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THE TRIAD OF AESTHETIC – ETHICAL – FIDEISTIC AS A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF CULTURE

The article is dedicated to the triad of aesthetic-ethical-fideistic as major categories and the fundamental principles of the construction and existence of culture. The convergence of the fideistic and aesthetic relations on the basis of artistic composition allows noticing their twinning, and clarifying the nature of the aesthetic.

Keywords: aesthetic, ethical, fideistic, faith, understanding, culture.

The culture in our time is more and more recognized as a synthesis of science, art and religion, which is confirmed in a number of publications on this topic [2, 3]. However, even in the middle of the XIX-th century Prince V. F. Odoyevsky claimed that three elements are merged in human – namely, *faithful, cognitive and aesthetic*. Based on this thesis, Odoyevsky concludes that in the basis of the philosophy should be put not only science but religion and arts. The main content of culture, according to Odoyevsky is in holistic combination of faith, knowledge and aesthetics (experience of understanding), the development of which, in their turn, forms the sense of history. "The holy trinity of faith, science and art you will make you find the peace of mind, of which your fathers prayed" [4, p. 173]. Odoyevsky's statement is joined by A. Einstein, who late in life said that "all religions, arts and sciences are branches of the same tree" [2, p. 16]. Continuing Odoyevsky's thought, the main content of culture can be represented by the triad **aesthetic – ethical – fideistic**, in which aesthetic is experience of understanding, ethical – the experience of knowledge, fideistic – the experience of faith. Confirming the idea that this trinity is the main content of culture, let us give V. S. Soloviev's words, expressed by him of F. M. Dostoevsky's works: "Being a *religious* man, he was at the same time a free *thinker* and a powerful *artist* (*emphasis added – S.O.*). These three sides, these three top things for him were not distinguished between one another and did not exclude each other, but entered inseparably into all his activity. In his opinions he never separated truth from goodness and beauty, in his artistic work he never set beauty apart from goodness

and truth. And he was right, because these three parties live only as union. Goodness separated from truth and beauty, is only a vague feeling, powerless impulse, abstract truth is an empty word, and beauty without goodness and truth is an idol. For Dostoevsky, they were only three kind of one inseparable absolute idea" [9, p. 305].

A close analysis to the approach interesting to us, of different types of social relations reveals N. Mechkovskaya's study. In particular, the author gives a detailed comparative description of fideistic and aesthetic relations, indicating the fundamental proximity of the nature of these phenomena and their relationship with the processes of conceptualization. [6] "There are features distinguishing fideistic communication from any other one. Firstly, fideistic word is included in the most important, often critical, situations in the life of a believer. Secondly, a special drama and tension in communication, including fideistic words are related to the fact that human here in some way appeals to the higher powers – superior to him in everything, usually not visible and never knowable to the end. Fideistic communication opposes the earthly, "interpersonal" communication – not just domestic, everyday, but the service, official, festive (though, of course, feels the impact and itself affects them – especially in the field of aesthetic and the status-role of communication). The peculiarity of communication in mythological-religious sphere and the elements of unconventional attitude of believers to the sign caused some general genre features of fideistic texts (both folklore and written).

The texts of fideistic genres are characterized by a higher (than in everyday speech) formal-semantic organization, "alignment", ingenuity. This determines such common features of fideistic poetics as sound repetitions of different types (anagrams, onomatopoeia, alliteration, metrical regularity, rhyme); semantic parallelism and imagery (allegory, metaphor, symbolism); the principle existence of "dark" expressions (in one way or another incomprehensible to the audience, and sometimes to the performers), with what sometimes is associated significant archaicness of sacred language and general "mystery" of the fideistic word, its

supposed semantic inexhaustibility, and most importantly, the fundamental opposition to the "normal" language" [6, p. 77-79]. The long quote of a number of N. Mechkovskaya's thoughts is explained by the fact that the author regards the complex problem of the interaction of faith and understanding.

The genetic connection, the twinning of faith and understanding are witnesses by many observations, descriptions, ideas expressed throughout the whole human history, including the quotable aphorisms of Augustine and St. Anselm ("I believe in order to understand"), Pierre Abelard ("I understand to believe") [1, p. 135].

Consequently, for our research the approach based on faith (fideistic) is particularly important. Fideism – (French fideisme from Latin fides – faith) – a sphere of philosophical thought, justifying the need for religious belief, along with knowledge. Several areas of philosophical thought – neopositivism, pragmatism, existentialism, personalism, phenomenology, neo-Thomism, philosophical anthropology – are closely connected with fideism. Increasingly popular in the XX century became those fideistic philosophical schools that, recognizing the merit and the need of science, at the same time announced that human cannot be limited by science, cannot do without religious faith, because science deals with natural phenomena, and religion gives answer to the questions of the spiritual life of human, serves as the only basis of morality. [10] "Dictionary of the Russian language" by S.I. Ozhegov defines fideism as a religious doctrine which puts faith over understanding.

One of the most important thinkers of the so-called "Russian Abroad" – Ivan Ilyin – did not consider it right to oppose faith and understanding. He said that "even those of us who doubt the "laws" and "truths" and start criticizing them or refuting – will be shaken not *faith*, but only in the *cognitive certainty*" [5, p. 8]. I. Ilyin stated that faith was allowed to speak and think only where "the truth is perceived by the depth of our soul" [5, p. 8] and the person *believes* in something that perceives as the most valuable, the most important thing in his life. "Here is the *real center* of your life, here is your love, your service, here is where you

sacrifice. Here is your treasure; and where your treasure is, there is your heart; – there is your *faith*" [5, p. 8]. Thus, I. Ilyin defines faith as the top priority, leading human's attraction that define and structure his whole life, his beliefs, aspirations and actions. It becomes a kind of spiritual law, according to which a person gradually *assimilates to what he believes*.

Ivan Ilyin in his work "Path of spiritual renewal" expresses his categorical disagreement to the established in the scientific community opposition *knowledge – faith*. He emphasizes that this gives roots, on the one hand, to the immense overestimation and exaggeration of the value of knowledge proof, since often what "people rank as "conceivable" and "known" – remains unjustified and unproven" [5, p.29]. On the other hand, the area of faith has its own special proof, its special authenticity. "A real scientist knows until where his knowledge extends, and therefore is spiritually humble. He seeks and tries to prove he always achieves *maximum* reliability and proof, clarity and precision ... He always remembers how limited is the scope of what is "already known", and how comparatively low is the strength and competence of scientific thought, for indeed the thought is truly only *one of the capabilities* of human, along with others, and scientific thought needs *experience* for which one should perceive sensually, sense, feel, desire, imagine, contemplate and commit acts "[5, p. 31]. That is what explains, in I. Ilyin's opinion, the fact that many great scientists combined in themselves "true scholarship" and a sincere faith in God. As proof of this thesis I. Ilyin cites a number of sayings of famous scientists about their relationship to God and to religion – those "who really comprehended the nature of science and the limits of human thought, and therefore liberated place in their soul for *sincere and pure faith in God!*" [5, p. 34].

Aesthetics (from the Greek *aisthetikos* – sensitive), according to the definition of "Modern Encyclopedic Dictionary" – is a philosophical discipline that studies the area of expressive forms of any sphere of reality (including artistic) given as independent data and immediately sensually perceived values. As a special discipline, it was singled out in the XVIII century in the teachings of A. Baumgarten, who introduced the very term "aesthetics" to mean "the science of

sensory knowledge." *The aesthetic*, with respect to culture defines as pointed out by Samokhvalova, "the ability and the skill to experience one's relatedness to the world, to survive meaningfully and to express humanly axiologically the fullness and diversity of these relations "[8, p. 401]. In this case, the specifics of the aesthetic is created primarily by the two issues relating to both the uniqueness of cultural content, the nature of unfolding and the mechanism of implementation of the aesthetic. This is, firstly, integrity, complexity, all-encompassing nature of aesthetic relation that can not be realized in partial form – for example, only rationally, or just sensually. And, secondly, it is the relation, the principle and constitutive value of which is based on the subjective side.

In the analysis of the aesthetic experience and the aesthetic culture V. Samokhvalova comes to the conclusion that human brings in his experience of the world as much as there is in him. He can understand and evaluate the perceived to the extent how much unconditional (phylogenetically) and determined (ontogenetically) capabilities he has in his possession. In other words, the aesthetic realizes the need of *cathartic need of understanding* as "achieving in knowledge what is not given directly in the everyday experience, has no known and subjectively highlighted side" [7, p. 176]

The term "ethics" (from Greek ethike, from ethos – custom, temper, character), which is traditionally treated as a philosophical science studying morality, ethics, as is known, was introduced by Aristotle. From the Stoics comes the traditional division of philosophy into logics, physics and ethics, which was often understood as the science of human nature, that is, actually had to (if we follow the definition of its subject area) duplicate anthropology. "Ethics" by B. Spinoza is the doctrine of substance and its moduses of; in the system of I. Kant, it appears as a science on the proper, Kant developed the ideas of the so-called autonomous ethics, as based on internal self-evident moral principles, contrasting it with heteronomous ethics coming from any external to morality conditions, interests and goals. In the XX century, M. Scheler and N. Hartmann, as opposed to

Kant's "formal" ethics of duty developed "material" (substantive) ethics of values. For ethics the problem of the good and the evil has been and remains a central one.

In studies on various aspects of life of culture, the *ethical* becomes an important tool that implements the experience of *knowledge*. Through this humanitarian disciplines there appears an opportunity to "handle" one's "knowledge – to coordinate, enter into new dialogical relationships, explain and apply (project on own subject) statements, opinions, categorical definitions, conceptual-discursive discoveries, various verbal forms of scientific and artistic ideas, identifying their similarity and difference, as "signs" of the same way, but many ways to overcome it (multiplicity of its realizing). As the Eastern proverb says, when two people say the same thing, they are talking about different; we can take it as an indication on one of the parties of culture intertextuality) " [7, p. 42-43].

The third component of our triad – the *fideistic* (from the Latin *fides* – faith), as mentioned above, this category can be defined as a worldview based on faith in which the experience of *faith* is realized. According to the definition by S. Averintsev, faith – is the central philosophical position and at the same time psychological orientation, which includes, firstly, the adoption of certain statements, dogmas (of being, the nature of God, what is good and bad for human); secondly, private trust to God as the organizer of the believer's life, his supervisor, assistant and savior in all specific situations; thirdly, personal loyalty to God, for "service" to whom the believer gives himself (in all languages, originally related to the formation of theistic religions, "faith" and "loyalty" and "believer" and "loyal" are denoted, respectively, with the same word) [1, p. 135]. To understand any cultural organization as a whole significant become ethical-aesthetic judgments, personal-meaningful orientations, indicating complementarity of rational-logical and sense-irrational (intuitive) ways of learning about the functional significance of fideistic relationship to form activity-related human positions.

This triad *aesthetic* – *ethical* – *fideistic* and the corresponding to it *understanding* – *knowledge* – *faith*, are the "members" of the dialogue of human

consciousness with Faith, Knowledge and Understanding, which become a form of achieving meanings and their and conductors, while the driving force of this dialogue is catharsis, acting as "noetic phenomena. "Consciousness" –is what is cleared, "faith, knowledge, understanding" – are cleansing tools; "God, truth, humanity" – ideal above-addressees in this type of dialogue and its last cathartic goal. Particular importance in the ontology of catharsis is that the achievement of one of the specified ideal senses means the inclusion to the other two as well, opening their original unity " [7, p. 177].

Following the line of reasoning of M. Bakhtin, A. Samoilenko highlights the aesthetic relation as a central point of "understanding communication", the phenomenon of humanity, of life and art of co-creation, and also notices such its duality as "perfection – openness." From the standpoint of this duality, M. Bakhtin treats depending of the aesthetic and the ethical as "an act of creativity" and "act of life." The connection of this relationship is important for researchers because they both express axiological experience, but each in its own way.

On the basis of these considerations, A. Samoilenko concludes that in "ordinary experience (in life) the ethical can be sufficiently far removed from the aesthetic, subordinate it to itself in the logics of action, in terms of moral *responsibility*, externally finish, execute personal efforts "be present in life", find place and time for this, so as to limit, narrow, even suppress, but make the aesthetic experience purposeful. In artistic creation the aesthetic becomes the leading, absorbs ethical, although reckons with it as the necessary requirements of a creative action – action of art "artistic making" of poetics "[7, p. 59].

Thus, these relations converge to identity, as evidenced by the use of M. Bakhtin himself of the expression "ethical-aesthetic" ("moral-aesthetic" – such a "double" term has been widely adopted in the traditional domestic aesthetics; in fact, this duality could not be left by any discussion of aesthetic phenomena in art, artistic categories). In art, the aesthetic acquires final functions – unlike life in which it is never quite complete, "systematically clearly and deeply" (M. Bakhtin), thanks to the semantic autonomy of art form, its "detaching" transformations of life

(and art, presenting) material, that is due to reaccentuation just as an aesthetic one. The ethical, on the contrary, acquires a new convention – openness, as "illusory", associated with the imitation of real conditions of choice act, simultaneously with the creation of the other place and time for its implementation – already not from the position of vital pragmatic expediency, but from the standpoint of aesthetic "expediency without purpose." Therefore, entering the aesthetic content of art, the ethical ends and is executed by it.

However, the aesthetic is never finally completed in the art form too, as a final interpretation of the meaning is impossible, given the nature of the latter. Therefore, the completion of the ethical – as the artist's knowledge of his of moral choice and knowledge of composition possibilities – norms, creativity rules, language of technical requirements, the genre and style requirements of art – does not become final, but only specifies the "ethos" – the place and nature – staying of meaning as its time (and temporal) condition. The ethical carries in itself the knowledge of the limits of meaning realization, the aesthetic – an understanding of these limits as open ones. "Game of frontiers" in an art form takes place like a game of completeness and openness, in which the aesthetic has a dual role: it "prompts" integrity, uniqueness, "singularity" of artistic composition, that is, originality and thus the immutability of the artistic completion of sense; at the same time it detects a "surplus" of meaning, which cannot be reduced only to this artistic-compositional decision, redundancy of "humanity," not fitting into the prescribed borders. Thus, in art, the aesthetic assumes "responsibility" – the responsibility for understanding, for the multidimensionality of compliance of human action with "higher meaning instances" – "perfect above-addressees" [7].

Therefore, music is the main carrier of fideistic ideas, allows also to come close to the originality of aesthetic relationship. Some common features of fideistic and aesthetic communication point to the importance of for their musical execution. The fideistic and the aesthetic relations are awakened by the situations connected to the appeal to the "supreme powers" to God, that is, to what is superior

to human in his capabilities, is *more than* he is, "is not normally seen and not knowable to the end" [6, p. 78].

Therefore, the aesthetic is always to some extent opposed to everyday, ordinary communication. Secondly, the fideistic, bound up with the aesthetic, causes *nonconventional* relation to the sign. Such an attitude is more correct to call *a special kind of convention* that arises spontaneously, "instantly" and determines the choice of some of the objects, phenomena, relationship as symbolic ones [7]. According to N. Mechkovskaya, "the origins of unconventional perception of the sign do not lie in the initial fideism of consciousness, but the primary syncretism of the world reflection in the human psyche – it is one of the fundamental features of pre-logical thinking. That was the thinking of primitive man. *And this is not a lack of logics – this is just another logics*" (emphasis added – S.O.) [6, p. 42]. Thirdly, the fideistic seeks particular forms of expression. We can talk about fideistic poetics, requiring special alignment, "mastery" and "artificiality" of texts with fideistic functions. Part of this is poetics is the sacredness of the fideistic language that unites him with aesthetically determined artistic symbolism. Fourthly, as the ideational in nature formations, the fideistic and the aesthetic equally need sign stability, that is being fixed in certain substantive conditions, in compositional semantic predictability, in high degree of canonicity [6, p. 77-79].

Thus, the convergence of the fideistic and the aesthetic relations on the basis of artistic composition allows observing their affinity, thus clarifying the nature of the aesthetic, born by the need for in special kind of semantic "knowledge." In this case, as we see, comprehension, understanding must precede knowledge: learned what is meant, and not vice versa – something that is somehow already known is subject to understanding, as it happens in everyday life. Knowledge seems an indirect sense, accessible only to "peripheral vision" (G. Pomeranz); it requires a kind of "paradoxical intention," that is such self-knowledge, which alienates the known from the subject (person), turns it into a "counter-feeling" (L. Vygotsky), objectifies, concretizes, and makes available for review.

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