

Logic of Good : Moral Logos of Vladimir Soloviov

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1. Two Ethics

One of the widespread opinions in contemporary Western philosophy is the assertion that Russian Philosophy is an applied, not fundamental, philosophical tradition. It seems, most bright expression of this presupposition is the assertion of primary moral nature of all Russian Philosophy. Russian Philosophy of All-Union, based by Vladimir Soloviov, is not an exclusion here. Moreover, one of the important books of Soloviov and possibly all Russian Philosophy is "Justification of Good", essentially moral work of Soloviov. It would seem this fact only confirm once more the hypothesis of the secondary character of Russian philosophy.

However I try to show some another possibility in the philosophical estimation of Russian Philosophy including Russian Philosophy of All-Unity. In particular I offer some ideas below using analysis of "Justification of Good" (JG).

From my point of view, Russian Philosophy of All-Unity, and may be all Russian Philosophy as a whole, developes another, not north-western, version of Ontology. This version presupposes a vitalistic picture of the world, where primary principal of being is a living being, not inanimate thing. Principle of life, "ktojnost' " ("whoness"), is a primary ontological principle, connecting phenomena of Living and Being. Universal Knowledge about Life, as a Cosmic principle, is a basis of Russian Philosophy. From this point of view there exist two images of Ethics:

1) Ethics as a fundamental knowledge in the vitalistic picture of the world. Here Physics is an applied knowledge relatively such Ethics. I shal call this image of Ethics as Ethics-1.

2) Ethics is an applied knowledge in a physical picture of the world, where, on the contrary, Physics is a fundamental knowledge about being. I shall call this Ethics as Ethics-2.

Now one can say that assertion of the secondary philosophical status of Russian Philosophy, basing on its intrinsic moral character, presupposes a physical picture of the world first of all, where Ethics is represented as Ethics-2. My opinion is the following. Russian Philosophy uses Ethics as Ethics-1 in the framework of a vitalistic picture of the world. Such status of Russian Philosophy can be combined with its fundamental character.

To prove this assertion I shall investigate some ideas of JG as examples of Ethics-1.

2. Tracks of Life

In the preface to the second edition of JG Vladimir Soloviov uses an intuition of **Tracks of Life**. During his life, man goes on many Tracks of Life, he can change one track to another. There exist infinite number of such tracks, however only one is a right and direct between them, which leads to Ultimate Good by direct way. This is a Track of Good. All another tracks are Tracks of Non-Good. As a rule they are close to Track of Good at the beginning, however the more time is passing the more a distance between them and Track of Good. All the Tracks of Non-Good finish in a one general point – point of Ultimate Evil.

Analysing the Soloviov idea of Track of Life, one can come to the conclusion that Soloviov uses an intuition of Subject-Driver here. Namely, every man can be caught, or possessed, by different Subject activities, e.g. by Ideas of Good or Evil, or Beauty, or Power, or something else, while these Ideas are not only intellectual principles but they have own system of values, own desires and will, i.e., they express themselves as some Subject principles. I shall use the term “Subject” as synonym of “Living Being” here. Therefore every man can be possessed by different Subject activities during his life,

and I shall call such activities as **Subject-Drivers**. Every Subject-Driver is a principle of life driving for men and women.

Therefore every Track of Life represents an according Subject-Driver. When man chooses a Track he chooses the according Subject-Driver. This choice expresses itself in the acceptance of an Subject activity with own values, feelings and desires. To clear this idea I shall see a model of Subject below.

3. Subject Ontology

Living Being is considered in Russian Philosophy of All-Unity as a microcosm, i.e., as a little world with own ontological constraints. This intuition is similar to Leibniz Monadology with the exception of the idea of whole closeness of Monads. For example, Nikolaj Losski considers Subjects as Open Monads, using the term "Substantial Actors" for them. I shall use the term "**Subject Ontology**" for this sense of Living Being. Then I shall use a model of Subject Ontology which is based in my book "Logic of All-Unity"¹. Briefly speaking, Subject Ontology S is a three $\langle U, B, \psi \rangle$, where

1) U is **Ontology** (Universe) as a class of **states of affairs** (in accordance with the ideas of L. Wittgenstein). Every state of affair u is a piece of reality which can be described by collection of parameters $p(u) = (p_1, p_2, \dots, p_n)$. We can differ one state of affairs from another, or identify them, on the basis of their parameters. Null state of affairs 0 , with null number of parameters, is also presupposed here. I shall say that state of affairs u is a **sub-state** for state of affairs v iff every parameter from $p(u)$ is a parameter from $p(v)$. Null state 0 is sub-state for every state of affairs.

2) B is **bodyness** of Subject S . I suppose that there exists a sub-state of affairs $b(u)$ for every state of affairs u from U . $b(u)$ is a part of u that can be directly changed by Subject. $b(u)$ is an **instant bodyness** of Subject in u . Then bodyness B is set of all $b(u)$ for all states of affairs u from U . One can say that B is a primary ontological space of

¹ V.I. Moiseev. Logic of All-Unity. Moscow: Per Se, 2002. – 415 p. (in Russian)

freedom of Subject, in the framework of which Subject can directly change states of affairs, events in own microcosm.

3) ψ is a function, which takes a number $\psi(u)$ from segment $[0,1]$ to every state of affairs u from U . $\psi(u)$ is a subject measure of Subject S that expresses a value of u for Subject. Namely if $\psi(u) = 1$, then state of affairs u is estimated by S as maximum of well-being; if $\psi(u) = 0$, then u is a state of affairs with minimum of well-being. Another values correspond to intermediate situations, between maximum and minimum of well-being for Subject. I shall call $\psi(u)$ as “**degree of itself**” of Subject S .

Unity of these three principles, Ontology U , Bodyness B , and ψ -function ψ , form Subject Ontology S . One subject can differ from another by some of these principles or by their combinations. Every Subject S try to change states of affairs u by the activity of the own body $b(u)$ in order to increase degrees of itself or to prevent its decreasing. This assertion can be considered as a highest Subject Imperative for any Subject Ontology. I shall call it as **Law of Subjectness**.

4. Phenomenon of Subject Driving

Let S be a man and S' be a possible Subject-Driver for S . I consider S and S' as some subject ontologies $S = \langle U, B, \psi \rangle$ and $S' = \langle U', B', \psi' \rangle$. I shall denote state of driving of S under the S' as $S \downarrow S'$ - “ S -under-the-driving-of- S' ”. State $S \downarrow S'$ is also a subject ontology $S \downarrow S' = \langle U \downarrow U', B \downarrow B', \psi \downarrow \psi' \rangle$. In the simplest case, Ontology $U \downarrow U'$ is U , $B \downarrow B'$ is B . Therefore phenomenon of Subject driving will be expressed itself only in the change of ψ -function of the subject S : we will deal with $\psi \downarrow \psi'$ instead of ψ here. I shall presuppose that ψ -function $\psi \downarrow \psi'$ is isomorphic to ψ' . Therefore the Phenomenon of Subject driving expresses itself only in the change of subject measure of well-being: subject S correlates own system of values with the system of values of Subject-Driver S' . In other words, S begins “see on the world by the eyes” of S' , by his values.

5. Subject-Drivers as points of Tracks of Life

When Soloviov writes about Tracks of Life, he presupposes that man can go on some Track, passing from some point of Track to another. Moving on a Track is a process of development of a principle of the Track. Therefore, if u^i is a Track of Life, then there exist an inner time of the Track and different moments $u^i(t)$, $u^i(t')$, where $t < t'$. The more inner time of the moving of the Track, the more development of the principle of the Track. Hence we can connect according Subject-Drivers $S^i(t)$, $S^i(t')$ with separate points of the Track, $u^i(t)$, $u^i(t')$. They belong to one i -Track, which is marked by index i , but they are different stages, at moments t and t' , of the development of the Track principle. Principle of a Track of Life is a **Sense of Life**.

6. Falsificators of Sense of Life

Soloviov presupposes that real life can verify or falsify acceptance of definite Track of Life. For example, acceptance, as a Sense of Life, of the Track of Physical Beauty and Power is falsified by diseases, physical aging and, at last, by death. Such processes can be considered as **falsificators** for principal of a Track of Life. Let us express the idea of falsificators of Senses of Life in the terms of our model. If a subject $S = \langle U, B, \psi \rangle$ accepts the driving by subject $S^i(t) = \langle U^i(t), B^i(t), \psi^i(t) \rangle$, which is a point $u^i(t)$ of a Track of Life u^i , then S is transformed to the subject $S \downarrow S^i(t) = \langle U, B, \psi \downarrow \psi^i(t) \rangle$, as it was presented above. ψ -function ψ of S is passing to ψ -function $\psi \downarrow \psi^i(t)$ during the driving. Let segment $[u, u']$ be a segment of states of affairs in ontology U . Some activities of subjects, or object processes, can be presented as segments $[u, u']$ in ontology U . Let some ψ -function ψ be defined on U and ψ be decreasing on segment $[u, u']$, i.e. $\psi(u') < \psi(u)$. It means that measure of well-being is decreasing during act $[u, u']$. I shall call such acts as **minus-acts**, designating them as $-[u, u']$. Now we can say that different falsificators for i -Sense of Life, demonstrating by Subject-Driver $S^i(t)$, are different minus-acts, which are generated by real life and which can not be prevented by the subject $S \downarrow S^i(t)$. Accumulation of such falsificators can force the subject to be out of

driving by the Subject–Driver. This process lies in the basis of justification of Good by real life. From this point of view, Track of Good is simply the Track with the minimum class of falsifiers of its principle.

7. Conclusions

By the same way, one can analyse many concepts of moral philosophy of Soloviov and other partisans of Russian Philosophy of All–Unity (see²). I would like to stress that only little part of the whole moral logos of Soloviov was presented above. Whole system of the logos is presented in my new book “Logic of Good” (in Russian) and the system has many sense dimensions, which very complicate the whole image of moral logos in Russian Philosophy. In any case, the following general conclusion can be repeated here. Moral nature of Russian Philosophy is an expression of the philosophical work with a new type of ontologies, Subject Ontologies, where phenomenon of being is directly connected with the phenomenon of living (both senses are unified in the Russian word “zhitie”). Therefore Ethics, as Ethics–1, plays a role of a symbol of some fundamental Subject Ontology knowledge. From this point of view Soloviov’ work JG is an effort to clear some fundamental senses of this knowledge, to create a fundamental work on basic principles of Subject–Being.

² V.I.Moiseev. Logic of All-Unity. Moscow: Per Se, 2002. – 415 p.