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FUTURE ORIENTED TEMPORALITY AS A WORLDVIEW NARRATIVE OF WESTERN CULTURE

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to explore socio-cultural conditions in European history that formed Modernity as the system of ideas and attitudes to reality through new forms of temporality, which, in turn, still determines our worldview. The historical justification strategy uses two temporal dimensions: the idyllic past and the sequenced present. Therefore, the dominance of future-orientation, as a feature of the worldview that was formed in Europe in the era of modernity, is a cultural nonsense. The article analyses the features of its formation. The theoretical basis of the research is the classic works of enlighteners, who were the first to consider history as a planetary phenomenon, and humanity as an “unfinished project” not only of nature but also of history. The historical and philosophical works of George Collingwood, Jacques Le Goff, and Jonas Ahlskog have helped to argue the assertion that modern European culture has a specific scale of understanding time — the future is the horizon of goal setting, and not the past “golden times”, which in the pre-modern era were perceived as a model for endless reproduction. However, in his work, Matt Ossiias notes that the dimension of the future has lost its optimistic and technological connotations in contemporary Western culture and is associated with risks and uncertainty. Scientific novelty. The study demonstrates that in the era of modernity, unique worldview characteristics were formed, which emphasize and determine the specificity of European culture, namely the way of perceiving time. For the first time, the uncertainty of the future was perceived optimistically, and expectations were located on the horizon of linear secular time. Conclusions. The philosophical context of modernity associated with the main worldview features of the Enlightenment was formed under the influence of the methodology of natural sciences. For example, the history of civilizations was interpreted as a continuation of the geological history of the planet; the object of socio-philosophical reflections acquired a global scale — it was no longer about the history of separated communities, but the history of human race progress; the stages of social evolution were clearly outlined and considered inevitable for each society. The perception of modern times, its “here” and “now”

coordinates had lost connection with the past and became oriented into the future, which was seen as dependent on human intentions and efforts.

■ **Keywords:** worldview; temporality; traditional society; modernity; risk society; modernization

■ **Introduction**

The forming of any kind of identity — cultural, professional, gender, etc. — requires posing self, or referring community, in the temporal and spatial dimensions. Whatever we aim to do could be fulfilled in some place, during some time duration. Both these factors compose the phenomenon called “life circumstances”. To be a human means to set yourself in time — from the past, across the present, and into the future. In different cultural epochs, the past, the present, and the future were not equivalent in value. Traditional cultures (according to cultural classification that consists of traditional or agrarian, industrial, and information waves) assessed the past highest, it was perceived as a golden standard of the right life and decent behaviour. For many cultures, this worldview orientation is still valid. As for European civilization, the new kind of world-understanding has started to emerge in the late 17th and 18th centuries. Its main features were the growing importance of technical knowledge for the new industrial realm, the forming of self-relying attitude that symbolized the end of the religious type of worldview, the device of the universal, even geological, history of humankind. The future was imaged alike to the heavenly paradise in Medieval Christian consciousness. Nevertheless, in the Modern epoch, its main characteristics acquired absolutely pragmatic definitions, the future was interpreted as such that was accomplishable in real conditions of human life. Even nowadays, we appeal to the imagined future advantages while starting a business, planning some event or social activity.

This imagined temporal dimension is so important for the Western culture, that it has become essential for its ethic narrative, as Matt Ossiass (2016) admitted in his essay “Death of the Future”: “The future has long receded behind its own eternal event horizon in the ‘Western’ culture. Visions of paradise that were once too divine to imagine in this world have been transformed by an affirmation of utopia as no-place: a future that is always ecstatic, never present, always arriving, infinitely free, endlessly changing”. But nowadays future is perceived differently: through issues of ecological threat and social uncertainty, economic crashes, cultural wars. So we are shocked by the future, by its unavoidable negative consequences, caused by unplanned human activity, in other words, by the careless attitude to the future. To protect the present we should learn the future in all its possible variations.

■ **Purpose of the article**

The purpose of the article is to explore socio-cultural conditions in European history that formed Modernity as the system of ideas and attitudes to reality through new forms of temporality, which, in turn, still determines our worldview.

■ **Main research material**

In the widest sense term modernization means “renewal”, “making something better”, “improving characteristics of the process or thing for actual conditions”, more-

over, these current conditions, nowadays life are considered better than any previous period of history.

On the one hand, the concept of modernization is based on the evaluative judgments, on the visionary idyllic type of modernity. On the other hand, this social ideal isn't objective, it can't become embodied by itself without the inventions and efforts of those who created this idyllic vision. Hence, it follows those different societies that are not equal to their identity coordinates, despite being contemporaries. More conservative societies hold on to the heroic past, more innovative ones are focused on transforming venturesome futurological projects into reality. Thus the concept of modernization has two methodological features that should be taken into consideration from the beginning. Temporality, explicitly inherent in the notion of modernization, appeals not to mechanically measured time but mostly to the intensity, qualitative filling of human life, worldview type. On the other hand, theorists of modernization, who develop a measurement scale, should speak from the position of preferences, from the point "already in the future".

The concept of modernization comprises the idea of some kind of effort, institutional, administrative, educational, even cognitive, to approximate the reality to the imaginary ideal state. If reality could be influenced on, humankind history is observed as the chain of unavoidable stages of social progress, so it explains the difference in the development and wealth between nations, propose symbolic scale to compare them and to recognize that some are better because of achieving the more civilized stage of social growth.

The concept of modernization has roots in the idea about the cultural advantages of European civilization, on the one hand, and it became the result of the evolutionary approach to the theory of human progress. Thus, the concept of modernization geographically located in the European discourse of its evolutionary advantages and it is associated with a new idea, secular by its nature, of human creative freedom and the power of mind and rationality that are the main characteristics of the Age of Enlightenment. At that time the view of human history transformed from multiple ethnical separated retelling traditions to the understanding of the Past as a global process concerning mankind as a whole. It is clear that Christian cosmology and eschatology created preconditions for considering mankind's fate without regard to ethnical and cultural differences. But in our case, we talk about secular history devoid of religious connotations.

The British historian and philosopher Robin George Collingwood (1946) in his book "The Idea of History" clearly distinguished theological interpretations of temporality from actually historical ones. He noted that the Enlightenment had proposed a particular way of thinking about the past — to understand it as the past of people where such unclear subjects as gods or heroes, who were aided by gods as it had been represented in ancient myths, were not taken into account.

The human history denies a factor of some transcendental subject intermeditation into the course of events. It studies finite, unique, fleeting states and facts that were caused and experienced by humans. Discourse on the human history, which emerged in the Age of Enlightenment, attests the human interest to their own nature and capacity limits. Historians have become a particular intellectual class whose

opinion was based on autonomous reasoning from evidence, contrary to the previous history of “scissors-and-paste” depending on the authority of witnesses of the past. But critical history (“history proper”) relies on the historian as a self-authorizing researcher. Finnish explorer Jonas Ahlskog (2016) summarized the essence of “Copernicus turn” for scientific legitimation of history made by R. G. Collingwood in such words: “Absolutely fundamental to Collingwood’s idea of the relationship between historians and their materials was a sharp distinction between testimony and evidence... In history proper, one does not merely believe the testimony of authorities. Rather, these “authorities” become only evidence from which historians, upon their own authority, infer answers to their own questions about the past” (p. 182).

In the period of the 17th–18th centuries, a new way of worldview and feeling of social belonging appeared. In this historical period the idea of contemporarily as unique, progressive modernity, the important temporal moment actually continuing “here and now” emerged. There is a new type of worldview, due to growing economical production and consolidation of human contacts, generated by broader goods exchange and intensifying of intercultural interactions, the formation of communities with professional or even class identities. In his book “Culture and Society: 1780–1950” Cambridge researcher Raymond Williams (1983) gave an explanation for the crucial social changes of the time, appealing to discourse analysis, exploring semantic shifts as a result of everyday life changes. He argues that in the last decades of the 18th century some words been at that time in usage acquired their common meaning. These words are *industry*, *democracy*, *class*, *art*, and *culture*. Initially, the *industry* meant a particular human attribute that could be paraphrased as ‘skill’ but subsequently, it transformed into a description of the institution. Common English use of the word ‘democracy’ appeared at the time of the American and French Revolutions. Its previous connotation in aristocratic society was unfavourable. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, the representatively numerous working class was formed. This fact links together three mentioned notions — industry, democracy, and class. Two other words — art and culture — were still useful for describing elite attitude to the history and aesthetic self-expression. Steadily increase in the number of those who belong to and was identified with the working class has led to the emergence of a less pretentious form of culture — the one oriented on mass aesthetic tastes, focused on the fleeting emotional expression of communication with art that does not require diligent reflection and is continuing ‘here and now’.

The turn to the presence oriented on ‘the actual temporality’ was the first change in the way European civilization has reflected itself and the imagined future. The second paradoxical change was that presence had been perceived not as the predictable consequence of the better past but as the basis for a fantastic unimagined completely future. Why was this new temporal scale paradoxical? It was the first case in human history when the future had been interpreted as given hope and encouragement. Before this change in the worldview, the present and future coursed anxiety, fear, and shame. Societies of the agricultural epoch were dependent on repetitive natural cycles that determined the mode of predominant food production. That’s why the golden era, the standard to be followed was seen as affiliated to the past.

Sociologist Ronald Inglehart defined that the main social precondition for the unique idea about modernity was the change of the way to interact with the natural and socio-cultural environment: “Modernization theory is based on the idea of human progress. Historically, this idea is relatively new. As long as humans did not exert significant control over their natural environment, and agrarian economies were trapped in steady-state equilibrium where almost no perceptible change took place from one generation to the next, the idea of human progress seemed unrealistic. The situation began to change only with the occurrence of sustained economic growth” (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005, p. 24). The idea of human progress has its reliance on certain world-view points that are inherent in the European culture of modern times.

The first particular feature is the desire to realize creative freedom and achieve success in the visible future, not in the after-life, as it was proclaimed by the church. The second unique mental feature of the time was a positive perception of technological inventions and novelty as such. When the intellectual monopoly of the church had been overcome in the period called the Enlightenment, the idea of regulated progress (which is a core of the modernization theory) inspired people to increase their control over nature.

Jurgen Habermas (1983) in the article “Modern — An Incomplete Project” also pointed out the phenomenon of a new kind of temporal evaluation, a new way to feel the contemporarily that emerged in Europe in the 18th century. He reminded that the etymological origin of the word came from Latin “modernus” in the 5th century. At the time this notion was used in order to distinguish the presence that had become officially Christian, from the pagan Roman past. From that moment the term “modern” was used to express the feeling of changes that had separated the previous epoch from another actual one. The Renaissance seemed to be new compared with the Middle Ages alike ‘modern’ Enlightenment came to replace ‘old’ Renaissance. The concept of modernity, thereby, emphasizes two interconnected temporal dimensions — the past and the present. The preference, even supremacy, of ‘now’ on ‘then’ has formed the archive of conceptualized memory that gives birth to a rationalized idea of a human-dimensioned history.

But modernity that signified the emerging of the epoch we call the Enlightenment distinguished from preceding temporal transitions by the components that have been opposed to each other. The old tradition was not withstood to the actual one but the measurement of the future got into the focus of further human intentions. The Enlightenment proposed the third time dimension — the future — that couldn’t be predicted and operated on the basis of old methodology.

Futurity went beyond cyclical reading that was perceived as a repetition of old under new conditions or as a key eschatological point of the apocalyptic “end of the world” or as encouraging “new coming” on the vector of linear biblical time. The future has emerged as an unclear continuum of human perspectives on self-realization according to principles of mind and free will. The sense of modernity that emerged in the 18th century did not base on the dichotomy of the past and contemporarily because there was a break with the previous tradition of worldview.

Knowledge of the past and previous experience of generations became unavailable, when, due to speculative methods of analytical cognition and critical abilities of

the mind, it was possible to comprehend existential truths. There formed the demand not only for the historical knowledge but the always relevant, eternal, and even classical one. Something is considered to be classical if it has withstood the test of time.

The pace of social life significantly increased, the daily life practices have changed and such basic social structures as the root family, the production corporation (guild), the rural community underwent transformations.

Capitalism has changed the principle of time counting; it devalued the significance of the natural rhythm of life and replaced it with the dynamic of producing process that was the rhythm of the working factory machine. Therefore, modernity as a special way of relating to the presence that was peculiar to the people of the 18th century did not correlate with the traditional lifestyle of the agricultural epoch which preceded the industrial era. That's why the ontological nostalgia for something authentic, organics, or even real, in opposite to the mechanical rhythm of industrialization, was projected on the imagined progressive and better future.

This kind of aesthetic consciousness is based on the experience of rebelling against all that is normative. On the other hand, this distrust of tradition in the avant-garde aesthetic was not simply an expression of a historical consciousness. History, locked down in museums, was not taken seriously, unlike the history of ideas, the history of daily life practices.

The dominant feature, the main attraction of the future-oriented picture of the world is the idea of self-fulfilment of a person, the opportunity to influence the self-determined course of nature, the universal history. It stimulated the re-evaluation of the dominant method of exploring the past and the forming of a human-oriented project of world history.

The idea of the universal history of people (Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottfried Herder, Jean-Antoine de Condorcet) was based on the methodology of natural sciences, therefore the realm of the theory of cognition (epistemology) was based on three branches at that time — mathematics, theology, and natural sciences. But if the math dealt with formalized, abstract, ideal objects, theology also focused on general and even ontological temporal issues, the natural sciences of that time operated with the categories of variability, dynamics, and evolution. The historical aspect of the analysis was inherent to them. The truth that the natural science explores can be proved by laboratory equipment, for example, the mineral content of magmatic stones, so the geological processes that happened a hundred million years ago are transported in temporal measurement “here” and “now”. The turning from the universal (geological) history, which started from the time of the galactic big bang, to the world history dealing with the unique phenomenon of human past, has happened gradually.

Historian Jacques Le Goff emphasized the great methodological difference between the first and the second way of interpreting the past: universal history aimed to find witnesses and improve the widespread ideas on the secular origin of the world. It was the history of nature and ideas of cosmic scale. World history, in opposition to the universally interpreted one, is interested in exploring only the dynamics of human interactions. It is the history of personal motives and social values. Such methodological transformation caused that the analytical focus shifted on the description of

events, on the gathering of the facts to make the theoretical conclusion, not on the laboratory experiment and wide cosmic hypotheses. "A society cannot live without aims or dreams. The history of these dreams is the history of the imaginary. The history of these aims is the history of values, including the qualitative aspects of the history of individuals and societies" (Le Goff, 1985, p. 15).

Although the universalistic approach to history has been exhausted and overcome by the project of human-centred world history, a number of ideas that still have a narrative influence on the humanities are a product of the very first stage of historical science formation.

The idea of qualitative progress of culture and whole social life has appeared at the stage of universalistic understanding of the dynamic of natural processes, whereby mankind's history was seen as their continuation. For example, Johann Gottfried Herder in his well-known book "Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind" (1791) suggested that human history is a component of the history of nature, where the progressive development of the organic world is carried out by the unchanging natural patterns. So the history of human culture has started from the geological and zoological history of the Earth.

Another supporter of the theory of progress French enlightener J.-A. de Condorcet (1795) in the work "Outlines of an historical view of the progress of the human mind" interprets qualitative progress of human civilization as irreversible and total because improvement of economic and political life is inseparable from the progress of a spirit culture and education. This trajectory of the relentless improvement of mind and life's benefits is, in Condorcet's opinion, the consequence of a regularity of the Universe.

Thus, from the very beginning, the idea of progress tended to be considered as global and universal — progress concerns all of humanity; moreover, mankind is doomed to progress. However, according to J.-A. de Condorcet, local cultural features that formed historically are still able to inhibit the development of certain communities, separating them from the rest of progressive humanity. Therefore, as more progressive societies have responsibilities to backward ones, so the struggling communities can use appropriate management tools to become equal with the leaders of civilized life.

In the era of Modern time, unique worldview characteristics were formed, which determine the specificity of European culture, namely the way of perceiving time. For the first time, the innovations located in the future were perceived optimistically and laid on the horizon of secular times. Modernity as a particular worldview type is based on a set of principles that were formed in the context of the Western culture since the 16th century, namely: belief in the creative and critical power of the human mind, proclaiming the progressive dynamic of the human history, formulation of an idea of the global, universal identity of the whole human race, and at the same time recognition of many separated cultural identities, which are on different distances from the really modern Western civilization. It was the pan-Europeanism of the modern worldview, which could be characterized through evaluative and competitive attitudes between countries and civilizations that caused the necessity to create technologies for "achieving Modernity", in other words, modernization technologies.

Conclusion

Thus, the philosophical context of modernity associated with the main worldview features of the Age of Enlightenment was formed under the influence of the methodology of natural sciences, for example, the history of civilizations was interpreted as the continuation of the geological history of the planet; the object of socio-philosophical reflection acquired a global scale — it was no longer about the history of separated communities, but about the history of human race progress; the stages of the progress were determined and considered inevitable for each society. The perception of modern times, its “here” and “now” coordinates had lost connection with the past and became oriented into the future, which was seen as dependent on human intentions and efforts.

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МАЙБУТНЄ ЯК ТЕМПОРАЛЬНО-СВІТОГЛЯДНИЙ НАРАТИВ ЗАХІДНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ

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Анотація

Мета статті — з'ясувати соціально-культурні умови, які сформували такий історичний період європейської історії, як модерн, що вирізняється специфічним темпоральним фокусом світовідношення й досі чинить значний світоглядний вплив. Історична стратегія обґрунтування оперує двома часовими вимірами: сконструйоване чи й ідеалізоване минуле та його спадкоємець — теперішнє. Тому орієнтоване на майбутнє світовідношення, що виникає в європейській культурі модерної епохи, постає світоглядним нонсенсом. Особливості його формування й аналізуються у статті. Теоретичною базою дослідження є класичні роботи просвітників, котрі першими почали розглядати історичну динаміку як планетарний феномен, а людство як «незавершений проєкт» не лише природної еволюції, але й історії. Історико-філософські роботи Джорджа Коллінґвуда, Жака Ле Гоффа, Йонаса Алскофа доводять, що модерна європейська культура спирається на особливу часову шкалу — майбутнє є горизонтом цілепокладання, а не минулі «золоті часи», що в домодерну епоху сприймалися як модель для безкінечного відтворення. Разом з тим, у своєму дослідженні Осіас Мотт зазначає, що вимір майбутнього втратив свої оптимістично-технологічні конотації в сучасній культурі Заходу й асоціюється з ризиками та невизначеністю. Наукова новизна. Доводиться твердження, що в модерну епоху сформувалися унікальні світоглядні характеристики, що увиразнюють, надають специфіку європейському культурному етосу, а саме — спосіб переживання часу. Невідомість майбутнього вперше почала сприйматися оптимістично, а очікування розташовувалися на горизонті лінійного секулярного часу. Висновки. Світоглядні зрушення європейської культури в модерну епоху, що асоціюються з Просвітництвом, сформувалися під впливом методології природничих наук. До прикладу, історія цивілізацій трактувалася як продовження геологічної історії планети; об'єкт соціально-філософських рефлексій набув глобальних масштабів — більше не йшлося про історію окремих спільнот, але про прогрес всього людського виду; стадії ж соціальної еволюції чітко окреслювалися й вважалися неминучими для кожного суспільства. Координати модерного світосприйняття — «тут» та «зараз» — поступово втратили зв'язок з минулим і переорієнтувалися на майбутнє, яке розглядалося узалежненим від людських прагнень та зусиль.

Ключові слова: світогляд; темпоральність; традиційне суспільство; епоха модерну; суспільство ризику; модернізація

■ БУДУЩЕЕ КАК ТЕМПОРАЛЬНО-МИРОВОЗЗРЕНЧЕСКИЙ НАРРАТИВ ЗАПАДНОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ

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■ **Аннотация**

Цель статьи — выяснить социально-культурные условия, повлиявшие на формирование такого исторического периода европейской истории, как модерн, который отличается специфическим темпоральным фокусом мировосприятия. Историческая стратегия обоснования базируется на двух временных измерениях: сконструированном или даже идеализированном прошлом и его наследнике — настоящем. Поэтому ориентированное на будущее мировоззрение, возникшее в европейской культуре эпохи модерна, является мировоззренческим нонсенсом. Особенности его формирования и анализируются в статье. Теоретический базис исследования составляют классические работы просветителей, которые первыми начали рассматривать историческую динамику как явление планетарного масштаба, а человечество как «незавершенный проект» не только естественной эволюции, но и истории. Историософские работы Джорджа Коллингвуда, Жака Ле Гоффа, Йонаса Алскофа подтверждают тезис о том, что современная европейская культура использует особую временную шкалу, где будущее является горизонтом целеполагания, а не прошлые «золотые времена», которые в домодерный период воспринимались как образец для бесконечного подражания. Вместе с тем в своем исследовании Осип Мотт уточняет, что будущее как временное измерение потеряло свои оптимистически-технологические коннотации в современной западной культуре и все больше ассоциируется с рисками и неопределенностью. Научная новизна. Доказывается утверждение, что в современную эпоху сформировались уникальные мировоззренческие характеристики, которые определяют специфику европейского культурного этоса, а именно — способ восприятия времени. Неопределенность будущего впервые начала пониматься оптимистически, а ожидания располагались на горизонте линейного секулярного времени. Выводы. Мировоззренческие сдвиги европейской культуры в современную эпоху, ассоциирующиеся с Просвещением, сформировались под влиянием методологии естественных наук. Например, история цивилизаций интерпретировалась как продолжение геологической истории планеты; объект социально-философских рефлексий приобрел глобальные масштабы — больше не говорилось об истории отдельных сообществ, но в фокусе внимания оказался прогресс всего человеческого вида; стадии социальной эволюции считались определенными и неизбежными для прохождения всеми обществами. Координаты современного мировосприятия — «здесь» и «сейчас» — постепенно теряли свою связь с прошлым и ориентировались на будущее, которое зависит от человеческих стремлений и усилий.

■ **Ключевые слова:** мировоззрение; темпоральность; традиционное общество; эпоха модерна; общество риска; модернизация