

RUSSIAN CULTURE AND THE SYNTHESIS OF ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT

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From ancient western and oriental to current philosophies, great thinkers have concentrated their efforts in search of a sui generis philosopher's stone-an optimum of harmony in the interrelation of microcosm and macrocosm, world and individual. An experience of a similar search is synthesized by history-history of mystics, theology, philosophy. The tasks of the history of philosophy, as a quintessence of ecological mental experience, are not a reanimation of abandoned philosophical systems such as Taoism, Zen Buddhism, Pythagoreism, even though they are of a certain interest. These tasks are not merely a study of the pithy aspects of ancient systems-modeling different ways of thinking and the propagation of a philosophical modus vivendi- but the synthesis (non eclecticism) of positive ecological values, taking into account the specificity in their historical and logical evolution.

Traditionally, the course of the history of ecological thought begins with ancient philosophy through Hellenism, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance through modern and contemporary philosophyöexistentialism, positivism etc. Such a structure as the Kantian ideal is out of the question, but for practical reasons, as a result of so wide a coverage of historical space, many exciting "philosophical layers" are not involved in the curriculum. One of those layers, to my mind, is Russian philosophical thought, frequently introduced fragmentarily in Russian speaking anthologies.

The discussion concerning Russian philosophy continues. A paradigm of Russian philosophical mind (Spengler's "Russentum") is not understood or accepted even in its motherland, to say nothing of the West. Nevertheless, Russian philosophical mentality has and maintains deep roots ecologically. The Russian mentality widely represented in Russian idealistic philosophy of the 19th and 20th centuries by the Russian cosmism (N.F. Feyodorov, A. Tchzhevsky), the metaphysics of love (N.A. Berdyaev, V.V. Rosanov). The Russian ideal of the new man (P.D. Uspensky, G. Giurdzchiev), of the philosophy of religion (S.N. Bulgakov, L. Shestov), and Russian sophiology (V.S. Solovyev), has already found its explorers and adherents all over the world. However, it demands further comprehension. All these concepts, in spite of their geographical and temporary entropy are united by the fact that all of them are the products of one indivisible Russian mind-Sophia, Eternal Femininity-the allegory of Russian philosophy, religion and iconographic art. It is a paradox, that its roots could not be completely explained by Russian history or Byzantine and German cultural dominance. In spite of evolution, the pattern of Russian humanitarian thinking-in the words of Husserl, noesis of the intentional act-has not changed.

The ideas of Russian humanism-Russian `philosophy of bios' as opposed to the western `philosophy of life'-didn't perish from the Middle Ages to the time of Berdyaev, and it is simply a tragedy that the Russian idealistic mentality was seldom crossed with reality. What is Russian mentality as an original version of ecological mind?-that is the core question.

Russian philosophical emigration europeanized Russian Sophia overseas, but as it often happens, the circulation of information doesn't automatically result in its understanding. The Russian idea as its basis remains mysterious and sophisticated. Issues of Russian emigration-culturology, historiosophia, sophiology-are often treated without taking into account the ties with Russian classic humanism (Tolstoy, Dostoevsky) and Russian religious and idealistic medieval metaphysics, disregarding the logical evolution of Russian thought. However, there is no contradiction in those approaches; the conceptual kernel of Russian mentality is more than a disputable question.

Yet, I suppose one cannot agree with the opinion of the German philosopher V. Goerd, who writes that "Russian philosophy is our vital affair. It belongs to Europe, the `West'." Russian culture belongs neither to the West nor to the Orient; it is the property of a single mental culture synthesizing the experience of human traditions and national cultures. In my mind, the Bios Theory is likely to enrich its experience through studies of Russian specific ecologic thought speculating on its spiritual heritage.