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European culture: retro-futurist outlook at the phenomenon

Vladimir L. Kurguzov

Doctor of Cultural Studies,

PhD in History,

Head of cultural and social-cultural anthropology department,

East Siberian State Technological University,

670013, 40-v, Klyuchevskaya st., Ulan-Ude, Russian Federation;

e-mail: v.l.kurguzov@rambler.ru

Abstract

For over one hundred years the world and national cultural and philosophical analytics insists on the idea of degradation of European culture, even its extinction and even an imminent death. One of the pioneers of this assertion was O. Spengler, who dedicated a known book to this issue with fatal title "The Decline of the West". Recently, due to the globalization, the prophecy about the "perishing" of this culture only intensified. The article, on the one hand, concludes on the relativity of Eurocentrism, ambiguity of axiological fundamentals of European culture. On the other hand, gives the theoretical and methodological arguments against false assertions of its nearest perishing; it is concluded that the European culture is not on the decline yet, because every culture is not dying, but being modified according to the forms and may disappear only with the disappearance of the last man on earth.

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Introduction

The very title of this article obliges to turn to the discourse that will touch upon the past, which, in turn, will give basis to evaluate the present and even look into the nearest prospects of European culture. As for the past, it is much easier to deal with the roots of traditional European culture because it is already studied in all its fullness of positive and negative experience and, perhaps most important, has already been sufficiently analyzed by the arsenal of Social Sciences and Humanities.

It seems to me, that one of the main results of this reflection should be the conclusion that *European culture*, as such, pure, refined form – *didn't exist, doesn't exist, and won't ever exist*, as indeed, pure Asian or African culture. If this "purity" was not even in the period of prehistoric localization, it will definitely not exist in the period of globalization, development of communication means, breaking national borders, establishment of single currency, the huge increase of migration and tourist flows, as well as inter-ethnic marriages.

And those who defend imaginary "purity" of European culture should only be suggested to remember that we – Europeans – still write on paper, use gunpowder, compass and many other artifacts of the Ancient China culture, not European area at all. Yes, of course, we are proud that Gutenberg's metal type, Columbus's discovery of America, the Copernicus system and Newton's laws appeared in Europe. But, let's not forget that *font* as such first appeared in China long before that. However, it was a ceramic font.

We still use *numerical digits* that for some reason we call Arabic, although the Arabians borrowed them in India, while conquering it several times. All our sweets are made on basis of *sugar*, originally from the same India. It is also birthplace of the game that is so favorite all around the world - *Chess*. While the Europeans wore animal skins, dresses from Chinese silk were made on East. The Egyptians knew how to measure distance to the nearest comets. While the Europeans hunted with stone spears and bone arrowheads, production of metal was mastered in the Arabic East. While medieval European cities were literally drowning in streams of sewage due to the lack of at least primitive sewerage, the most complex irrigation facilities were functioning in the Arabic East.

Long before the Great Geographical Discoveries made by the Europeans, the Chinese have already built three-deck ships with telescopic bamboo masts, which took on board up to 3 thousand people and conquered the sea distances up to Madagascar, and according to some data even to the Eastern coast of Africa, while settling the Chinese in new territories.

The foundations of anatomy, rocket science, architecture, algebraic equations, astronomical calculations and much more was borrowed by the Europeans in the East. Even the Bible, as the main

spiritual product of the Europeans, also didn't appear in Europe. This should be taken into account, first of all, to build the prospects for the development of European culture in the XXI century. It is time to forget the usual formula "East is East and West is West" – it is wrong. It discredits the Europeans. The correct formula of current time shall be: "East is West, and West is East." One helps the other to master the complex world in which we live today.

The Europeans are still very proud of the fact that they are progenitors of **Humanism**, the ideology that considers human as the supreme value, protecting freedom and comprehensive human development. Long ago they came to a belief that humanism as such was founded by works of great Europeans of the XIV-XVI centuries.: Dante, Bruno, Copernicus, Shakespeare, Bacon, etc. in the era of feudalisms decline and establishment of capitalism. However, this is not quite like that. Indeed, completely different.

Humanism is a child of Eastern culture. For the first time this term was used in Farsi and was artistically interpreted by the Arabic poet Saadi, long before the European Renaissance:

All human beings are members of one frame
Since all, at first, from the same essence came.
When time afflicts a limb with pain,
The other limbs at rest cannot remain.
If thou feel not for other's misery,
A human being is no name for thee...

Philosophical understanding of humanism, indeed, occurred in Europe, primarily by efforts of ancient and medieval philosophers, but it happened later.

I refer to these well-known truths only to emphasize that forgetting contribution of **the East** to the culture of Europe is fraught with great costs, primarily to determine vectors of its further development. On the other hand, futurology is not only ungrateful, but sometimes dangerous. Not by chance most people are wary of various kinds of prophet's predictions. However, **forecasts of the future** are in direct responsibility of the people of science. In order to avoid reproaches in reading the tea leaves they prudently designate this process as "scientific prediction". The content of this article, which does not claim to be the ultimate truth, but only an expression of the subjective opinion of its author, should be understood as such a "prediction".

However, before talking about **futurological predictions** of European culture, it is necessary to describe in a few words the defining features of the current European culture.

About the Peculiarities of Current European Culture

Long before the third Millennium, Europe faced with global problems and acute contradictions of social development, economic, environmental and energy crises, and sharpening of social conflicts.

So beloved European *technogenic* type of culture, which at first contributed to social progress, is now actively generating means of destroying civilization. At the individual level, it reveals in the fact that *pragmatism and spiritual impoverishment* become prevalent in European's personality, domination of inhuman qualities and anti-scientific ideas.

Paradoxically, but it is even sacrilegious to recognize, that we are gradually getting used to daily violence against the elderly, women and children, robbery, corruption, epidemic bribery, stealing and embezzlement, pedophilia, homosexuality, sophisticated murders and outright terror, spells of astrologers, magicians and shamans. Today's European (including Russians) considers it as an ordinary phenomenon. And this, despite the fact that blood flows not only from home TV screens. Far from fake blood sheds in our schools, children's camps, subways, airports, entertainment facilities and even temples... This echoes the prophetic words of one of the greatest Europeans and consistent humanists of the twentieth century, Albert Schweitzer, who noted that "technocratic conditions, the sea of injustice, violence and lies that currently swept over all humanity..., with incredible cruelty turns modern man into a constrained, dependent creature".

We hoped that powerful European science would provide a way out of this impasse. However, at the end of the XX century it became clear that, same as all mankind, Europe is covered by an acute *gnoseological crisis*. Our traditional knowledge doesn't allow us to take into account fundamental connection between the phenomena, especially to forestall the consequences of their impact.

Russian philosopher, academician S. Galperin reasonably emphasize that "Modern science reveals its complete feebleness to build a complete picture of the world. Technical data gave human the promised power, but it turned out more destructive than creative."

Regarding my point of view on that effect, after visiting many countries of Europe and Asia, some of them several times, having went all over Russia from the shores of the Pacific Ocean to the Baltic Sea; I can make only one conclusion: the *culture* of Europe, including Russia, the culture in which we grew up, is simply *decrepit*. Losing its former attractiveness, it is now becoming a formidable and destructive power. I think that Maxim Gorky didn't write in vain before death in his diary: "Man has created a culture that can destroy him."

As academician V. Nalimov wrote: "Customary lifestyles and natural habitat swiftly collapse. Human ennobling senses are being left out of view... An aspiration towards living comfort replaced spirituality a long time ago." In other words – history repeats itself: everything goes exactly the same

as in Ancient Rome, in days of its decrepitude, fatigue and insanity.

«Decrepitude» of modern culture shows itself, first of all, in our thoughtless desire for narrow *specialization* in everything. Starting from school, we devote all our life, all our energy, to one direction, one topic. Our hypertrophied aspiration for narrow specialization, of course, contributes to rapid growth and even success in life. But we'll have to pay a very high price for this, because a huge, unclaimed layer of spiritual culture is left "astern" our interests. We haven't mastered it neither at school, nor at University or life. It is not ours to know.

It is high time to cause radical changes in the entire educational system. But not the way it is done by modern "innovators" from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, who "splash out the child" with water. Thanks to ignorant approaches to educational reforms in the vast territory of Eurasia, we have not yet achieved neither humanization or humanitarization, nor fundamentalization, and, especially democratization of educational system. Success has been achieved only in computerization, which successfully took over all these vectors of reformation, in particular, of our high school. Universities should prepare not "narrow-minded" bachelors, but widely educated intellectuals. However, these proposals do not find any response in modern Russia.

But where does the so-called "spiritual wealth" or "spiritual generosity" arise in modern Russian and European culture, when in practice the slogan "Be a human" is irrelevant for a long time. Long ago it was taken over by another slogan: "Be a professional, an entrepreneur, a businessman!". But to be so – you are not required to have breadth of the soul, mercy and humanity. They sometimes even interfere with already set goals.

It seems to me that Europeans in their cultural development, especially in scientific reflection, have long time ago abandoned broad formulation of any problems at all, as it was before, for example, the fundamental problem of *the meaning of life*. This fragmentation of culture, narrow professional approach, does not make it possible to influence society – hence, the poverty of the worldview, the "poverty of philosophy" and the "philosophy of poverty". Today, for example, the reform of Russian educational system doesn't even set the task of *knowledge transfer*, but has a task of *competence formation*.

But where will it come from this very "competence", if a modern student has almost forgotten how to read upon the powerful influence of global computerization! After all, Education from *ēducātiō* - brought up, as the process of formation of images that may arise only from reading texts. Any life images are strangers for him/her - they are formed by another person (producer, screenwriter, computer programmer, actor, broadcaster). The very notion of Education is erased and disappears. If it is not a crisis of culture, then how is this phenomenon called?

In these circumstances, I see the main path of European culture development in the XXI century only towards **humanism**, which has no and can not be any alternative. And it is not by chance that modern European thinkers have recently started talking about **global humanism**. However, in my opinion, this idea is good, but utopian, because even if initiators of this concept were engaged in practical confirmation of such humanism in European life, they would inevitably face a lot of difficulties. Since European humanism itself is **heterogeneous**. Religious and secular, naturalistic and existential humanism coexist in Europe...

As for my priorities, I am supporter of secular (social) humanism, because it is one of the most consistent. Religious humanism, for example, places God, but not Human on the first place. What sequence can we talk about here?

And, if today it is yet not really within our power to approve the mythical global humanism in Europe, then it is quite possible to consolidate the establishment of **a humanitarian culture**, by which I mean *a special kind of system of positive cultural meanings, humanistic orientations, methods, actions and results associated with human understanding as the highest criterion of social development*.

The basis of this system could be integration and cultivation at the level of lifestyle and worldview of moral, legal, civil, political, social, national and transnational, philosophical, aesthetic, scientific, existential and all other human values.

It just so happened that during the period Russian Culturology formation, I had to become one of the first developers of the Theory of Human Culture, with its axiological, ontological and hermeneutic basis – the theory of secular (social) humanism. This was also the topic of my Doctoral Thesis and a published monograph. After that there were published Subsequent books, although on other issues, but analyzed in context of the same humanitarian culture. Dozens of articles published in scientific digests only confirmed this trend. However, unfortunately, the topic of humanitarian culture has not yet become dominant, both in European and domestic Culturology.

The indifference of Russian culturologists to it turned into universe trouble: of the five areas of Russian educational system reformation (humanization, humanitarization, fundamentalization, democratization, computerization) only the last one is established. Humanization and humanitarization has not only unestablished in Russian educational space, but also sunk into oblivion with works of pseudo-reformers. And, although many write about humanism, only several about the approval of humanitarian culture. And, if they do write, then, not particularly going into details of axiological foundations of this phenomenon.

European culture is strong with its centuries-old history, dramatic but beautiful: it's everyday traditions, it's memory and monuments - that is what alleviates expenditures of today's grimaces of

modern culture. Today's Europe with its commitment to democracy and thirst for freedom, lack of borders, restores bridges between nations and their cultures while escaping from nationalist isolation of the past, while overcoming difficulties it opens gates of its cities for migrants, acquiring a completely new shape.

In these circumstances, paraphrasing the words of A. Schweitzer, we can probably say that although our experience in creating humanism is pessimistic, our faith in it is optimistic.

At the same time, it is incorrect to speak about the absolute priority of European culture over other cultures after the creation of works of E. Durkheim and K. Levi-Strauss on the equality of cultures of all nations. The age when Robinson was the representative of an "advanced" culture, and aboriginal Friday of a "retard" one, is gone long ago. There are many situations when any representative of the so-called "retard" cultures in the Australian desert or Amazon jungle will put a shame any Cambridge graduate, and in certain situations, even save him from imminent death. However, Europeans themselves do not always notice this, dreaming to restore former hegemony. Meanwhile, "hegemonies" can not be eternal – they come and pass, obeying the objective laws of one civilization changes another.

At the same time, we should forget those times when ancestors of modern Europeans were still strutting out in animal skins, lived in mudhuts and didn't know how to produce metals, and at the same time, Eastern Nations were building pyramids, majestic stone palaces, complex irrigation systems, used a compass, were able to measure distance to the nearest planets, produced silk, gunpowder, built three deck ships with telescopic masts...

The change of paradigms occurred later, when Western culture was oriented to *science* (it is active), and Eastern culture – to *religion* (it is passive). Today there was also a paradigm shift, but in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which have oriented their cultures on the model of Europe towards scientific and technological progress and today's development rates, for example, of Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China, India, Brazil and even Vietnam speak for themselves.

Indeed, since middle ages, since the birth of capitalist relations, Europe has always been on tide of scientific, technical and cultural progress, if you look at it from the perspective of Eurocentrism. Thanks to its rapid and dynamic development European culture was able to become a fundamental tradition on the planet and was able to achieve world domination, which, in the end, resulted in globalization, which takes place exactly on the *European*, and, by no means, on the American model, as some European sociologists believe.

Meanwhile, for almost a century we are listening to moans in culture-philosophical analytics about the degradation of European culture, its extinction and even imminent death. One of the first prophets of this outcome was a bright representative of European culture O. Spengler. In 1918-1922 he published

two volumes of his book with the fatal title "The Decline of the West", which concluded that "the decrepit body of European culture requires injections that must be taken in the East."

What disgusted Spengler's views on the fate of European culture? First of all, Decadence, from his point of view was the "fall" (from lat. *cado* – "to fall") of great European culture in the late XIX - early XX centuries.

Despite the phenomenal popularity of this book in broad culture-philosophical circles, the content of this work is not only admired by many, but also arises many questions of theoretical and methodological order. Let me give some of them, which perforce cause my certain bewilderment.

Firstly, this bewilderment appears immediately after you start to realize that Spengler meant by culture only what pleases the eye and the ear, i.e., considers this phenomenon from the standpoint of positivism, *metaphysics*, but not *dialectics*. Why, for example, M. Weber was not afraid to call even prostitution "a phenomenon of culture", and for Spengler this is fundamentally unacceptable? Is it a coincidence that content of his work suffers from unilateralism and denial of internal contradictions as a source of cultural development?

Secondly, why did he didn't notice all "cultural abominations", which are many in European history, while empowering the European culture only with former advantages of "cultural leader of world nations"? Was Spengler unfamiliar with 100-year-old, 30-year-old and 7-year-old wars that were waged not in Asia, but in Europe?

In ancient times, Europe did not have weapons of mass destruction, but Europeans coped same well with a primitive knife. Slaughtered everyone, that's end of the story. Schiller in his "History of the Thirty Years' War", and this war took place in center of Europe just a little more than 350 years ago, shows that during the war the territory of his homeland - Germany turned into a desert where rare wild people and packs of wolves roamed. Everything was destroyed, swept away and flamed by war.

Here you have a weapon of mass destruction, here's humanness and humanity. "The entire history of human, starting with first steps, - concludes E. Pozdnyakov in his "Philosophy of culture", – is bloody, and it couldn't be other - it's in our nature." Therefore, it is no surprise when Mark Twain wrote such a phrase in his autobiography: "Of all the creatures ever made he (man) is the most detestable. He is the only creature that inflicts pain for sport, knowing it to be pain." Confucius' quote is even more radical: "The better I get to know men, the more I find myself loving dogs."

Is it any wonder that two world wars were raised by European culture? If ideology is the undisputed product of culture, where, it is asked, fascist ideology arises and fascist regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, Croat, Franco Salazar, in Africa or what? In Europe, of course.

Yes, indeed, European culture has given humanity the greatest names: Homer and Aristotle,

Leonardo da Vinci and Copernicus, Faust and Shakespeare, Mozart and Goethe, Raphael and Bach, Newton and Einstein, thousands of other glorious names that adorn the face of European culture. However, Europeans should not forget that Europe, although it gave the world many books of great humanists, but it also gave a terrible, misanthropic book, compiled in the XV century by two monks J. Sprenger and H. Insistoris "Hammer of Witches", which was a set of sadistic ways to kill people. Another "masterpiece" of European culture is no better – Hitler's book – "Mein Kampf". This is also a product of the same European culture.

This European culture represented by the Church Inquisition first burned Giordano Bruno at the stake, and in our days the Vatican canonized this great man. "Sorry, our bad...". But isn't the Catholic religion, as the product of European culture, is responsible for thousands of such acts throughout history? And, therefore, it is hardly worth forgetting that fruits of the Cultural tree are not only sweet, but also sour and even bitter. It is not possible to figure out who is responsible for all that: whether a gardener, or seeds, or soil.

Thirdly, Marxism as a scientific worldview is also a phenomenon of European culture. And most likely, we should be proud of it.

However, Spengler unreasonably declared the socialist formation, as a product of Marxist doctrine, a "phase of decline" in European culture." At the end of the XX century, although Marxism moved to the periphery of social theory and ideology, its ideas and methodology today retain not only in judgments of the Orthodox or neo-marxists, but also in the judgments of a number of ideologists of liberalism, conservatism and globalism. And this is symptomatic, because no one can repeal the Marxian law of surplus value. Wage labour and its exploitation continues. Well, Marxism was and remains an ideology against the exploitation of human by human.

On the other hand, the reality has long ago canceled the arguments of Spengler, because in some European countries today it is more socialism than it was in the Soviet Union. Most likely, V. Lenin was right when he noticed that: "...no matter how "spenglers" whine about the decline of "the Old Europe", - it is just one of the episodes in the history of the world bourgeoisie fall, gorge on imperialistic robbery and oppression of the majority of the Earth population."

Fourthly, almost at the same time with "The Decline of the West", in 1923, there was published an article of the great humanist of the XX century (1923). Albert Schweitzer's "The Decay and the Restoration of Civilization", in which the decline of European culture was also interpreted as world-scale tragedy. However, if according to Spengler, "the decline" can not be converted to "the Rise", then A. Schweitzer believed in "the Rise". In his opinion, for this it was necessary that European culture regained a solid *ethical* basis, for which he proposed his ethics of *humanism*, ethics of "*Reverence for*

Life", and up to the 60s of the last century practically followed it, without losing faith in it even after two world wars and all the revolutions of the XX century.

Who is right in this debate? It seems to me that A. Schweitzer with his idea of *humanism*, which, indeed, has no alternatives. And who is right, O. Spengler or the author of "The Protestant Ethic" M. Weber, who believed that European culture can not be measured with the previous value criteria. They were replaced by universal rationality, which changes the view on this culture, and therefore its death is out of the question. And here Weber's conclusion should be supported, because this conclusion is quite obvious.

Fifthly, if the European culture, according to Spengler, somewhere "declines", as wittily noted by Ortega y Gasset, if something "declines", it is always from the top down. This simple truth means that we have at least to demand the notation of O. Spengler's judgment about "the decline" of culture, what is understood as the "top" of culture, from where it conjecturally "declines". However, everyone has different "top". Someone needs may be the philosophy of Bach's music, and someone is enough a smash hit. Someone needs sermons of Mother Teresa, and someone a modern detective "A shot in the coffin". All these are products of the same Mother Culture. Therefore, the culture is not "declining" anywhere, and certainly it will not "disappear". It only changes shapes. Unfortunately, not always for the better. But it's natural state.

Spengler's conclusion that "living cultures are dying", which he placed on the first page of his work is initially wrong. Culture in general and the culture of Europe, in particular, will die only with the disappearance of the last human on earth, because animals do not need it at all – they are given all by Nature, and Culture gave human the missing, i.e. what Nature didn't give us. And it didn't give us a lot of things, to survive in tough conditions of nature: wool cover, means of self-defense (fangs, horns, hooves). A human is bad in swimming, running, we hear and see worse than animals, can not fly at all... All this and much more we compensated for Culture.

Another Spengler's conclusion, when he predicts the "death" of culture after setting in "*ignorance*", can be called an inexcusable methodological miscalculation and even absurd in understanding the nature of the phenomenon of culture. This very miscalculation, it seems to me, led today some culturologists to a completely absurd conclusion about the emergence of some "*counter-culture*" where all the moral impurity of modern society was dumped as in a cesspool: prostitution, drug addiction, crime and other unpleasantly-smelling phenomena. Where, we ask, is the border between culture and counter-culture, or is it, as rightly noticed E. Pozdnyakov: "... exists only in the minds of some culturologists who consider it their professional duty to refer to culture only what is good and pleasant..." and what can be said in sublime tones "to the music of Vivaldi, to the glorious harpsichord"?

Meanwhile, there is only one counter-culture - it is *Nature*, which is not yet *Culture*, and the last – is already not *Nature*. Everything else, both with "plus" and "minus" signs – is a sub-product of her Majesty – Culture. Spengler's "ignorance" is not just lack of culture, but the presence of a culture of a lower level and nothing more.

Pessimistic predictions for the development of European culture continue to appear until now. Today they related to the processes of *globalization*.

And again, modern followers of Spengler do not want to consider this process from positions of dialectics.

For example, the well-known French philosopher, geopolitician and culturologist Alain de Benoist, who studies development problems of liberalism, modern European culture of mass consumption and globalization, believes that *globalization* is able to completely destroy the traditional European culture in a relatively short time and replace it with a mass *consumer* culture of post-industrial society, triumphantly marching on the planet and having absorbed a fair number of local cultures.

And this conclusion, from my point of view, is too rigoristic. Everything goes in a spiral. Did prehistoric society really have no culture of consumption? Yes, prehistoric human thought only about consumption. Hunger breaks stone walls. I want to eat permanently. And, has food today ceased to be an object of *consumption*? Maybe we are just returning to such a society, but only on a completely different level? And globalization itself did not arise from nowhere. *Integration* came to replace the simplest *cooperation* in the prehistoric society, for example in hunting of mammoths or gathering gifts of the forest. And today, integration has been replaced by *globalization*. Life itself demanded to change integration for globalization. And it is not worth looking at it as a universal Scarecrow. This phenomenon also has its "pros" and its "cons".

Why do we have forget simple truth that there are no "pluses" without "minuses" and globalization, of course, brings a lot of negative, including for the fate of traditional cultures. However, there is also a kind of "natural selection", because traditional cultures also contain a lot that is must leave. After all, humanity does not cling to cultural values of slave-owning formations. These values, like many others, are gone, and rightly so, because there can be even more harm in mindless idealization of traditions than of globalization.

For example, me, as a Russian person, will never cling to the traditions of bygone days, especially those that have become ridiculous. For example, the code of moral rules "Domostroy", compiled in the XVI century, contains such a postulate: "Woman's path lays from the oven to the door." If we fatally follow this tradition today, Russia will disappear overnight from mud, hunger and cold, because today there is no sector of economy in which women would not work. In some of them, they make up an

absolute majority. If all of them, following this tradition, should get back to four walls of the house, then life will stop. That will be a real collapse - the end of the world.

On the other hand, for instance, I know many examples when, contrary to all predictions about the death of traditional cultures, they live and do not intend to die. For example, in Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Canada there live a lot of Russian Old Believers who emigrated there at the beginning of the XX century. They live in a complete neighbourhood of foreign cultures, but their children know traditions of the Russian Nation and use much more clear Russian language than children of the same Old Believers in modern Russia.

As for the preservation of the so-called "purity" of European nation's traditional cultures, is not also so simple. For example, there are three quarters of borrowings in my native Russian language. Probably, they are not less in German, French or English languages. Anyway, I know it for fact that there are no alligators in the Thames, but in the big Cambridge dictionary the word "alligator" is represented as English. Well, what do poor Englishmen supposed to do now? Change that word? Or publish a new dictionary?

Ardent opponents of globalization still do not know what exactly they need to fight, and what they must not, and shouldn't. That way you can get to the point of absurdity. In any case, following the author of the book "Ideology and Utopia" K. Mannheim, it can be said that "... the decline of culture can not be accepted by carriers of this culture as its death, because it is above forces for a living being to recognize such a fact."

The above-mentioned modern analyst of European culture Mr. Alain de Benoist looks extremely negatively at the phenomenon of globalization. From his point of view, it brings death to diverse national cultures and erases national identity. He claims, that visible cultural diversity is blurred under the pressure of globalization of the American model, and there is a new phenomenon of "the world without outside world". Maybe to a large extent we should agree, but, it is hardly necessary to forget that globalization is a complex, controversial and multifaceted process that **does not** have a single focal point, so all attempts to find the source of globalization are futile.

First of all, we should keep it in mind, that this phenomenon has a fundamentally different nature, it is above the level of states at some abstract supranational level. Thereby, it is totally different, for example, from communism, liberalism and other similar socio-political systems. It is not entirely true to consider the United States to be a spreader of globalization. Despite the strength and power of American influence on the planet, the United States suffer from harmful effects of globalization same as other countries. The United States suffers from the influx of illegal immigrants, drug traffic, illegal gun trade, which to a large extent is consequence of the referred globalization processes.

On the other hand, today's fighters for the purity of European culture shouldn't forget that not only American but also European liberals passionately dreamed of the collapse of the Soviet political system and the collapse of the Soviet Union. And not only dreamed, but also did many to make it happen. Their expectations were met – the Soviet system currently does not exist. However, the liberals have forgotten that, as A. de Benoist fairly points out, "the Soviet system performed as a counterbalance to the rapid spread of the American military machine and globalization of the American model." Today, there is no such counterbalance – and globalization "walks" freely through the cities and towns of Europe. As they say in Russia: "Were hoisted with their own petard".

A typical modern European citizen in the street (including Russia) is a liberal individual consumer. The emergence of such an individual echoes the all-consuming domination of material and market values over spiritual ones. In a society where everything is ruled by the market, where everything is amenable to evaluation and accurate calculation. Even here in Russia, with the formation of a market economy, values such as decency, honesty and morality are devalued at a terrifying rate. We can also say that today ideology of profit is in direct antagonism with morality, which desperately resists and refuses to obey the rationalist trends of the time.

According to A. de Benoist, one of the most harmful effects of globalization on culture of European nations - is that "the popularized market model is becoming universal. A lot of areas (culture, art, sports, education) that previously were not a subject to the influence of capital, has become completely dependent." He believes, that the final aim of European liberalism is "the complete destruction of all spiritual and moral values and the creation of a global market society. In such a society, final commercial values become the only ones." The merchant, - as notes A. de Benoist, - has no homeland, he can settle in any country. Homeland is where he multiplies his profits."

This is difficult to oppose, because it would be possible to talk about the bright future of European culture, only after preserving the basic values of humanism. I would like to add that spiritual values of European nations will probably return their former prominent status only through the awareness of each European that market economy, accumulation and consumption of goods is limited. Wide popularization of reasonable consumption should logically correctly give a prove to the need to revise the existing doctrine of social order and return morality and spirituality to their rightful place.

What does all this mean for each individual state as part of Europe? To act from the point of realism. And this means – to understand globalization as an inevitable, objective factor of historical development in the unity of its positive and negative consequences. I don't think that in this situation it is necessary to be too tormented by questions of exclusivity and originality of the French, German, English, Russian or other development – anyway they will not disappear owing to cultural uniqueness of any state.

It is not necessary for any European country to assume the mission of the saviors of all mankind, as well as to build its own Paradise alone, moreover for the sake of future generations at the expense of the present one. The search for enemies always and everywhere also does not correspond to the position of realism. It does not, of course, mean that they do not exist at all, or that confrontation and clash of interests of different countries and nations in context of globalization is weakening. On the contrary, the contradictions are growing and escalating, and each state pursues, first of all, its own interests. So it was and will remain as long as there are sovereign states that will cease to be so not tomorrow and not so easily.

Futurological forecast (as a Conclusion)

What awaits the culture of Europe in future? Most likely, the answer to this question depends on depth and duration of the global crisis in which it finds itself. In this regard, it is worth listening to the predictions of the founder of the School of Spatial Analysis, an Anglo-American scientist David Harvey, who become today the most cited geographer in the world.

The article with the symptomatic title "Why the U.S. Stimulus Package is Bound To Fail" Harvey deliberately begins with the words: "Much is to be gained by viewing the contemporary crisis as a surface eruption generated out of deep tectonic shifts, and the likelihood of more frequent and more violent crises will almost certainly increase... The manner, form, spatiality and time of these surface disruptions are almost impossible to predict, but that they will occur with greater frequency and depth is almost certain. Since these stresses are internal to the capitalist dynamic, then what better argument could there be, as Marx once put it, "for *capitalism* to be gone and to make way for some alternative and more rational mode of production." That is not a heartening thought – as D. Harvey believes - but then thinking of such a prospect might just awaken much of the West to the urgency of the task before it and get political leaders to stop preaching banalities about restoring trust and confidence and get down to doing what has to be done to rescue capitalism from the capitalists and their false neoliberal ideology." But this, in our opinion, will mean nothing more than *socialism*, nationalization, strong state leadership, strengthening international cooperation, creating a new international financial architecture and affirming the values of humanitarian culture in all countries of modern Europe.

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Культура Европы: ретро-футурологический взгляд на феномен

Кургузов Владимир Лукич

Доктор культурологии, кандидат исторических наук,
завкафедрой культурологии и социокультурной антропологии,
Восточно-Сибирский государственный технологический университет,
670013, Российская Федерация, Улан-Удэ, ул. Ключевская, 40-в;
e-mail: v.l.kurguzov@rambler.ru

Аннотация

В данной статье, с одной стороны, делается вывод об относительности европоцентризма, неоднозначности ценностных оснований европейской культуры. А с другой, приводятся теоретические и методологические аргументы, против ошибочных утверждений о ближайшей ее гибели, делается вывод о том, что смерть европейской культуре не грозит, ибо любая культура не умирает, а видоизменяется по формам, исчезнуть же она может только с исчезновением последнего на земле человека.

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Ключевые слова

Европа, культура, природа, общество, цивилизация, глобализация, традиция, инновация, деградация.

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