

# To the judgments of N.A. Berdyaev about new religious consciousness development

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**Abstract.** The article presents an attempt to consider a new religious consciousness with the main support of N.A. Berdyaev works. The historical context of the spiritual movement development during a turning point in revolutionary Russia, which also occurs at the time of the Local Council, is considered. It also examines the influence of modern culture on the rooting of certain forms of thinking for modern man, the transformation of religious culture, as well as, in turn, the modification of the religion perception by society and its adaptation, or the adoption of a forced compromise by the Russian Orthodox Church. The article also focuses on the voice of the modern world, touches on the theme of technology dominance in human life, which, in particular, is the cause of a priori circulations in the type of religiosity. The article discusses an attempt to create new religious forms, proposes solutions related to the liberation of person.

## 1 Introduction

The XXI century in modern Russia represents various points of exacerbation - the social life of a person, the political context, spiritual values. However, strangely enough, in past centuries (XIX-XX centuries), the situation was somewhat identical. The exacerbations mentioned above began with many years of church persecution at the time of the presence in power of the communist ruling party, which is identified in our consciousness as nothing more than the atheistic. This period of Russian history had no precedents, including the period of modern church history. I would like to give an example of the period of the Local Council (1917-1918). This is a unique period, at the same time extremely tragic, symbolizing the era in the heyday of the ascetic and confessional spirit of mankind. Undoubtedly, studying the history of the Russian Orthodox Church of the XX century is one of the most important means of spiritual and moral education of modern Orthodox Christians. However, our country is a unique field for combining both elements of the Tradition paradigm and, in particular, the Post-modern paradigm, not excluding their value settings and orientations. The civilization development of Russian people begins with the entry into the Christian tradition of spiritual and moral life, which determines the further

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vector of its development. All the characters and characteristics of economic, political interaction, ethical and aesthetic perceptions, the development of social connections, etc. are built on the basis of Christian moral values. Also, if we talk about modern realities, we cannot help but say about the struggle of opposites regarding the adoption of technical innovations that are beneficial and the negative impact of world technicalization. This issue is discussed in various circles, as well as spheres of human activities, because the issue of humanity has always been relevant, especially in the modern automated world. I would like to focus on the part of individuals who are negative about technicalization and even see some apocalyptic predictions, associate global automation with the imminent coming of the Antichrist and the ensuing consequences, supposedly related to religious knowledge. Such “universal” approach, in particular, refers to the new religious consciousness that has been developing among the Russian people for several centuries.

## **2 Research methods**

Research methods used in this article are synthesis, analytical, historical, descriptive, comparative and hermeneutic methods of scientific research. Thanks to the application of general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, objects of new religious consciousness development in the context of N.A. Berdyaev, I.A. Ilyin, E. Fromm. The use of historical and descriptive methods is determined by the specificity of the material being studied - texts of philosophers of the XX century, which helps to unite the characteristic features of religious consciousness in the works of thinkers by combining the expressed ideas. The comparative research method allows us to compare the views of philosophers on the subjective and complex understanding of religious consciousness and highlight the mystical aspect as the main attribute of religious consciousness. The use of the hermeneutic method makes it possible to penetrate deep into the meaning of the text, interpret texts about the development of a new religious consciousness for philosophers’ point of view.

## **3 Spiritual movement**

From the moment of Russian baptism, the struggle of paganism and Christianity has been present in the minds of Russian people and at the same time, there is a “resurrection” of both the Christian God and the pagan gods. A person with a new religious consciousness is not able to fully distance himself from paganism or Christianity, because everywhere he can see the revelation of God or gods. “The sin of historical Christianity was not so much in its spiritualistic ontology, not competent to solve our problem of “spirit” and “flesh”, but in its dualism, according to which “spirit” was recognized as divine, good, and “flesh” was godless, evil. But there may exist a philosophical ontology, which will completely deny the existence of matter, recognize the physical world only as a fictitious convention, and this kind of pan-psychism will only favor the rehabilitation of the “flesh” ”(N.A. Berdyaev, p. 352).

The new person wants to combine and finally connect the opposites, however, at the same time, not invent something new, but achieve the interaction of the man and the Divine. Understand, realize, destroy their own limitations and discover that any of the revelations is no less perfect than the present one or preceding ones. “Souls have appeared in Russia that are very sensitive to all the spiritual trends. The rapid and quick transitions took place from Marxism to idealism, from idealism to Orthodoxy, from aesthetics and decadence to mysticism and religion, from materialism and positivism to metaphysics and mystical attitude. The breath of spirit swept over the whole world at the beginning of the XX century. The inner spiritual upheaval was associated with the transition from exclusive

appeal to the “worldly”, which had long dominated the Russian intelligentsia, to the disclosure of the “otherworldly”. A different orientation of consciousness is turned out” (N.A. Berdyaev, p. 3).

A need is ripening for the development of a new philosophy - a mystical one, which can synthesize religion and philosophy, will be able to critically interpret religious experience in the context of new philosophical knowledge to generate fundamentally new gnosis. “The whole spiritual movement of the beginning of the XX century, the whole religious and philosophical thought of that time is the spiritual movement and the thought of human souls that went through the complex experience of humanism and felt the need for religious reflection on this experience” (N. Berdyaev, p. 13).

The eternal fear of a religious person, accompanying him from the beginning of the interpretation of the New Testament, lies in the mistake of worshiping not the true God, but a false personification - the Antichrist, hence the denial or rejection of unknown religious forms: “The first thing to be established is the complexity of the spiritual movements - where spiritual elements met, touched and mixed, having different sources and different nature” (N.A. Berdyaev, p. 40).

## 4 Transformation of Religious Culture

The value orientations of postmodern culture today to one degree or another affect the foundations, traditions, customs and axiological attitudes of most modern national communities. Even if the culture of the people retains its traditional vectoriality, it will inevitably be saturated with the cultural background that surrounds it from the outside. At one of the lectures Zhdanov A.A. said: “To understand the people, you need to know their culture!” The culture-development religion of Russia, of course, is Orthodoxy. Consequently, the main traditional values are developed in the national (including religious) consciousness under its influence. However, in the entire quarter century of the post-Soviet period, domestic mental consciousness seeks to assimilate the modern western axiological tradition. There is no need to be verbose to show that, in turn, despite its Christian “cradle”, it came into sharp conflict with it, at least in the field of morality and ethics (there are innumerable precedents in modern public discourse).

In this regard, Russian ethical consciousness is now torn apart by the contradictions of Tradition (represented, at least, by the Russian Orthodox Church), Modern (echoes of the Soviet ethical school) and Post-modern. A tradition that is not able to give a worthy rebuff, both due to its historical failure and due to the intensity and persistence of external influence, quickly loses its position. “The nation has an ontological core. National being conquers time. The spirit of the nation resists devouring the past with the present and the future. A nation always strives for incorruptibility, for victory over death; it cannot allow the exceptional triumph of the future over the past. That is why in national life and national consciousness there is a religious foundation, religious depth. Religion is the establishment of communication and kinship, the overcoming of alien otherness, and in the homeland, first of all, a person acquires this connection. Any attempt to tear nationality from this religious depth throws it to the surface and exposes it to the danger of dispersion” (N.A. Berdyaev, 1923, p. 76). In order to prevent its complete annihilation, it must make concessions to modern ethical principles, and allow certain compromises and concessions. And in the conditions of its discrediting, this task becomes especially urgent. The official documents of the Russian Orthodox Church, adopted today, should simultaneously reflect the traditional view of the various problems of modern people, but at the same time partially correspond to their views and values.

“The problem of resistance to evil cannot be posed correctly without first determining the “location” and the essence of evil” (I. Ilyin, 1925, p.5). In practice, this task sometimes

seems impossible, because the public outcry that arises in the media at various socially significant venues indicates a sharp rejection, and sometimes rejection of traditional ideas and views, which is expressed precisely in the official voice of the Church. The modern Western Christian tradition has taken the path of compromise and total concession to the spirit of value relativism. As a result, an antonymization of traditional religious and modern morality took place. Christian denominations make concessions to the spirit of the times, taking as norm what was seen in history as deviation (female priesthood, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, etc.) All these bundles are presented to us as a fundamental substitution of the meaningful intentions of the categories “freedom” and “permissiveness”, despite the fact that they are declaratively divorced in different angles of ethical consciousness.

“The need for spiritual and moral purification is directly foreseen and established in the Gospel, and, moreover, for those who devote themselves to the struggle against another’s evil and another’s atrocities” (I. Ilyin, 1925, p. 91). The modern Russian ethical tradition (if we understand it as a socially popular (*publica vulgus*) moral consciousness) does not yet find a concrete answer to the question of which value vector (traditional or postmodern) to take as a basis. Consequently, Christian morality in the context of this development will either be rejected or undergo fundamental transformations, which will make it possible to harmoniously combine the meaning-developing values of post-modernity and the remnants of formal religiosity, which is akin to its loss (and, consequently, to the rupture of cultural continuity). The task of ethno-confessional communities in such conditions is to confront this value relativism of postmodernism and develop possible and acceptable forms of preserving traditional values.

## 5 Religion in Techno-World

Turning again to the voice of the modern world, we will inevitably touch upon the dominance of technology in human life, which is also the reason for excessive modifications in the type of religiosity. For worse or for better type - the question is still consistent. In the technical era, traditional forms are weakening; it is becoming increasingly difficult not to change the hereditary or familiar socially conditioned type of religiosity. “Religious life in the technical and machine era requires more intense spirituality; Christianity is becoming more internal and spiritual, freer from social suggestions. This is an inevitable process. It is very difficult in the modern world to maintain a form of religion determined by hereditary, national, family, social and group influences. Religious life is made more personal, more afflicted, that is determined spiritually” (N.A. Berdyaev, 1933, p. 27).

In the modern world, a person (especially some individuals) makes all the charges of his own failure due to the intervention of machines and technical innovations, although this formulation of the question becomes absurd and more reminds cowardice by virtue of the responsibility transfer from a person to technical devices that are created just to make life easier for the person. A person is ready to abandon the non-material soul for the sake of material benefits, not because he was “forced”, but because he makes this choice, from which it becomes obvious that the problem does not exist outside, but inside the individual. All technical attributes can become the foundation in building dominance over the world and nature, however, for a positive result, it is imperative, first of all, to have the spirit in order to subordinate the spiritual essence, both your ego and the machine. Man himself is directly to blame for global dehumanization, and not technology or science, while technicalism and machinism are only a reflection of this dehumanization, for “dehumanization is a state of the human spirit, it is the attitude of the spirit to a man and the world” (N.A. Berdyaev, 1933, p. 35).

A person wants to master irrational social forces and therefore generates an organized society and progressive technology, makes himself a tool for organizing life and decisively full possession of nature. A man himself becomes a kind of mechanism operating within the framework of his own created technology and organized society. Mankind has the ability to create innovative forms in order to solve problems that combine such problems as the liberation of man and his subsequent capture of the spirit for both society and nature. It is possible to solve these problems exclusively with a new consciousness, which will help a person to occupy a pedestal that elevates him above society (or even a crowd) and nature, which will establish the soul, and most importantly the human spirit, is higher than various natural or social forces that a person is forced to submit. Therefore, something which can free a person must be accepted, that which enslaves him permanently must be overthrown.

## 6 Conclusion

«“God” is one of the many poetic expressions of the highest value in humanism, which is not real. However, it is inevitable that, speaking of a mono-deist system, I often use the word “God”, since it would be awkward to add my own definition each time. Therefore, I immediately want to clarify my position. If I could define my views approximately, I would call them non-deistic mysticism» (Fromm E., 2014, p. 219). The modern understanding of God has changed a lot, the concept of “God” now has major number of meanings, and hence the enormous number of different religious concepts that appear from year to year or old ideas are transformed or improved. However, it cannot be denied that humanity always strives for systematization and integrity, including the ideologization of the vast majority of knowledge (scientific, semi-scientific, or even unscientific). This tendency, in the first place, is the person’s desire for “confidence”, which, of course, is justified from the point of view of the unreliability and transience of human existence. Therefore, a person seeks to create a general idea that there exists some higher power that will provide the highest goal to us, for example, the search for unity with the world through synthesis and qualitative improvement of exclusively human talents - the ability to think and love.

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