derrida, 1972, pp. 256-271).

As an alternative to the metanarrative discourse, postmodernist philosophy of history puts forward an idea that it is necessary to change the vector and scope of the study of history by drawing the attention of scholars to the individual manifestations of various "micro-histories". Examples include the history of food, penal system, crime, and childhood, which constitute the typical content of what is "commonplace". It is proposed to focus mainly on exploring the situation and the progress of various historically oppressed minorities, such as women (Scott, 1996), because such look at the history "contributes to the elimination of monopolies traditionally forming part of great stories" (Rzaeva, 2014, p. 25). Thus, postmodern historiography constructs a "mixed" history. Such approach presents the past of humanity as a combination of diverse elements. These elements are established on the basis of diverse and often arbitrarily selected "micro-histories. The general philosophical and methodological basis here is the postmodernism position contrary to modernism in its views toward the relationship between the part and the whole. It was most clearly formulated by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari (1983) in their theory of partial objects. This theory suggests that any social object is fundamentally partial, and not an element of the whole.

Taken together these methodological assumptions form a nomadic conception of historical development. It implies constant rejection by any subject of the historical process related to any centers, which existence the teleology of rationalism tries to impress upon him (Kolesnikov, 2013, p. 189). Such explanation of the role of personality in history should contribute to the formation of a new breed of human. This is a human who is capable of adapting and must adapt to the continuously changing conditions of existence, even if such adaptation occurs at the expense of newly formed attitudes and cognitive schemes "displacing from the people's consciousness the ties with real history and events" (Shalaev, 2008, p. 98). This interpretation of temporal development of humanity asserts subjectivism as the pinnacle of the hierarchy of values throughout history (Tanke, 2002, pp. 170-192). It allows a bifurcational individual, the individual who is not guided by permanent dominant existential meanings of being, to shape them situationally. For doing this, an individual uses the historical experience which is most relevant to the social structure with which this individual

identifies at the moment. Such individual is a priori forced to recognize risk as a determinant of own development.

The rejection of historical universalism, in turn, predetermines the position of postmodernism and the type of historical consciousness it postulates to the problem of the history orientation. Postmodernism as a methodological conception denies general direction of the historical process, the essence of which is explained by regularities derived from a certain metadiscourse, based on the apriori recognition of the phenomenon of cumulation in the course of historical development of mankind. Philosophy of the modern history finds it apparent that the present is naturally conditioned by the past, and the future is causally conditioned by the present. Postmodernists deny this. In their view, the present is predetermined by the future, which "creates our present" (Azarova, 2012, p. 43). In addition, cultural philosophers and historians-postmodernists do not believe that the phenomenon of time has the attributes of universality and uniqueness. As they argue, "Time has become multidimensional and relative" (Smirnov, 2014, p. 174). The denial of the linear character of history has two consequences. The first is that it introduces the individual to an ever-expanding web of possibilities, and liberates from the "chains" of the past and, in general, from rigid causal determination. This substantiates creativity as one of the highest values of modernity inherently associated with risk. The second consequence is the consolidation of multiculturalism. This principle is relevant to the information civilization, which is characterized by the trend of globalization, when "the need and importance of competitive rivalry ... based on the mutual enrichment of distinctive cultures becomes a key to the progressive development of mankind" (Shestakov, 2016, p. 26). The postmodernist interpretation of history as a web of possibilities substantiates the need to affirm universal culture based not on a uniform cultural meaning, but on the diversity of cultural meanings having equal importance.

Historical periodization in the framework of classical methodology of history is characterized by the following attributes: recognition of the universal character of history, its teleologism, necessity, progress, finalism. These attributes guarantee the implementation of social development projects, with the proper scientific foundation set for them. Alternative historical periodization within the methodology of postmodern history is extremely subjective and arbitrary, justifying "centrifugal tendencies, localization, fragmentation, individualization" (Panarin, 1999, p. 247). This opens up the most diverse aspects of history, to expand the horizons of researcher of the historical process, to expand the boundaries of historical consciousness. For postmodernists, this is where the value of history, embodied in the various constructs they develop, lies.

Closely related to the problem of periodization and the most "value-loaded" is the category of the goal of the historical process. The methodology of modernism is based on the assertion that the rational and unambiguous direction of the historical process, which science attempts to cognize, is determined by its goal. Total social formation, which eliminates "partiality, incompleteness of human presence in the world" (Strelkov, 2014, p. 44) and represents for modernist philosophers the achievement of the goal of history, its predicable finale. The modernist thesis that only the "end" of history makes it possible to comprehend the events that constitute it" draws heavy criticism of postmodernists (Furet, 1984, p. 13). Philosophers accepting the postmodern paradigm find this interpretation of history essentially narrow and repressive. As the researchers of Foucault's works note, "according to Foucault, the discursive formation is capable of marking science, ideology, medicine, etc., but taken as a given, totally beyond the assumption of their continuity and common purpose" (Gritsanov & Abushchenko, 2008, p. 131). J. Baudrillard (Shestakov, 2015, p. 237) expressed the same point of view. He postulated the unfolding of two histories in the process of human development. One he viewed as a struggle between the creative nature of culture and the desire of the masses to "amortize", "devour" it. The second is seen as a

stage in this confrontation, within which the teleology of history arises. Thus, the methodology of postmodernism replaces the teleology of history with its creative unpredictability. On the one hand, it is exposed to immanent risk, on the other hand, it magnifies the cultural potential by expanding the innovative component of cultural development.

One of the most important categories for structuring historical consciousness is the dynamics of history. The classical historiographic thought traditionally suggested three possible options – assertion of the progressive development of humankind, its regression, or the cyclical development of local cultures and civilizations. The originality of the postmodernist interpretation consists in the denial of progress as an infinite development of production and consumption. Rather, it is a view of the historical process as the temporally evolving forms of adaptation of an individual to the changing conditions of existence, as a process of deployment of not "meta-" but simply "narratives" that will be constantly "re-interpreted" following in the tracks of cultural innovation. Such interpretation of history implies neither any specific goal, nor its progress or regression. Our time as part of the historical process is seen by postmodernists through the prism of the need for effective adaptation of the individual to the cultural conditions, which are undergoing more dynamic changes than before, and therefore inevitably entail risk.

5 Conclusion

The denial of universalism of the historical process, the linear character and teleological nature of history, the absolute rational meaning of history as a consolidating force of the meaning of modernity; the periodization of history characterized by the arbitrary, subjective nature; the view of the historical process as temporally evolving forms of adaptation to the changing conditions of individual existence represent the uniqueness of the methodological principles underpinning the postmodernist philosophy of history.

Due to this uniqueness, the methodology of the postmodernist philosophy of history sees the main value of history in that it makes it possible to eliminate the determination of modernity by the past receding into the historical distance and becoming nothingness. This allows the emergence of a new reality, not strictly predetermined by the past, which is associated with the recognition of risk as an inherent element of social being.

The value of history in postmodernist philosophy is seen in the fact that it reveals the dependence of the meanings of individual and social activity on the attitudes developed in specific historical setting. History, according to postmodernists, substantiates the possible freedom of an individual becoming an interpreter and creator of these meanings. Elimination of the rational and universal meaning of history shaping the meaning of modernity, leads to two consequences. The denial of the historical "metanarrative" that gives legitimacy to culture leads to anomie and puts the cultural communities in danger of the destruction. The postmodernists' emphasis on "micro-narratives" stems from their desire to justify philosophically and historically the determination of small groups to achieve their goals, which are situational, short-term and subjective. On the other hand, it guides society toward creating a revised value structure of society. At the pinnacle of the hierarchy of values in this structure are such axiological determinants as individualism based on creativity, anti-functionalism, anti-utilitarianism, and multiculturalism.

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