



## Philosophy And Policy: The Russian Philosophy Of The Silver Age "In The Situation"

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### ABSTRACT

Topical issues of interrelation of philosophy and policy are considered on the example of contradictory relationship of the Russian philosophy of "the silver age" and the Russian revolutionary movement. The purpose was to show impossibility "shortly to close" (P.B. Struve) philosophy on the solution of problems of practical policy. Attempts to interpret current political problems in the horizon of "the universal fight of the good and evil" (S.N. Bulgakov) which have to be proved in "positive belief" could not be successful; as a result of the conducted research features of the Russian philosophy of a boundary of the XIX-beginning of the XX centuries are revealed (the most important of which, in the relation to article subject, are called: the claim for "spiritual guidance" acquired from V.I. Solovyev and from L. Tolstoy tendency to a sermon, defined failure in the solution of the task relying it (philosophy) of the major: to equip policy on the basis of "obligatory universal outlook" (N.A. Berdyaev), unities of political, national and philosophical and religious tradition. The "World outlook nature" of the Russian philosophy of "the silver age" based on "self-understanding" of the essence and the main objectives in many respects caused its extreme modernity to it to "public consciousness". Consecutive and basic differentiation (N.A. Berdyaev) of "political" and "philosophical" has to precede efforts on designing on the basis of their synthesis of political tradition, contrary to the haste shown in work of the Russian philosophy of "the silver age"; the philosophical journalism in itself is not suitable means for the solution of the called task in any way (and there is no business of the philosophy); this conclusion is relevant for political realities of our time.

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### INTRODUCTION

The philosophical journalism is fornication. This characteristic implicitly contains all fate of the Russian moral and political philosophy which quite consciously gave itself to publicity so that from time to time almost gave in to temptation directly to involve God in newspaper polemic on the next burning issue; especially, there were exclusive examples for imitation: A.S. Homyakov (18), for example, could remove the European socialism and revolution directly from "filiokva". Having apprehended "a teaching mission" from the Russian

literature (maybe), the Russian political philosophy of "the silver age" was simply not necessary; and for us as the studying subject, it is of antiquarian interest; sometimes – leisure curiosity; almost never – means of resuscitation of national consciousness (F.I. Girenok (14)). It was shown most visually in the history of the collection "Milestones" (21) and stories connected with it: journalese scandal, a joke of a trip of Milyukov "across Russia" with lectures denials, "organizational conclusions" about accomplices of the collection ("boycott" was in custom of the

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Russian democratic intelligentsia), - all this befits philosophy a little (this is not about the content of the ideas stated in "Milestones", very different by the way). Generally, "from history" we have the right to judge the subject (collection) which was involved in "unpleasant incident", "made" it (but, we will add as well to make a conclusion about society to which this message was addressed). The Russian political philosophy of "the silver age" (generally, the silver age is about literature, but somehow was fixed in use about philosophy) had no addressee: there was no political movement against which it could "lean" (or from which to make a start), with which it could legally (or not, from some Views, not an essence) to connect. Here as a satisfactory illustration can serve: Berdyaev and Bulgakov's "social democratism", a short-term episode<sup>1</sup> (Berdyaev was at exile in Vologda "for social democracy"; Bulgakov began to design "Christian socialism" (7)), come to the end with "Idealism problems" (23); mystical revolutionism of Merezhkovsky: it did not differ with political revolutionism from time to time, but remained absolutely alien revolution; the liberalism of the book of E.N. Trubetskoy suspicious for positivistic cadets, - it is possible to multiply examples, but mentioned authors will occupy us in this article<sup>2</sup>. Society, revolution, philosophy were not just separately<sup>3</sup> (they should be so), it is worse: they existed for each other only in plots of stories, like those connected with "Milestones", and it already demands to be interpreted<sup>4</sup>; philosophers "guardians", by the way, were in the same but even worst situation, they'd never been their among theirs. The Russian society in general, any of its "element" - "was not combined" (here even other word would be more appropriate: "was not mounted") with the Russian philosophy of a turn of centuries. If the Russian revolution (and even more the reaction, but in this article we have to miss about it) had depth, then it was found out of in connection with philosophy, and the nature of the Russian philosophy of the silver age was not the last cause of such situation<sup>5</sup>; finding the designated mutual extreme in effort to be "practical". Publicism, moralising, teaching (moreover: the claim for a prophecy going from Vl. Solovyev and for a sermon from L. Tolstoy), on the one hand there is pensiveness, illusiveness, fantastic radicalism (the same of Berdyaev and Merezhkovsky), on another hand there is anarchism which needed to be "mystical" (so even more "radical"), - at full isolation from "society" which has the right to reject a prophecy and a sermon, and also thereby has an opportunity and occasion to turn away also from philosophy, if the philosopher mixes them not only at the level of contents, but also style (of course the "mystical fornication" which is perfectly described in Berdyaev (5) or Stepanov memoirs (27)) the

philosophy has to be and doesn't have to look for influences (Heidegger noticed, for example<sup>6</sup>), and only with it it (philosophy) can (if at all can) influence. However, at some recurrence and even repeatability of our history, it can be reasonably useful to listen to what the philosophers chosen by us for this article and able to catch "deep shifts" of history and to see revolution symbols connected not only with "a political surface" wanted to tell (Merezhkovsky (20) and Frank (12) considered "the political measurement" the "plane" deprived of measurement of depth on which "true story" "is projected"), and, maybe, not quite to ignore heard<sup>7</sup> (not as "a recipe", but as the certificate and indication "on something" that can be related to "our circumstances").

## DISCUSSIONS

Exclusive subject of our interest, thus, is that Berdyaev, Bulgakov and Trubetskoy's philosophy (first of all) which most of all, accept journalese polemic, was alien and caused resolute rejection (we speak about social, political philosophy first of all): the constant (sometimes deliberate and causing) aspiration to interpret the most superficial and topical political events from the prospect of "universal fight of the good and evil" which, to everything, were perceived not differently, as in the source of belief (not quite church). From the European and liberal point of view it is possible only from a lack of culture as the best confirmation of barbarity, but the hypocritical involvement of this point of view, together with everything proving and belonging to it, had been already quite clear then, and not without efforts (it is more than involuntary) of the Russian philosophy.

It seems to us Berdyaev draws on "the independent value" of the truth and, respectively, on need as he writes, "differentiations" (4, page 14) in the sense that the philosophy should not "serve" political interests or prove political ideals. On the contrary, he insists on "synthesis": "new consciousness" is represented to him as "synthesis of knowledge and belief", "theories and practitioners", "the truth of verity and the truth of justices" (4, page 29), need of "obligatory universal consciousness" (4, page 1) is represented to him undoubted; "craving for a complete world view" makes related the Russian philosophy and the intellectuals (to "reaction" Berdyaev is hostile, and considers it responsible for "distortions" of intellectual mood); in general, positive and valuable lines of Russian intelligentsia are "craving for a complete world view in which the theory is merged with life, craving for belief. Not without justification the intellectuals are negative and suspicious to abstract academism, to section of the live truth" (4, page 16-17) and in "their requirement of the complete relation to the world and life one can consider line of unconscious

religiousness" (4, page 17). A problem of philosophy is to make religiousness conscious; "the concrete idealism" (of Vl. Solovyev first of all, at least during this period of his creativity Berdyaev considered therefore) has to be both national philosophical tradition, and a basis of outlook of Russian intelligentsia and, thereby, to provide "religious and philosophical" "deepening" of policy. So: it is "synthesis" instead of "service", instead of "materialism as a religion" it is the "concrete idealism" which in turn is based on "religious interest"; the policy has to apprehend "spiritual leaders"<sup>8</sup> (besides it is important for them to be "correct"). Differentiation by all means has to be solved by synthesis. That is the sense of Berdyaev's "program".

For the correct understanding of Bulgakov in his analysis of the religious nature of Russian intelligentsia, it must be kept in mind his latest characteristic of "essence" of the main directions of philosophy as heresies (9). Bulgakov begins the article in "Milestones" with a statement that the Russian revolution (the first one, 1905-1907) was as well "a historical court" (8, page 32) and that the history "is a life experience, the experience of the good and evil making a condition of spiritual growth" (8, page 32). First of all it was the trial of the intelligentsia because "all ideological baggage, all spiritual equipment, together with the advanced fighters, leaders, propagandists were given by the revolutionary intellectuals" (8, page 33). And in general, "soul of the intelligentsia, that is Peter's creation, is at the same time and to the future fate of the Russian statehood and the public ... Fates of Peter's Russia are in the hands of intelligentsia no matter how it was persecuted and pursued, how at present it is seemed weak and even powerless" (8, page 33); for the patriot "loving the people and being ill because of needs of the Russian statehood, there is no more fascinating subject for reflections now as about the nature of Russian intelligentsia, and at the same time there is no care more painful and disturbing, as about whether Russian intelligentsia will rise to the height of its mission" (8, page 3). As, according to Bulgakov, "the main feature of the intelligentsia is in its relation to religion" (8, page 35), and "it is also impossible to understand the main features of the Russian revolution if not to keep in the center of attention of this relation of the intelligentsia to religion" (8, page 35), then "the historical future of Russia is confined in determining how the intellectuals will gain independence in the relation to religion" (8, page 35). Bulgakov believes that there is a basis to hope that we are waited by "original revolution in minds and hearts" (8, page 35) as "Christian lines appear in spiritual shape of the best and largest figures of the Russian revolution" (8, page 37), "social repentance" and "sacrifice" which strengthen

"mood of a divinity of the intelligentsia" are peculiar to it (8, page 37); "the known divinity, an eschatological dream of the God's City, of the future kingdom of the truth (under different socialist pseudonyms) and then aspiration to rescue the mankind if not from a sin, then from sufferings represent, as we know, invariable and distinctive features of Russian intelligentsia" (8, page 36); and even: "How many times in the second State Duma in rough speeches of the atheistic left block I heard – strangely to tell! – Orthodoxy psychology echoes, suddenly the influence of its spiritual inoculation was found" (8, page 36). It is not only Bulgakov's "personal opinion"; Dostoyevsky tried to hand to "Brothers Karamazov" nearly the fate of the world, too. Of course, there were also sceptics. Rosanov, for example, noticed repeatedly ironically (and at strong irritation even sarcastic) that the serving official, the military, and first of all the Emperor who at all not less equip the state with their business (and sometimes incomparable more); the other estates of the empire do not less (the first are listed in view of their constant opposition to the intelligentsia as "powers of darkness", it is constant found at Berdyaev and Bulgakov's works including the quoted articles). But what one can take from the person believing that to provide everyday life of family and to give given to daughters is more important mission than to observe "ideological purity" (it means the history of cooperation of Rozanov who revolted so all at once in "conservative", "liberal" and "social democratic" editions in which he sometimes even polemized with himself, using pseudonyms and the public did not guess until one of pseudonyms accidentally was not opened by efforts of one of the editions). He was also accused not only of political double-dealing, but directly of moral untidiness, and that is especially important for us in philosophical insolvency. Rosanov in general dared to believe that intellectual fights are "almost nothing" in the attitude towards "the fate of Russia" (and despite revolutions, we cannot tell that he was absolutely wrong: he only underestimated that harm which could be caused on the ways of realization of an intellectual dream of the God's Hail). In general, a certain prospect is characteristic of domestic philosophy: to reduce "business of the state" to an intellectual small party<sup>9</sup>; it is important that such "understanding of business" successfully manages to be represented as "essence".

But it is important to see first of all that "in a source" Russian intelligentsia (as it was interpreted by Bulgakov, and not only by him) and the Russian philosophy (in the person of its most famous representatives) were uniform: religious "interest" and "God's City search" occurred, however, on the different ways, and the most important problem of philosophy, by Bulgakov for example, was

considered "to direct to a true way" (philosophy per se is not capable of it; but "spiritualized" by religion it can contribute in and it is its only "justification"). The philosophy receives the truth "from the depth" of the religion ("institutionalized" or "free").

It seems that the Russian liberalism was quite out of religious and as we told above, positive (it does not mean that liberals did not go in fixed days to the Temple, sometimes, however, after the meeting in the Lodge). However, the mason prince E. Trubetskoy (the admirer and one of the first apologists of Vl. Solovyev), philosophizing about the meaning of life, wrote: "This is one or the other: whether all in the world is eventually consciously, or everything is senseless. If there is a universal sense getting in some unknown depth everything that it is, both terrestrial and heavenly and dead and live, or the search of sense is vain. If there is a meaning of life, then it has to be the force which can win everything. It has to have ability to implement everything in itself even vanity, even the nonsense. - In world life there should be no uniform corner which had not been lit up and filled with it. This sense has to shine not only below and not only above, but with crosswise beams up and down extensively. - It has to open in the suffering, in the infirmity of a creature, in failures of its search, in its highest, limit agony, moreover - in its death" (29, page 293), and "is clear to everybody that this question of omnipotent and all-conquering sense is a question about God. - God as vital completeness, is also the main assumption of any life. It is also for the sake of what it is worth living and without what life would not have the price. And if this assumption could be disproved by daily experience, if we could continually meet bright proofs of senselessness and godlessness of the Universe, after all in final instance that overcoming sense on which all our life is approved, cannot be rejected by any proofs" (29, page 294). "Justification of policy" is directly removed from this: "Justification of a horizontal line of life consists in a thought of the future new earth full of absolute, spiritual contents and sense; this plane, local life comes true only so far as it rises in other plan and changes in it. It means, here the horizontal line proves not in itself taken separately, but in combination with the vertical line. Justification both by the first one, and the second can be found only in association and in crossing of both lines. - It is confirmed also by all data of our experience on a vertical course of life" (29, 304).

## RESULTS

We tried to give the extracts, apparently, disproving our statements had been made at the beginning of the article. We should repeat that we speak not about revolution, not about assessment of a role of the intellectuals, not about "society" per se, but about philosophy: about the Russian philosophy of

"the silver age" accused by us at once: firstly, in publicity, secondly, in uselessness (not because of circumstances of time, but in fact) of that "opportunity" to which it defined itself mainly: it is called outlook, - and we claim that in the world outlook nature of the Russian philosophy there was its "defect" and the reason of this "uselessness" despite the fact that it persistently preached (the main objective is to find the "integral outlook" by means of philosophy implanted to "the area of belief").

To deal with the first of the called points is rather easily: the legal and directly necessary sermon (let it be a moral sermon) providing for such understanding of problems of philosophy is journalism. And in this quality it is influenced by all circumstances of area of "media" (it is hardly believe someone, except journalists in the broadest sense, would claim that this area in something is similar to the temple, but not a warehouse directly, and it could not be otherwise). Of course, it is possible to preach here, but grace and sanctity are required for this purpose, - so we do not speak about philosophy and then we cannot consider the opening here further opportunities: in article we speak about philosophy and we emphasize it once again.

Concerning whether philosophy per se first of all is "outlook", in the first half of the XX century the extensive literature (first of all in Germany) appeared (16; 17). Without touching upon a subject in essence (not one article is necessary here), we will note only that prior to all disputes on this subject the philosophy just has to be. And the weakness of philosophy, exactly philosophical tradition in Russia at that time, was directly admitted (and it was specified in works) by those authors whose opinions were indicated in a subject of this article; the Russian philosophy of the silver age, having not quite become philosophy, at once defined itself to tasks and filed the claims hardly corresponding to "situation" of that time. And those who "did philosophy" often wanted to be "not only" philosophers ("the poet in Russia is more than the poet").

And, nevertheless<sup>10</sup>, we'd like to try to make some not quite useless conclusions and the assumptions concerning our "situation". There are widespread practices of "philosophical justification" (sometimes "justifications") of political practice, and often it is called "policy philosophy"; it seems it was agreed that "current problems" of "present" could be a subject of philosophical "judgment" (even the special obligatory section in theses on philosophy about their "practical relevance" is sometimes interpreted directly in sense of a possibility of "practical" use of a research conclusions). It is useless to argue with it; but it is possible to try "to limit" similar practice and "to

correct" "consensus" a little (including the references to the Russian philosophy of "the silver age"). Perhaps, the philosophy needs in the criterion similar to developed in due time by M. Weber (30; 31) for distinction of social scientific knowledge from as he said, sermons: difference between "reference to value" and "assessment". However before it the other is more important: it is only possible "to philosophize" "from philosophy", and nearly the first step here is distinct self-understanding concerning tradition and method<sup>11</sup>. And, at last, after all "business of philosophy" is philosophy; this conclusion directly follows from our discussion of one of the subjects connected with the Russian philosophy of "the silver age".

In comparison with Heidegger's "episode", everything that happened to some Russian philosophers was nothing real. Here we also speak about special "harmony" (and least about contents) of the political movement and philosophy, but not only specially of political philosophy: they are, of course, always separately (only A. Badiou (2, 3) is able to connect them almost directly, but as for Sartre (24; 25) or Foucault applying for it (11; 10) – they could not do it), but as Heidegger's example sets, and other example of the Russian philosophers mentioned by us, can happen differently "separately".

Nobody hardly ever had a desire to involve his "social democratism" in interpretation of maintenance of Berdyaev's philosophy per se, though Berdyaev always and till the end emphasized "spiritual fidelity" (5) to "the left direction".

The example of P.B. Struve (28) (the philosophical gravity was partly the cause of his rather fast evolution from social democratism to the right), on the one hand of K.P. Pobedonostseva – with another hand we claim, and it only confirms told.

It is impossible to consider seriously, in communication by questions of this article, V.I. Lenin's "polemic" developed by him in "Materialism and an empiriokrititsizm". This work is probably ingenious in any relation, but does not have any relation to philosophy. Actually, Bogdanov and Lunacharsky's "building of God" with companions has the same relation to philosophy.

D.E. Galkovsky (13) possesses an interesting remark on character and level of the Russian philosophy of "the silver age": "Milestones", at known "development/condition" of philosophy would have to represent "degression" to "political topic of the day", but were, on the contrary, a demonstration of "a limit of opportunities" ("abilities") of this philosophy (not "journalism", but "the philosophy"). Despite deliberate radicalism of similar assessment, something important is fixed for us in it: specific understanding of the tasks by

the Russian philosophy and the philosophers of "the business" who are interesting for us here.

The philosophical genius of Heidegger is so obvious that the "episode" (15) imputed to him, in post-war and especially in our liberal times, certainly could have destroyed not only the philosopher, but also his philosophy, affected very little on the assessment of its (philosophy) value, in spite of all the efforts made for it (Adorno (1), Popper (22), Bourdieu, for example (6)). It is not "episode" in itself, but in the resumed attempts to interpret Heidegger's philosophy through this "episode". But well-intentioned do not want to comprehend that even if to assume that, from the mentioned authors, Bourdieu, for example, is right in the conclusions presented in the book "Political Ontology of M. Heidegger" (6) - it will not at least shake "authenticity" of philosophy of Heidegger, the validity of his historic-philosophical interpretations; equally as patent goodthinking will not improve quality of some "philosophies" at all. K. Schmitt (26) was less lucky, but also he is not decided to be ignored absolutely, only properly to interpret (as it, for example, is made in the recent book "K. Schmitt, L. Strauss and "A concept political". About dialogue of two absent" (19) H. Maier) But here the genius is. In the Russian philosophy it is possible to believe only V.V. Rozanov could be proportional to Heidegger, but all in all in another and in a different way, maybe, he is nearly the only one from the Russian philosophers who also has passionate and irreconcilable enemies now. There is the most right indicator of not only "historiographically - antiquarian" interest in its philosophy.

Certainly, our article is philosophical journalism, too, and it concerns almost everything that we told about this genre earlier; we'll justify ourselves the end of our review, now we only remind about the opportunity specified by F.I. Girenok.

The Claim of "spiritual guidance" underwent changes, but did not leave Berdyaev who was "an anarchist individualist" up to the end.

Not only for the Russian: French "intellectuals", for example, "behaved" in this regard even more considerably and consistently; the same is about the American journalists, media was wider and the accompanying to its "university environment"; the amazement, offense, rage connected with elections of 2016 and their result are indicative, too.

We promised to justify ourselves at the end of the article for the fact that we had resorted to a genre of "philosophical journalism" and the fact that that is the most part written under the formal title "philosophy", in itself, of course, does not justify.

Most gloomy "part" of philosophical theses is "methodology of a research".

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