

## Methodological and historical grounds for search of the meaning of the national idea

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**Abstract.** The article is an interdisciplinary research. It examines the phenomenon of the national idea using a philosophical approach and considers it against the background of historically formed conditions in the modern Russian society. The authors single out the major aspects of the nature and the specific features of the national idea, as well as the content and prospects of its formation as a national discourse.

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### Introduction

Search of the national idea is search of sense in real time, the relevance of which is conditioned by the dynamics of permanent social, cultural and global changes. The consequence of these global changes is a change of political, cultural and economic paradigms. Following the approach offered by T. Kuhn in his "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" [1], the authors of the given article define paradigm as principles, methods, procedures and provisions which are accepted in a community and allow the community to respond to challenges. To understand the historical nature of the phenomenon of the national idea, we are to consider its methodological value.

It should be noted that the content constituent of the national idea is always defined by the subjective factor that manifests in the system of subject - subject relations. On the one hand, the national idea appears as the value content in the relations between subjects of a social action. On the other hand, it is a result of the subjects' practice. It follows that the meanings of the national idea can be found and can be on the social agenda, only if projects and actions of separate social groups correlate with the outlook and demands of all social groups. The national idea is a result of the collective mind's work lined up in a chain from subject to subject, from social group to social group, with some members introspecting challenges and formulating demands of the society and other members searching suitable meanings, models and methods to satisfy the demands. The final stage is the procedure of interiorizing the submitted meanings and methods by everyone.

In the functional sense, search of the national idea is conditioned by strong semantic ties that strengthen the joint social practice and allow to solve shared problems.

It should be mentioned that there is always an effect of the visibility of the phenomenon of the national idea in a society, even if it isn't transmitted openly as a superstructure over the public consciousness. The national paradigm penetrates in such man-created social institutions as education, politics, culture, law, etc. Thus, the phenomenon of the national idea in relation to the system of public relations is extremely polyphonic. Amid the crisis, the phenomenon is in demand as a superstructure over all the schemes of a society and appears as needs to consolidate a society and create a new social paradigm.

Nowadays one of the world project sites to reconstruct various meanings, including the meanings of the national idea, is Russia. The concept of reconstruction (reproduction) shouldn't be confused with the concept of deconstruction (destruction), and also it shouldn't be devalued through interpreting meanings in extreme forms of individualism and denying the variety and the right to bridges in public consciousness. The agenda of any modern society is connected with search of sustainable development and change of the convention-oriented values.

To Russia, this agenda is an outline by which a new public discourse is being constructed. It is necessary to state again that in any social process a special role is played by subjectivity carried by certain individuals, subjects of social action. Subjectivity manifests in the ideas about one's own fundamental economic and other kinds of interests, one's own place in the social structure and the political organization of the society, as well as the ways and means of their reformation.

Social challenges of the modern society call for the community-oriented subject of the action. In modern Western science the analogue of a community is the phenomenon of intersubjectivity. This term is frequented by E. Levinas [2], A. Renault [3], B. Waldenfels [4], A. Schutz [5] and others. An

important component of intersubjectivity is commonality in the subjective structures, which provides interaction of individuals and their understanding of what is commonly valuable in their joint practice. The necessity for this component is dictated by new technologies of production and structuring the economy which demand from an individual high degree of social responsibility. Understanding of the significance of the joint practice is also achieved through the national idea. In a situation when all is measured by result or success in bringing into effect what was planned rather than by the formal truth of moral, the phenomenon of the national idea can be considered as a basic world outlook site which provides success of national projects and identity and acts as a condition of mutual public responsibility and liabilities of members of the society to each other. Universal worldwide changes require a set of actions that can be successful only with common meanings and internalized values.

When it comes to fundamental socio-economic and value transformations, there occurs reconsideration of the role of common values of social institutions and systems. As a result, a society may "lack community" [6]. Denial of community reduces the society to utilitarian functions. These functions presuppose no such values as public self-creation, self-organization, identity, or self-development. The extremely global, utilitarian and technocratic approach to a society emasculates spiritual, cultural, anthropological and collective contents, blunting its own existential identity strategy. In this case the phenomenon of the national idea can be regarded as a fundamental value and a quality basis for the intersecting discourses of a society and a state, and then the national idea backs up the practice of the common "We".

The Russian practice of creating a national paradigm has developed so that the idea of breaking with the Soviet past, overcoming the systemic crisis and creating simultaneously the basis for market economy and society of universal prosperity could play a uniting role for only a short period of time. From the very beginning it was clear that the idea was short-term. The 2000s' stabilization turned out to create real material welfare for an insignificant elite group of officials, bureaucrats and businessmen, along with poverty and frustration for wide groups of the population. As a result, there strengthened demands for the state to ensure security of personality, society and nation.

It should be noted that the society in Russia assigned the universal value guidelines of development long ago. In the last twenty years Russia hasn't ever dramatically changed the strategic choice of the ideology of development designated in the

Constitution as creation of the civil, law and social state and the civil society. However, in practice the nation faces bureaucratic obstacles that prevent the formation of people's civil initiatives, the implementation of the principle of the rule of law and the principles of the free and honest economic competition. The representatives of the ruling elite, being in search of a miraculous national idea, constantly appeal to the population, speaking about the need to develop social solidarity and political integrity. It should be noted, however, that the role of the elite in Russia has always been defining, and the elite has always initiated the basic reforms, while the social bottoms have traditionally showed low reflexivity of these reforms.

Modern Russia is no exception. The idea of breakthrough and renovation is set from the top-down. It is the authority that again formulates national priorities of development for the coming years: to frame new economy; to construct an effective state; to handle demographic problems; to organize the system of up-to-date health care; to ensure the right of citizens to high-quality education; to create the system of providing the citizens with affordable and comfortable housing; to renovate life in the village; to implement modernization of the army and the fleet. Each of these directions is significant for any Russian, and any positive shift in the conceived reforms can certainly maintain the authority of the state. Nevertheless, the new reality isn't taken into consideration, while the society doesn't merely expect the national idea to comprise certain kinds of activity in all major spheres of life, but mostly to concentrate on the activity approach and operational culture. The society demands "common cause" and a most effective result in it, shapes a categorical grid and adjusts it to modern standards of life [7].

The concept "order" comes to the fore and functions in the budgetary sphere, in receiving social guarantees on personal security, education and health care services. The society is obviously resentful to the cynical and criminal behavior of certain representatives of oligarchic estate. Meanings are clearly adverse. For the elite, "steady stabilization" is of major value, while the population advocate for social guarantees which are in the consciousness archetype of each person living in the social state, and fighting for the guarantees can become an ideology in future.

It is obvious that in the course of liberal reforms no desirable market production with its major sector of average and small businesses has appeared in Russia, and no universal social and political paradigm has been formed. The state's unshakable right to ownership is a well-known and

very old formula of stability and order. Thus, it is possible to claim that the rule of law providing order demanded by all social groups of the society, as well as recognition of legal imperatives as universal for all, along with freedom, including the freedom expressed financially as the essential right to property, and the philosophy of labour are a categorical basis for the creation of the modern national discourse.

The category of labour may account for the most important constituent in the national idea, as a principal social question in Russia remains that of the working "poor". The labor price in Russia is extremely low and too insufficient to satisfy the needs of the employee. The majority of the labor market analysts recognize that in the years of reforms there was in fact triggered a mechanism of degradation of labour [8]. One can witness a socially unfair income gaps between various groups of the population. The decile dispersion ratio in Russia makes 1:13, while in the countries with the developed market economy it doesn't exceed proportions 1:4 or 1:5.

In the Russians' sentiment nowadays one can easily observe aspirations to social, economic and legal justice. The majority of citizens deny the possibility of returning to the Soviet model with its specific wage-leveling, and treat the evaluation of social usefulness of their labour contribution as a desirable pattern of social justice. To overcome mass poverty and adjust economic strength, the GDP per capita in Russia is to be higher than the official 27,000 USD in the United States and is to reach at least 80,000 USD per capita. The solution of this problem is in new approaches to pricing the labour force and in development of knowledge-intensive and high innovative technologies. Overcoming defects of legislation, economic and administrative spheres of life, bureaucratic obstacles and corruption, the society is to focus on the person of labour and the conditions of highly effective and productive work.

The defective bureaucratically-set salary values are to be substituted for the economically reasonable pricing of labour force which, in its turn, is capable of changing cardinally the scenery of the state reorganization. Instead of the value and power of money, it is the value of labour and labour effort, the constructive pains of scientists, workers, teachers or doctors, that is thought to become an element of the national idea in Russia. The Russians aren't spoiled with high-quality food, industrial goods and services [9]; on this premise, the cash inflow to employees is supposed to become an internal investment stream for the development of the Russian hi-tech industry. Socially and economically reasonable salaries of employees might allow our

state to leave the "oil needle" and recover from the Dutch disease. With a smaller circle of European countries ready to export Russia's natural resources, this item of export is becoming an unpromising item of the state budget.

In case the problems of mass poverty of the working population are solved, a whole complex of social questions will gradually be erased: ambiguity of reforms of pension provision, demographic crisis, poor quality of social services for the population, or lack of real chances for acquisition of housing. Each employee will be able to deal independently with social and economic issues, participate in new schemes of social, medical and pension insurance, take care of dependents - children and pensioners. Realization of the reforms beneficial for the Person, and particularly for the Employee, is to provide widespread support to the authorities capable of such a step.

But in the programs offered to the society the idea of new economy supposes no implementation of any economically reasonable assessment of the labour force. There dominates a conviction that this task is a secondary one and that the "economic development of the country is defined by its scientific and technological advantages". The programmes outline the mythical image of Russia as a great exporter of intellectual services into such hi-tech spheres as modern power industry, communications, space and aircraft industry. The abstract, formalized vision of the Person, his needs and interests, leads to alienation of subjects from the national idea.

"The efforts that Russia takes to transform herself" [10] are the efforts to achieve internal social, economic and political stability, and these are to be aimed at minimization of potential threats and dangers, among which the most challenging are: the slowed down process of transformations (merely with no positive results for the population), sharp social polarization of the society, broad criminalization of all sides of the public life, frequent manifestations of nationalism and regional separatism. The competitive fight of various official and enterprise centers for expansion of spheres of influence with the subsequent gain of financial preferences is behind-the-scenes.

## Conclusion

The problems of building up bridges between the authority and the society in modern Russia are evident. Manifestations of initiatives "from the top-down" via self-organizing spontaneous associations have become more frequent. The population reflects problems of poverty, mass migration, etc.

The prospects of economic growth in Russia today are rather indistinct and vague, and although there happen certain positive shifts in economy, the scope of economic growth is exhausted. The reforms are not socially-oriented, the establishment of market structures and market mechanisms aims neither at the welfare of all members of society, nor at their social activity.

In the context of further adverse combination of circumstances (oil prices today are unlikely to go up, while there are no other sources of income in the Russian budget), possibilities to support the poorest groups of the population will be limited. This model will block all positive prospects of a new social reality.

### Results

It is necessary to consider the fact that the spiritual and value mosaic of the modern public conscience in the information society is overcoming the patterns of the historically developed inertia, which can blow up only in extreme situations. Under the influence of the information environment, various preferences, orientations and models that it offers, the situation of constant choice is being formed. The choice becomes a necessity for the subject, and consequently, the degree of freedom of choice in the Internet space and its chances to cross lines and limits increase. The historic arena witnesses a new subject force - the Internet community, in which the metagroup illusion is being formed, and a total feeling of equal opportunities and rights to use the Internet space for the sake of self-expression reigns. Thus, a new matrix of social reality, which can at any time cross and escape the Internet space, is being shaped. To the majority of users, who have no access to business projects or social "elevators", the Internet is a new religion. It isn't subject to social design and regulations and, with its destructive messages, is often dangerous. Under the circumstances, all-nation guiding lines that allow the society to keep their ability to self-organization and reproduction of essential spheres of life are urgently necessary.

In the modern Russian realities search of the national idea, which is in fact, the choice of ideology,

is strategically urgent and is preconditioned by the formation of a modern categorical grid of values which could be accepted as consequence of a "social contract". The grid should comprise the principles of multi-vector sociocultural orientations and specificity of the society. If the result isn't reached and fails to comply with the latter principle, "isolation from life" will lead to futility and utopian character of the project of search of the national idea.

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