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**К ВОПРОСУ СТАНОВЛЕНИЯ «РУССКОЙ ИДЕИ»
КАК РОССИЙСКОГО НАЦИОНАЛЬНО-СПЕЦИФИЧЕСКОГО
КОМПОНЕНТА МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ**

Рассматриваются становление и развитие понятия «Русская идея» в русской философско-социальной мысли, его определение, содержание, критика. Выделяется важность формирования национальной идентичности и культурного самоопределения для эффективного межкультурного взаимодействия. Кроме того, раскрывается роль «Русской идеи» как российского национально-специфического компонента, формирующего национальную идентичность в практике межкультурной коммуникации.



The article reviews the foundation and development of the concept of the Russian Idea in the Russian philosophical and social thinking, its main definitions, content, as well as critics. The significance of development of national identity and cultural self-determination for effective intercultural communication is pointed out. Besides, the role of the Russian Idea as a Russian nation specific component, forming the national identity, when dealing with intercultural communication practices is discussed.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная коммуникация, национальная идентичность, «Русская идея».

Key words: intercultural communication, national identity, the Russian Idea.

156

A religious philosopheme of the Russian Idea bears the influence of its classical researchers, and roots in more than hundred year experience of philosophical discussions, which are being carried out still.

As a scientific concept, the Russian Idea can hardly be defined. However, having examined a variety of attitudes toward the issue, in an attempt to define the concept, it can be simplified to a complex of ideas, reflecting the historical distinctness, and specific traits and mission of the Russian people.

Today the Russian Idea is of a high concern and significance for discussions. When considering the preconditions for the Idea, according to V. Gasieva, it became substantial and notable with the rise of the Russian Empire [3]. The Russian idea had been a common theme throughout the Russian social thinking through the history of the Russian state. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and a number of geopolitical changes, the Idea is considered to be lost. And the current issue about the Idea as a precondition for forming of Russian national identity raises.

In order to better understand the concept, it would be relevant to address to the process of founding of the Russian Idea. Traditionally, one of the fathers of the Idea is considered to be a Russian philosopher of the XVIII century Pyotr Chaadaev. Albeit he was not actually the founder of the term itself, and in his works he focused on the national idea in general, rather than on the Russian Idea. Nevertheless, his contribution into the founding of the Idea is hardly deniable. Thus, speaking of mentioned specific mission of the Russian people, he refers to the national idea as follows: "Nations are ethic beings, just like any single human is. They are being educated through centuries, just like people through years. What one can say about us (the Russians) is that we are some kind of exception from all the nations. We belong to those of them, who, somehow, is not a part of the mankind. But we exist for the only purpose of teaching the whole world a grand lesson" [4]. In his Philosophic Letters he stands for the national idea as an element of public political consciousness: "these are the thoughts of duty, justice, law, and order" [4]. Besides, back then Chaadaev points out the lack of intellectual elite in Russia, rather passive position of the Orthodox Church in socio-political realm, and explains the whole pessimistic picture by the divine providence.



Religion is tight highly closely to the Russian Idea. Hence, Chaadaev mentions that unlike the Russian Orthodox Church, Roman Catholic one actively influenced national identities and politics of Christian states, which had positive effect on, for instance, the abolition of serfdom. Thus, despite the position of Chaadaev was not exactly the Russian Idea, his philosophical thoughts were the solid boost for the further development of the concept.

The term 'the Russian Idea' was coined by a famous Russian writer and philosopher Feodor Dostoyevsky. Dostoyevsky's reflections on the people's fate and the Russian idea can be found in his work *A Writer's Diary*: "There are the ideas that are unspoken, unconscious, and that only can be sensed; those ideas that are numerous, and as if they were melted together with a person's soul. They exist in a nation, and in the mankind as a whole. Yet those ideas rest in sub consciousness of people's lives, and they only can be sensed extremely and truly – it is only until then the people can live its strongest, the most vivid life. The pursuit of finding those secret ideas in the people is the energy of its life" [2]. His reasoning is rather highly spiritual and religious. Gassieva sees the notion of the Russian Idea by Dostoevsky in the content of three layers [3]. Firstly, the Russian Idea is the idea of all-uniting of the Slavic people, "uniting under the Russian wing is the representation of the whole Slavic civilization" [2]. Secondly, the Idea is not limited to Slavism only, but also represents Orthodoxy. The author mentions that "what is important in the Slavic issue is not Slavism, or Slavdom core, but Orthodoxy" [2]. This is where Chaadaev's and Dostoevsky's ideas meet. And thirdly, the Russian idea is the uniting of all the mankind on the basis of the Christ. Mainly, the Christ here is not referred to as in a religious sense, but in the sense of agape, which, basically, is the image of the Christ as the ideal [2].

The religion was extremely important in formulating the Russian Idea. Besides, it reflects the messianism views, as the theory that the Russian people has special mission in the fates of the mankind. Thus, N. Berdyaev calls Dostoevsky "the most iconic voice of the Russian messianic consciousness" [1].

Among the researchers of the Russian idea the following names should also be mentioned: V. Solovev, K. Leontiev, N. Berdyaev, and many others. However, these numerous views on the issues can be summarized in some general approaches: the Russian Idea is the idea of religious and cultural uniting of the Russian people; the Russian people is the God-bearer people, having messianic consciousness; the Idea segregates the Russian people from the rest of the nations; the Russian soul is both the psychological trait of a Russian person, and the basis for the Russian idea; the concern of Slavophilia and Westernism; the Idea strongly represents Russian spirituality, Orthodoxy, unity, and messianism.

Undoubtedly, the Russian Idea should not be interpreted straightforwardly. It is the issue of polemic and debates between philosophers, sociologists, and various specialists involved. Thus, as long as there are the studies on the Idea, there are the critics.

The overview of critical approaches appears to be relevant. Thus, N. Kocherov distinguishes three approaches towards the critic of the Russian Idea [5]. The first one includes, that the Idea is not denied, however, perceived negatively. It is represented by A. Yanov, who claims that the Russian idea is the ideology of Russian Imperialism.



The second one denies the Idea fully. The main argument is the Russian Idea's ambiguity and controversy. Thus, Kocherov firstly cites the polemic of P. Iosifova and N. Tsimbarev: "But what is 'the Russian idea'? It is historical explanation of the historic mission of Russia? Is it the sign of chosenness of the Russian people? The ideal of the world order, the ideal of the Russian people? Fortune telling? The category of the Russian philosophic thought? There is no concrete answer" [5]. Then he quotes F. Girenyuk, who appeals to the paradox: "Russians are the Russian Idea, and namely something that has never existed and will not exist" [5]. Moreover, Girenyuk characterizes Russia as a simulacrum, by the term of the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard for the loss of connection between sign and reality.

The third approach states, that the Idea is not denied, however, the contents and subjects of the concept as scientific and philosophical notion are questioned. Thus, B. Barabanov and O. Volkonogova consider the Russian idea as a myth, and it, being ethno-cultural heritage, basically, cannot be a rational approach towards the development of Russia and its policies [5].

This article is not aimed at negation or support of the Russian Idea as a notion. Besides, in accordance to obvious current tendency of its active usage in the domestic policy of Russia, it appears rational to consider the Idea in the context of intercultural communication as a potential basis for the national identity. Understanding of the critics of the Idea might prevent possible obstacles, when representing Russia and Russian culture.

In order to present a national culture abroad, firstly it seems crucial to reach the common understanding of national identity, cultural self-determination, and future development of a country at a domestic level. This can be achieved through learning and analyzing cultural heritage, research, and discussions. For instance, the Russian Idea might be useful in the formulating and development of the image of Russia, as a country of rich cultural heritage, with such classical writers as Feodor Dostoevsky shaping the positive perceptions of his country abroad. The Idea appears to be solid cultural support for better understanding of a 'mysterious Russian soul'.

Among the advantages of sticking to the Russian Idea there is the solidarity and social cohesion in the country, which would benefit the state both domestically and internationally. Besides, there is the opportunity to present Russia abroad with the abovementioned characteristics. As for the disadvantages, in terms of the domestic policy and raising patriotic moods in the society, the Idea should not cross the line. Unlike the historical definitions and characteristics of the Russian idea of the XIX century, nowadays, there should be a distinct boundary, in order to prevent transformation of the Russian Idea into nationalism.

Summing it up, the Russian Idea, through the prism of personal perception of a representative of Russia, appears to be rather subjective ideas of those speaking of it. However, if absorbing the best and unique characteristics of this country and its people, their mentality, culture, views, and values, it can compound the ideal and actual essence of Russia. In its turn, such representation of the country and its national identity could definitely serve for the better in processes of intercultural communication.



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