

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2023.61.01.21>

How to Cite:

Galiakberova, A.A., Mukhametshin, A.G., Asratyan, N.M., Kornilova, I.V., & Galiev, R.M. (2023). Categories and methods of civilizational approach in modern philosophical and historical discourse. *Amazonia Investiga*, 12(61), 202-211. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2023.61.01.21>

Categories and methods of civilizational approach in modern philosophical and historical discourse

Категории и методы цивилизационного подхода в современном философско-историческом дискурсе

Received: January 24, 2023

Accepted: February 26, 2023

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Abstract

The diverse contradictions of the modern world, social and international conflicts, the growing trends of both globalization and national isolation, the rapid development of communication technologies against the background of growing gap between poverty and wealth of the countries and within them are evidence of another crisis in the system of international relations, of the entire world order. The growth of entropy has once again raised the question of the lack of a holistic and systematic understanding of the processes of socio-historical development, and actualizes the need to analyze theories that consider the development of large socio-cultural communities. In this regard, it is important to study socio-philosophical and philosophical-historical theories and views, united in a civilizational approach. The dominance of the formational approach in Soviet historical science ended in the late 1980s. And in 1995 the Russian Academy of

Аннотация

Многообразные противоречия современного мира, социальные и международные конфликты, нарастание тенденций как глобализации, так и национальной изоляции, стремительное развитие коммуникационных технологий на фоне роста бедности и богатства между странами и внутри них являются свидетельством очередного кризиса системы международных отношений, всего миропорядка. Нарастание энтропии в очередной раз поставило вопрос об отсутствии целостного и системного понимания процессов социально-исторического развития, актуализирует необходимость анализа теорий, рассматривающих развитие крупных социокультурных общностей. В этом отношении важным является изучение социально-философских и философско-исторических теорий и взглядов, объединенных в цивилизационный подход. Доминирование в советской исторической

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Sciences recognized that civilizational theory can serve as one of the conceptual principles for analyzing and describing the historical process in textbooks for schools and universities. The object of our article is the essence of the civilizational philosophical and historical concept. The subject is the discourse, in the space of which there is developed a methodology, and are analyzed the categories of the civilizational approach to history. We apply general theoretical research methods: analysis, synthesis, comparison, interpretation. It is shown that within the framework of the theory under consideration methodological differences are significant, so several theoretical varieties are identified and the key categories of the civilizational concept in them are interpreted differently.

Keywords: culture, civilization, civilizational approach to history.

Introduction

In modern Russian philosophical and historical discourse there is observed an antagonism between two opposing conceptual approaches - formational and civilizational. The basis of the formational approach is the Marxist theory, according to which human history is a linear process, the driving force of which is the class struggle. The periodization of history is built on this principle, where after the primitive society there come a slave-owning, feudal, capitalist ones. And the highest stage (formation) is recognized as an ideal communist society, in which all major social contradictions are resolved that leads to social homogeneity and social harmony. Proponents of the formational concept try to separate utopian elements from rational ones in it. And critics point to the key shortcomings of this theory: materialism considers the spiritual life of a person in a simplified way, does not see the cultural identity and diversity of peoples, does not identify the reasons for their uneven development, and belittles the role of the individual in history. A view of history based on a civilizational concept puts at its core the concepts of civilization and culture. This approach pursues the main goal - the study of local cultures and civilizations in all the diversity and richness of their most important phenomena: religion, art, rituals, customs, crafts, principles of education, the nature of the family. It is recognized that the historical process has a variety of forms and represents a complex mosaic

науче формационного подхода завершилось в конце 1980-х годов. А в 1995 г. Российская Академия Наук признала, что цивилизационная теория может служить одним из концептуальных принципов для анализа и описания исторического процесса в учебниках для школ и университетов. Объект нашей статьи – сущность цивилизационной философско-исторической концепции. Предметом является дискурс, в пространстве которого разрабатывается методология, анализируются категории цивилизационного подхода к истории. Используются общетеоретические методы исследования: анализ, синтез, сравнение, интерпретация. Показано, что и в рамках рассматриваемой теории методологические различия существенны, выделены несколько разновидностей, в которых по-разному трактуются ключевые категории цивилизационной концепции.

Ключевые слова: культура, цивилизация, цивилизационный подход к истории.

picture. However, critics of the civilizational concept argue that it does not give us a holistic, but a fragmented picture of history, does not reveal to us the general laws of the socio-historical process. Repeated attempts by a number of philosophers and historians to find ways to harmonize both methodological approaches and present them as complementary ones have not been successful. However, no matter what conceptual principles scientists adhere to, their research should be aimed at comprehending objective truth and represent a respectful and benevolent view of the history and culture of each nation.

Methodology and design

The categories of culture and civilization, their correlation are of fundamental importance for the study of society, its structure, and understanding of the most important historical events. Considered in a philosophical and cultural vein, these categories make it possible to form holistic and systematic ideas about the features of the development of social communities within certain spatial and temporal boundaries, to identify objective laws in their development, to consider the place of certain events and processes within the life cycle of society, to predict the manifestation of certain trends.

The object of our article is the essence of the civilizational philosophical and historical concept. The subject is the discourse, in the space of which there is developed the methodology, are studied the main principles of the civilizational concept and analyzed the categories of the civilizational approach to history. The work implies general theoretical research methods: analysis, synthesis, comparison, interpretation.

On this basis, the following tasks are formulated:

- to study the essence and methodology of the civilizational approach;
- to consider the relationship between the concepts of "civilization" and "culture";
- to study and evaluate the discussions within modern philosophical and historical investigations concerning the most important categories on which civilizational theory is based;
- to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of this theory, the possibilities of its integration with other conceptual approaches.

Analysis and Discussion

1. The concept of Civilization

The appearance of the word "civilization" dates from the middle of the XVIII century. The term comes from the Latin "civilis", interpreted as "civil, state". Based on the etymology of the term, it is possible to say that we are talking about a period when society left its primitive state, there arose an organization in the form of a state, and active development started to characterize cultural life.

The English thinker of the 18th century, A. Ferguson used the concept of "civilization" to study the early stages of the development of peoples. As criteria for "civilization" the author named the transition of peoples from shepherding to production, as well as the appearance of property rights (Ferguson, 1792).

Analyzing the modern application of the term, B.S. Erasov identifies 9 variants of its usage. Most often it is used to denote the stage of development of society, to describe the development of mankind in terms of its place in the Universe, to designate a particular society, taken within certain time and territorial boundaries, to identify the level of development of society, as well as with an axiological purpose (Erasov, 2002).

E.B. Chernyak gives the following definition of this concept: "civilization is an integral self-developing system that includes all social and non-social components of the historical process, the entire set of material and spiritual objects created by the human being" (Chernyak, 1996).

A similar opinion is presented by M.M. Mchedlova: "civilization is an extremely wide, stable socio-cultural community that exists in certain spatial and temporal coordinates" (Mchedlova, 2008). At the same time, the author points out that civilizations are characterized by a certain ratio of different value categories.

2. The concept of culture

The word "culture" has Latin roots and comes from "cultura", which means "cultivate". Initially, it was meant that this concept neither refers to the natural habitat (nature) nor to human nature (organism), but to the methods and results of "cultivation", changing the external material environment, as well as to transforming people themselves. Therefore, the field of culture is an artificial environment created by people, which includes diverse spiritual values, social relations and artifacts, as well as bodily and spiritual abilities and social traits acquired by people in the process of upbringing and socialization.

Due to the versatility of this concept, there have developed many of its definitions, each of which being based on a certain conceptual approach. Here are the following major features for the definition of culture (Kuznetsova, 2013):

- 1) objective (culture is a set of material and spiritual values created by people);
- 2) procedural (culture is a process of production, distribution and development of cultural values);
- 3) semiotic (culture as a sign system that preserves the experience of generations in various symbols – words, concepts, art, tools, consumer goods);
- 4) functional (culture as a way of existence and a system of means that allows individuals and communities to solve diverse problems they face);
- 5) activity (culture as practice for the creation, mastery and implementation by individuals of the wealth accumulated by mankind: knowledge, skills, abilities).

In accordance with certain approaches, the authors define culture as generally accepted ideas, manifested in actions and artifacts that characterize a particular society (Redfield, 1941); as a set of non-biological manifestations of a person (Pelipenko & Yakovenko, 1998); as a practical implementation of universal and

spiritual values (Vyzhletsov, 2016); as a special semiotic mechanism and a set of genetically non-inherited information in the field of human behavior (Lotman, 1996); as a historically established system of norms of behavior and activity (Il'enkov, 1991).

V.Zh. Kelle noted that, in relation to historical development, the concept of "culture" was first used by German researchers in the 18th century. This concept in this period "was applied mainly to the phenomena of the spiritual sphere as the highest layer of the peoples' life" (Kelle, 2008). At the same time, the researchers made a conclusion about the diversity of cultures, their significant differences from each other, uniqueness and intercultural relations. In the same period, within the context of German Romanticism development, there was formed a concept of culture as a worldview: each culture sees the world in its own way, it represents an original picture of the world.

Starting with the prominent American philosopher and ethnologist Robert Redfield (1952), the concept of integrity and consistency of each culture is presented and studied as a general cultural picture of the world (Ariarskiy, 2001; Arnol'dov & Kruglikov, 1987; Bibikhin, 2007; Bykhovskaya, 2017). At the same time, many scientists are delving into different aspects of the world picture in order to study them in detail.

In connection with the aggravation of the human problems and the crisis of culture in the modern era, the relevance of the humanitarian picture of the world is significantly increasing (Torosyan, 2020; Asratyan et al., 2018b; Galiakberova et al., 2018). Being part of the general cultural picture of the world, it generalizes and synthesizes the key results of research in many fields of the humanities. In its turn the humanitarian picture of the world contains an ethnic picture of the world (Gibadullin et al., 2018; Zverev, 2011; Sereckina, 2014), an artistic picture of the world (Averintzev, 1975; Bakhtin, 1990; Borev, 1970; Blokh et al., 2019; Grakhova et al., 2019; Asratyan et al., 2020) a religious picture of the world (Tillich, 2015; Grigor'eva, 2008) a linguistic picture of the world (Asratyan et al., 2018a; Kornilov, 2003; Zaliznyak et al., 2005).

3. Correlation between the concepts of "civilization" and "culture"

We have analyzed how different concepts consider the relationship between the categories

of civilization and culture. As a result, there were identified three groups of concepts:

1. Concepts where the notions of "civilization" and "culture" act as being close or synonymous. For an example, we can refer to the theory of A. Toynbee, where civilization is considered as one of the stages in the development of culture. At the same time, attention is focused on the spiritual component, and religion is considered its main component (Toynbee, 2011; 1993).
2. Concepts that consider both the similarity and difference of culture and civilization. This group of concepts includes the theory of F. Braudel, who proceeded from the position that civilization is the basis of culture. At the same time, the author also focuses on the spiritual aspect of civilization, but he assigns the central role to mentality (Braudel, 2008).
3. Concepts where culture and civilization are antagonists. This group certainly includes the theory of O. Spengler, set forth in his work "The Decline of Europe". Civilization within the framework of this theory is presented as the final stage of the existence of culture, as its disintegration (Spengler, 1993; 1998).

L. M. Martseva considers the semantic commonality of the concepts of "civilization" and "culture" and claims that they correlate "as a dialectical unity of content and form ... The dialectical unity of content (dominant spiritual and moral values, moral behavioral norms) and its expression (laws and regulations) fixes "cultural code of the development of the nation" (Martseva, 2017).

V.M. Strogetskiy (2020) believes that most modern concepts proceed from the fact that there are points of intersection between civilization and culture, while there is no complete compatibility. The author points out that culture is associated with various types of human creative activity, while civilization reflects the broad context of social development from the functioning of social groups to the creation and use of material values. At the same time, the category of civilization least of all refers to the individual's contribution to society. V.M. Strogetskiy, like L.M. Martseva, makes a conclusion about the dialectical connection between civilization and society.

S.I. Levikova, exploring this issue, indicates that in the English-language works the concepts of

"civilization" and "culture" are considered as synonymous. However, the situation is different in the discourses of other countries.

The author points out that the first attempts to "unite civilization and culture" date back to the 18th century. Later on the study of this issue was significantly developed in the 19th century, in the works of German philosophers. This problem aroused considerable interest of researchers in the 20th century. S.I. Sevikova points out that the source of the problem of the relationship between civilization and culture is scientific and technological progress, which has had a significant impact on the social life of a person (Levikova, 2018).

V.D. Komarov seeks to integrate the ideas of dialectical materialism and the civilizational approach. He points out that civilization combines the material foundations of society life, political institutions and socio-cultural processes, the way of people's life. The author comes to the conclusion that "civilization – in the most general definition – is such a historical state of society in which the accumulation of material social wealth and the development of social freedom determine the humanistic progress of culture" (Komarov, 1998). At the same time, the author introduces the concept of "civilized culture", thereby pointing to the relationship between culture and the stage of development of society. Thus, culture is based on the current level of development of society (including its material component). In turn, the development of culture creates the basis for the development of a human being at this stage of the development of society (social being).

In our opinion, the categories of "culture" and "civilization" should be considered in a complex dialectical contradiction. Although these concepts are very close, their identification leads to a narrowing and impoverishment of the content, does not take into account important semantic shades. Culture proceeds from the priority of spiritual principles over material factors, while civilization is firmly connected with the material and technical component of society's life. It is also important to take into account that the development of both culture and civilization contains not only the characteristics of a linear movement, but also the continuity of previous experience and its accumulation. However, each new level, if it is achieved through free creativity, huge constructive efforts, can represent a special inimitable quality, historical uniqueness. At the same time, human

history is full of examples of cultural degradation and historical regression.

From this we can conclude that modern humanity retains the possibility of both the formation of united civilization, which was mentioned by K. Jaspers (1994), and is able to slide into an even more pronounced differentiation in the spirit of S. Huntington's theory of the clash of civilizations (Huntington, 1996).

4. The essence and methodology of the civilizational approach

The use of the category "civilization" in itself does not indicate a commitment to a civilizational approach in understanding history. Thus, the already mentioned A. Ferguson, as well as the equally outstanding figures of L.H. Morgan (1934) and H.T. Buckle, who during all his lifetime was writing "The History of Civilizations" (2000–2002), took a linear progressive view of history as a single process. They considered civilization to be the stage following "savagery" and "barbarism", civilization meant a higher historical stage, the superiority of some societies over others that did not reach this stage.

The emergence of the civilizational concept gave this term a fundamentally different meaning. The classical principles of the civilizational approach imply a rejection of understanding history as a single linear process of movement. The emphasis is replaced on the uneven development of various communities, their self-sufficiency and autonomy. Within the same time period, different communities can be at different stages of their development.

The process of formation of a civilizational approach went through a number of stages. The first of them dates from the 2nd half of the 19th century, when for the first time there appeared a view of history not as successive stages of development, but as the coexistence of different cultures. This position was quite clearly expressed in the work of H. Rickert (1908). In Russia it's possible to attribute to this stage the ideas of N. Danilevsky (1995), who distinguished 10 types of cultures. At this stage, the concepts of civilization and culture were not yet opposed to each other.

The second stage starts at the beginning of the 20th century. Here the key role belongs to the work of O. Spengler "The Decline of Europe" (1993, 1998), in which civilization is understood as a time of decline following the period of

culture. O. Spengler's ideas are comparable with the position of N.A. Berdyaev (1969), who spoke of the soullessness of civilization as opposed to the religiosity and spirituality inherent in culture. The third stage can be dated from the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, associating it with the concept of A.J. Toynbee (2011-1993), which explored the life cycle of civilizations. A. Toynbee introduced the term "local civilization", combining in it various aspects of existence of civilization (territorial, ethnic, religious). Similar ideas were shared by the Russian-American scientist P.A. Sorokin (1992).

As a result of this evolution, civilizational theory has acquired many features that require scientific analysis. L.G. Koroleva (2019) highlights the following peculiarities that are characteristic of modern theories within the civilizational approach:

- an indication of the diversity of historical forms of development;
- the study of the whole manifold interweaving picture of interests, values and ideals of various socio-cultural communities' representatives;
- recognition of the possibility of two or more systems coexistence within the framework of world civilization.

V.T. Novikov & N.A. Kandrichin (2007) identify three approaches that differ in their understanding of self-sufficiency of civilizations or their interdependence.

The concepts of the first group form ideas about the mosaic nature of the world picture, emphasize the regional features of the various structures that make up civilization. Here, less importance is attached to the issues of interaction between cultures, than to those of a single civilization society development. The authors refer to the concepts of this group the theories of O. Spengler, L. Gumilyov (1989), J. Derrida (2012) and others.

The second group of concepts is focused on the spiritual component. When considering the stages of civilization development, we won't find strict cause-and-effect conditionality, there are no rigid frameworks and criteria for belonging to a particular civilization. The authors refer to this group the views of P. Sorokin, K. Jaspers and others.

The concepts of the third group connect civilizational problems with the modern processes of globalization and glocalization. The

emphasis is on common features in the development of civilizations and on the factors influencing this process. In these theories, attempts are made to identify general patterns, to reveal possible directions and prospects for the development of civilizations. This group of theories, according to the authors, is the most promising.

In an effort to generalize numerous studies, different authors in their own way in a concentrated form represent the essence of the civilizational approach.

According to E.V. Chepikov, this entity includes:

- rejection of the end-to-end periodization of all the mankind history, the discreteness of the historical process;
- as subjects of history there are considered cultural-historical types (according to Danilevsky), great cultures (according to Spengler), civilizations (according to Toynbee) or large cultural super-systems (according to Sorokin); they are fundamentally different from the historical stages analyzed within the framework of ideas about linearly progressive historical development;
- recognition of the originality of each civilization, the uniqueness of its spiritual culture;
- acknowledgement of the cyclical nature of civilization: as a rule, there are distinguished the stages of its birth, flourishing and death (Chepikov, 2010).

A slightly different algorithm is proposed by A.N. Polyakov, who proceeds from the peculiarities of socio-economic development and priority values, therefore sees the following typological features of civilizations:

- the presence of a "social" core of civilization (strata of the population that are freed from productive labour);
- study of the features of management and lifestyle;
- analysis of the key values inherent in this community;
- studying the correspondence between axiological and economic components (Polyakov, 2007).

A.V. Lubskiy proposed to make a theory based on the unity of the following components of civilization:

- the leading role of social integration;

- psychological type of the super-ethnos (mentality, values and worldview);
- correlation between needs and the most typical living conditions (Lubskiy, 2005).

Conclusions

Thus, the civilizational approach itself is a field of discussion, it includes a wide range of concepts. However, in most studies as the key features of this approach there are recognized discreteness, singularity, uniqueness of civilizations, cyclicity and multivariance of their development. Such a view significantly distinguishes civilizations from all sorts of historical stages studied in the context of a linear approach to history.

The actualization of civilizational methodology is explained by the noticeable shortcomings of the linear and, in particular, formational approaches, in which the uniqueness and singularity of individual social objects are leveled. In contrast to them, civilizational methodology emphasizes the diversity of social reality, the cultural and historical context of human activity, helps to describe the historical process as a cultural mosaic of specific human communities and individuals.

However, it is obvious that the civilizational approach is not free from shortcomings either. This is especially evident when there is a need for a comprehensive study of social processes, their forecasting in conditions of increasing entropy. This method is deprived of tools that should help to understand and define versatile human and global problems, universal principles that determine the geopolitical processes of the modern world.

The methodological crisis that has developed in modern studies of socio-historical processes is due to the dichotomy of two approaches – linear and civilizational. Meanwhile, in the conditions of a stochastic picture of society and geopolitical realities that are difficult to predict, such a situation is becoming increasingly unacceptable. Obviously there is a necessity that in modern theories their authors should more and more strive not to isolate the civilizational approach and oppose it to other ones, but to combine them in a complicated way. Consequently, further deepening and meshing of the civilizational approach should lead it to ever greater intertwining with other approaches and thereby enrich the historical panorama. It is necessary to take into account and study both trends in world history: the trend towards universalization, the

formation of a single world civilization and the one towards differentiation, towards peoples' awareness of the uniqueness of their culture, the desire to preserve it as their most important asset. And this is possible on the basis of a new methodology based on the synthesis of various approaches.

Acknowledgements

The study was carried out under the project "Formation of future teachers' professional skills for the work with students with health disabilities using the Digital Simulator of pedagogical activity" within the framework of the Agreement on the provision of subsidies from the federal budget to finance the implementation of state task for the provision of public services (fulfillment of works) between the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University" (additional agreement No. 073-03-2023-015/1 dated February 14, 2023 to agreement No. 073-03-2023-015 dated January 26, 2023).

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