

## I. PROBLEMOS IR SPRENDIMAI / PROBLEMY I ICH ROZWIĄZANIA

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### CIVILIZATION AS A SIGN: NEW PERSPECTIVES IN CIVILIZATION STUDIES

*The problem of the future of the Eastern and Western civilizations has come to the fore in civilization studies. There are researchers who insist on the idea of their cooperation, which represents itself whether in a dialogue form (polilogue) or in the form of absorbing one civilization by another. There are also researchers who believe that civilizations do not have much in common, and that is why conflicts are unavoidable. As a result, there appeared four models of civilization development, namely: the Europe-centrism model, the model of the parallel development of the West and East, the model of the clash of civilizations and the model of cultural dialogue. Could they be viewed as something holistic but open to different realizations? The authors give the idea of a synthetic (or rather synergetic) approach to treating civilization development built with the help of the causal-genetic perspective.*

**KEY WORDS:** Civilization; sign; causal-genetic perspective; idea-biased content of civilization; phenomenon-biased content of civilization.

#### **A brief overview of modern civilization models**

At present we can distinguish four branches or, rather, *four civilization models* represented in the sphere of knowledge devoted primarily to the problems of the development of technological civilization as a dominant civilization type. They are: the Europe-centrism model (Buchanan 2002; Fukuyama 1992); the model of the parallel development of the West and East (Gulik 1962; Nakamura 1965); the model of the conflict of civilizations (Huntington 1993); the model of a cultural dialogue that leads to uniting different civilizations into eco-civilization (Моисеев 2000).

Most of the researchers in the field tend to emphasize mutual exclusiveness, disjointness and independence of the above-mentioned models. Nevertheless, one can come across a different view, which is not wide-spread however – there exist several attempts to look at the models from the point of view of their synthesis (Следзевский 1997; Чешков 1990). Though until now these attempts can hardly be called successful, as in each case no balanced system has been created. Just the opposite, uniting the models leads in those approaches to the predominance of one of them. Does it confirm unsuccessfulness of synthetic modeling in general?

Before discussing the issue, let us look at the above-mentioned models of civilization development and single out the main characteristics of each of them.

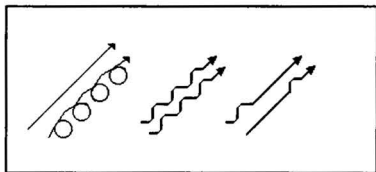
*Europe-centrism* seems to be one of the oldest geopolitical theories. It postulates and demonstrates a special status and significance of the European values for the world civilization in particular and cultural process in general. Europe-centrism is based on the idea that all nations should join the Western pattern of development and thus a world-wide unity will be created. The theory is based on the fact that the Western civilization assimilates the most important cultural achievements of the East. This fact provides the predominance of Europe. Accordingly, the notions of universal history, humanity as a holistic notion and the progress of both could appear only within the European tradition. Europe-centrism assumes that certain states and nations have the leading positions and set the guiding line for the development, while the others are outsiders of history (Епачов 2001). Thus, this model annihilates diversity of cultures and traditions because it states that mono-civilization (mono-polar world) will be inevitably formed in future.

In other words, this model sets a hierarchical ontology. The conceptual attributes *more significant* and *less significant* are used here to describe different cultures. In particular, it allows dividing the world into *the center* and *the periphery*. *The center* includes societies mainly from the Western civilization, which are successfully undergoing the process of modernization. *The periphery* includes non-modern (or *semi-modern*) societies from the Eastern civilization, which can hardly respond to the challenge of time. In addition, the centre and the periphery are connected by the flows of information, money, goods, working power and so on, and the direction of the flows

determines interaction between the central and peripheral structures. The concept of *the center* indicates the territory where technological, social and other innovations are created, while *the periphery*, which contacts with *the centre*, propagates and applies them (Эйзенштадт 2001). Such task sharing is followed by the administrative hierarchy (one more *hierarchy*!) of the territories, as well as by the concentration and intensification of different kinds of activities. Thus it exerts influence on the level of development of the territory. And the development is described as hierarchical as well.

*The model of the parallel development of the West and East* admits a principal dualism between the West and East as between the technical and traditional civilizations. Representatives of the theory emphasize the principality and necessity of this distinction. They state that no global integration process can go beyond the fundamental opposition between the *introvert* and *extrovert* types of thinking and culture (Епачов 2001). The idea of fundamental dualism is based on the supposition that in future only *two historical agents* will remain, and each of them will become social and cultural monolith. The West and East are considered to be counterpoises keeping balance of the world system. According to this model, most of the conflicts will disappear in the process of final territorial division into two spheres of influence.

According to this model, modernization has only slightly transformed the Eastern civilization but has not touched its foundations. That is why the traditional type of culture is not just a period in the development of the Eastern society. On the contrary, such development is natural and distinctive for this culture. Only within different types of development the potential of the East and West will be realized. The followers of the model conclude from the above-stated fact that the division



Picture 1. Several of possible variants of parallel development of civilization

and independent (parallel) development of the civilization types are unavoidable. They presume that cultural identities of a higher level will be formed during parallel development of the West and East (Epacov 2001).

We should point out that parallelism of development may be perfectly described through the concept of the *syntagmatic (linear)* configuration of the self-realization of civilization. In particular, we can describe civilizations as syntagmas (or components united somehow in a kind of line), which develop in a parallel way, in the sense that they do not intersect (see Picture 1).

As we see, the concept *line* and in particular, *parallel line* is far from being simple. It includes the development process even in the opposite directions; it allows including here ascending, descending, spiral and other forms of development. In this case parallelism does not mean just two parallel uni-directed lines (as it is accepted in the Euclidean geometry), but lines of any configuration, which do not intersect on different reasons of spatial and temporal nature.

*The model of the clash of civilizations, or the model of Huntington.* According to the researcher, civilization itself as a specific type of culture has its own source of conflicts. Neither ideology nor economy but culture is the main point of discussion here. The model broadens our understanding of the civilization as it includes not only the

so-called traditional participants of international relations (the Western and Islamic civilizations) but also the Latin American and African civilizations.

This model is based on the following assumptions:

Contradictions between civilizations are significant and real. They become real in the process of the development of the self-consciousness of civilization. Constant intensification of interaction among states and cultures leads to a deeper understanding of the differences of civilizations (their *structures*). Moreover, within each civilization different cultures belonging to a similar type adjoin and it leads to interaction among local civilizations on different spatial, cultural and geopolitical levels. National elites of the so-called non-Western civilizations undergo the process of de-westernization and re-evaluating of their own cultural roots. At the same time another process goes in the opposite direction – the process of expansion of Western values and the type of rationality, the process of creating the Western mass-man;

The conflict among civilizations will substitute the former ideological consent and other forms of conflicts;

International relations will be transformed from the game played by the Western civilization into the game where non-Western civilizations take an active part (see: Gulik 1962).

The model of civilizations' dialogue (the model of creating eco-civilization) has got another starting point. The basis for the model is the assumption that the world and humanity exist as a self-reproducing, self-developing and self-acting system, which has a distinct finite self-perception. This assumption allows overcoming the idea

of the *already chosen* role of each nation, class or group, as well as the idea of linear development. Such ideas are replaced by the idea of multi-vector development. It means that the micro-subject (in a mega-system it is a person, a small state or states of the *third world*) may influence global administrative processes and determine the macro-direction of development. At that the micro-subject preserves its characteristics. Thus we can observe a dialogue among the subjects possessing equal rights, but at the same time different in their characteristics.

The idea or the project of eco-civilization may be developed only on the basis of the above-mentioned assumptions. Culture is viewed here as the counter-agent (*the subject*) in correlation to environment, human aggression and modernization. Culture is not described as the manifestation of certain tendencies, standards or goals. It rather serves as zones of bifurcation. Discourse is viewed as an instrument of representation of a historical period done by a contemporary or a historian. It is principally polylogical. (Compare with Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia – the idea of the multiplicity of discourses in culture. Bakhtin opposes monological language to a dialogue, which moves language towards multiplicity. (We would rather use here the word *polilogue*). Polilogue includes multiplicity of meanings, different ways of speaking, different rhetorical strategies and vocabularies).

The diversity of voices being a fundamental characteristic of any culture (according to Bakhtin), presupposes the existence of many standards and patterns in the area created by interaction of different social forces. The correlation of what is either rational or irrational is not of fundamental importance in this case. The theory of eco-civilization does not admit the ideas of linear or multi-linear world history. Instead it offers the

idea of a net *a system* or an area of trans-border interferences; supranational *undulatory processes* constituting the globality. Thus, the model takes into account different material, role and symbolic agents of historic changes. It accepts the idea of reciprocity of any influences and the idea of the united world as a co-evolution of historic forces.

Thus, the four models of civilization introduced in civilization studies are viewed as having their own logics and because of that as being non-intersective. But if we pay attention to the fact that they are being focused on the contents, which are of a complementary nature (hierarchy, syntagma/line, structure, paradigma/system), we would make another conclusion: thus the four models of civilization introduced in civilization studies are viewed as having their own logics and because of that as being intersective and complementary.

### Idea-Biased Content of Civilization

We view civilization in the terms of the theory of communication as it is viewed in the process of interaction. Thus, it (civilization) is a complex functioning sign that has its form and content. Because it is complex, we define its *content* as that of a double nature, that is while studying civilization content we find there both idea-biased and *phenomenon-biased content*. In this part of the article we will consider the civilization within its idea-biased content.

*Content as an idea* presupposes the focus of attention on conceptual issues that is the issues of interconnection and projection and mostly the idea of content space organization (in structures, lines/syntagmas, hierarchies, systems/paradigms). Otherwise, content is of ideological nature.

Giving a brief overview of modern civilization models we have paid attention to the fact that civilization is viewed within four interdependent and inter-penetrated organizational parameters: *hierarchical, structural, system* and *linear*. Our approach is that these parameters are interdependent and inter-penetrated. Out of this it is quite logical to accept the fact that all the above-presented models of civilization development (each being focused on one of the mentioned above parameters) may be regarded as complementary and interdependent. In fact each of them gives insight into different aspects of the same idea (concept) called *civilization*.

Thus, we can view *civilization as a self-developing dynamic system*, which is formed under the influence of four key *factors* (permanent reasons), which are of process-based or activity-based nature. Accordingly, we can state that the Universe has four sources of self-development, which are the following four *processes* (or forms of interaction):

- (1) *The “evolutionary-pivot” process*, (a hierarchy focus of attention), which presupposes co-development as co-subordination of different forms of development to the one, and that is (self)-determined viewed as the most progressive, powerful, dominating one;
- (2) *The “evolutionary-parallel” process*, (a line focus of attention), which pre-supposes step-by-step co-development, co-evolution of equal in power and balanced structures, non-crossing in principal and acting jointly.

Both processes work as *factors* (permanent reasons) and they are evident and essential for the formation of civilization as a generalized, holistic notion (concept). The only difference between them is that the first

process views *the hierarchy* as the leading form of interaction while the second one adheres to *the line*. Otherwise, for the first process promotion or self-promotion of the leading form of development is based on strength or authority/tradition, and other forms are followed through borrowing or propagating. In the second case in the focus is *the idea* that, each civilization has its own way (line) of development no matter how others develop (no borrowings or propagating are presupposed);

- (3) *The “revolutionary-conflict” process* (a structure focus) as the co-development (crossing/clashing) of different forms of development through inter-negation, repulsion; the so-called “development in spite of” (*“We exist in spite of the fact that the others exist, we have our own way of development”*);
- (4) *The “revolutionary-consonant” process* (a system focus) as co-development (crossing/meeting/dialogue) of different forms of development; as “development thanks to” (*“We exist thanks to the fact that the others exist, we are making up a system together”*).

These two processes are also *factors* (that is constantly existing reasons), and being such, they may be characterized as *latent* (potential) *factors* for the formation of civilization. The question is which of the forms of development will intersect (clash) bringing structural changes at one or another period and will clash, and which of them will activate their system characteristics and will turn to dialogue. At that we should mention the specifics of their interaction: in the situation of a conflict the actualization manifestation of structural forms takes place. Structural forms do not adapt to each other and consequently reject each other. Dialogue is possible only on the level of

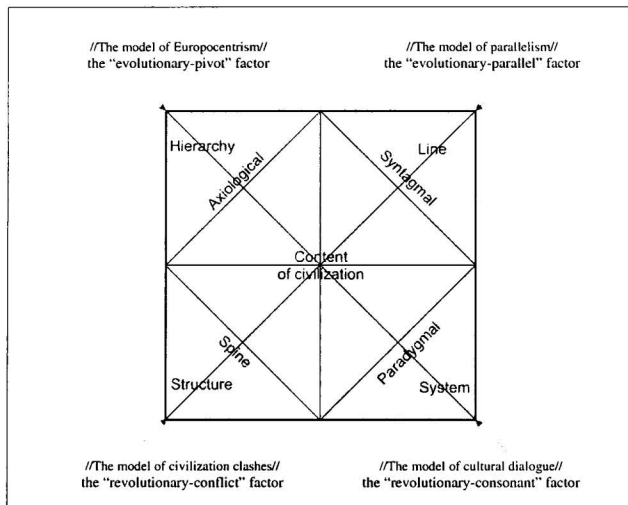
the development of system characteristics, which constitute communicative basis, (the communicative nature of the sign).

Thus, we see that all represented above civilization models may be viewed as focused on this or that organizational dimensions: hierarchy, line, structure, system. In particular, the presence of *structures* gives ground for their clash, the presence of *systems* gives ground for the dialogue, the presence of *hierarchies* gives birth to and embodies subordination, and the presence of *advancing potential* for their development, represented as a line of any shape. In other words, on the basis of all the models of civilization development that we have at our disposal, we reconstruct the key, determinate type of activity and consider it as a factor of formation and development of civilization. Thus, we view each model of civilization as a possible and predetermined form of civiliza-

tion development and civilization itself as a complex holistic notion organized in a hierarchy, linear, structural and systematic way and due to its complex nature open to different realizations. Any realization is just a part of the whole.

The above-said is shown in *Picture 2*. The given approach was born inside the *causal-genetic perspective* (Oukhvanova 1998). Causal genetic content modeling illustrates the fact that civilization is a set of specific, settled forms of development (such as societies, nations, races), which are anyway interactive and their interaction may have evolutionary or revolutionary nature with further specifications.

They respond to the interaction in a revolutionary way, that is they cross and as a result they are attracted to each other or push each other away; or they can respond to the interaction in an evolutionary way and as a result the forms absorb



**Picture 2.** Civilization content caused by four factors  
(permanent reasons)

others or simply ignore them. All these processes are natural inside the civilization in its functional state. They form the basis of its development and its built-in functional components; they determine and transform the way it (in its particular realizations) changes. They help to examine civilization as a living (functional) being, they determine the content components of civilization. That is why we also call them factors or the “whys” and the “wherefores” of civilization. They help to explain unexpected changes in the development of civilization; they help to foresee these changes. Accordingly civilization may be described as an open dynamic system that experiences the effect of all the above-mentioned factors (constituting categorical shear of the civilization). In its turn the theory of the civilization may be introduced as the ability to examine and explain specific processes of interaction: clashing, attracting, absorbing, parallelly developing processes.

We see that the study of civilization as something ideal (conceptually organized) includes examining its hierarchical characteristics (pragmatic or axiological content), linear characteristics (syntagmal content, examining specific periods/syntagmas), structural (cognitive or spine content) and system (paradigmatic content) characteristics.

Making a conclusion, we should mention that such an approach shows a new perspective in the study of civilization processes, and it can present the ideas of Europe-centrism, Parallelism, Clash of civilizations and their Dialogue (polilogue) as complementary, inter-crossing factors of the historical process. So, our premise is that the four idea-biased (spatially and timely organized) content dimensions are complementary. Accordingly, the study of the civilization in a historical continuum includes the decoding of:

*Pragmatic or axiological content of civilization.*

Each form of civilization represents a set of

functioning (and therefore correlating) value characteristics (functional values). Their correlation determines if it is becoming a unity or not; it determines the *manifested* content of civilization in its functioning;

*Syntagmal content.* Each form of civilization represents a set of functional stages/intervals determining civilization. Each form of civilization has a set of functionally valid (and therefore correlating) stages or intervals (functional stages); and it also determines the *manifested* content of civilization in its functioning;

*“Spine” content.* Each form of civilization represents a specific structural resolution or structurally united idea. Each civilization has a specific functionally valid “spine”, or a set of structurally correlated elements. Their combination makes up the integrity of civilization; it determines the *latent* content of civilization functioning;

*Paradigmatic content.* Each form of civilization represents a specific system resolution or system united idea. Each civilization is a set of functionally valid system units, or a set of system organized signs. It is in the framework of this system that we can speak about a particular civilization. The correlation of system units determines the *latent* content of civilization in its functioning.

*Conclusion.* It is clear then, that we can go beyond a specific civilization and look at Civilization from a holistic angle. Then we will be able to observe a specific civilization as a part of a larger unit, which has its own axiology, spatial (and temporal) organization (extension), just as its own system of sign organization. In other words, our approach remains open, dynamic, adaptable, admitting any transformation (evolutionary and revolutionary).

## Phenomenon-Biased Content of Civilization

Content as a phenomenon presupposes the focus of attention on objects (facts, events, etc.) and subjects (people) which are phenomenological by nature and can be reflected and reconstructed. This kind of content refers to reality, denotes reality and reconstructs it in the minds of the communicants.

Civilization can be viewed as bearing certain phenomenological characteristics. Otherwise, it also has a specific phenomenological content. Each form of civilization can be characterized by (self) identification (ethnic identification), cultural foundation (categories of culture and law), as well as general level of reality (referential world). Each of these characteristics is a significant phenomenon, but at the same time there is a tendency for their introsculation and inter-manifestation, which we cannot but view. When we are concentrating on their correlation and integrity, we are *to adapt* the existing terminology for our case. Then we can go beyond academic discussion carried out among representatives of different traditions presented in the first part of this article and concentrate on what unites them.

Studying the works devoted to civilization phenomenon as, for example, the works by Gurevich (Гуревич 1984), Stepin (Степин 1986; Степин 2001), Kiesov (К'есаѣ 1999), Hobsbaum (Хобсбаум 2002), we find that practically all of them represented their approaches in complete isolation to others (and here only the latest book of Erasov (Ерасов 2002) is an exception). In other words, we do not see direct interchange of terminology in the works written by of the above-mentioned researchers, as well as their followers. On the contrary, each of the approaches is detached from the others, each of them applies a specific set of methods and is guided by its own idea (vi-

sion) of the phenomenon. This situation makes the researchers in the field rather choose among the approaches than look for some common ground.

To what extent is our synthetic approach effective? Can it bring the researchers closer to understanding how civilization is organized and functioning as a specific phenomenon? How can civilization as a phenomenon be defined in this case? We will come closer to the answers to these questions after we have a closer look at the existing terminology and see if it can be reconsidered from a synthetic angle.

*Self-identification* is a term that may be represented in ethnical sense. In other words, it is a fact of a certain ethnical self-consciousness. Its basic element is ethnical identity. It is formed due to the processes of (ethnical) self-identification and typification (typology). The mechanism of the formation, development and maintenance of ethnical self-consciousness has many levels. It is constructed and represented by stereotypes of behavior, traditions and ceremonies that translate (communicate from generation to generation) norms and values. It is also constructed and represented by stereotyping people world perception. Thus, ethnically determinated world-outlook (the picture of the world) and behavior are formed (Ерасов 2001). Self-identification in global civilization is most effective when a person and society are considered in correlation to both their own cultural tradition and the world culture. Integration is accomplished by the destruction of local culture through translating a wider cultural horizon. Imported values do not necessarily negate local values, but they stay "on the surface" of culture. This level helps the local culture to enter the orbit of the world (global) culture.

The second term is *pattern*. We will proceed from the assumption that any culture is varied,



and common consciousness is principally inlaid. Archaic ideas from the point of view of science as well as ideas, which will constitute the foundation of the world outlook in future, co-exist in modern culture (Степин 1986). Common sense will include modern social myth as well as religious ideas, elements of magic and many other things. This complex of ideas constitutes a harmonic unity, in which no element dominates. If we examine culture in its vertical and horizontal shears and consider the point of their intersection, we can find here a cultural-axiological centre – *pattern*, or orthodoxy. Pattern does not presuppose implicit acceptance (and even complete knowledge) by *all* representatives of the culture. Orthodoxy constitutes the value and the will centre. It is transmitted from the centre to periphery. One of the variants of pattern formation is its borrowing (it was used for the formation of the cultural *canon* in Eastern Europe). But a *borrowed pattern* does not mean that it is spread along a blank cultural field. All previous cultural meanings and ideas make up the foundation of culture and make it unique (Мойсеев 2000). Borrowing and fixing of a pattern is made practically without conflicts in the case when orthodoxy is imported purposefully, permanently, when it has homogeneous basement and when there is no place for the clash of different patterns at the same cultural field.

*Cultural foundation* is a system of ideas basic for culture, which makes up the model of reality typical for a specific historical period. Cultural foundation is “a system of coordinates, which helps to mould the world outlook of a person” (Жбанков 2001, с. 474). It forms the basement of pre-theoretical knowledge and the basis for the constitution of “different forms of mature world-outlook” (Жбанков 2001, с. 474). This model describes how a person is related to macro- and

micro-cosmos and society, his/her duties as a representative of a certain tradition, standards of behavior in typical situations (ordinary stereotypes) and, what is most important, a special set of existentials (“life-death”, “the past-the future”, “I-the Other” and so on), which constitute the system of universal cultural ideas and determine the infiltration into sacral and profane dimensions of human life and all basic strategies of personal and social existence.

The next term is the *general level of reality*. We have already mentioned that self-identification is possible only in the case when person and society are correlated to different cultural grounds as to equally possible, and no cultural idea is given the position of value predominance. But the questions arise: what is the mechanism of this correlation? Is this process theoretically and practically possible? Let us consider the role of Latin-American and Baltic literature. The so called magic realism (Latin America) of G. Marques, H. Kortasar, H. Borches and others as well as intellectual mysticism of M. Pavich, G. Petrovich (Маркез 1997) demonstrates this position. They state the existence of the general level of reality (which includes material level) where all levels of consciousness – personal and public – are mixed. In this situation culture does not separate people on the basis that they belong to one of its versions, but it eliminates the conflict nature of consciousness and instead suggests the idea of endlessly different possibilities to interpret social codes (H. Borches) or the idea of transmutations and the transformation of culture (M. Pavich). It means that the process of self-identification is endless, open and never finishing because culture itself is non-static and changeable. This does not mean “broken”, “schizophrenic” consciousness. In fact, genuine culture can not be static and fixed. That is why the pro-

cess of self-identification, striving for self-identity can be interpreted as a permanent correlation to different cultural foundations. And no foundation dominates over others. This situation can be described as existing "at the break of traditions and meanings", which is possible only when instability and variability of the system serve as a condition for its effective development.

*The referential world* is the ground that provides meaning to any human knowledge, including scientific knowledge. It is given directly in emotional experience; it is pre-reflexive and it is always connected with the subject. It has structural characteristics, which provide the possibility to form scientific abstractions, idealizations on its basis (Гусецкий 2000). So, the referential world is prior to scientifically organized thinking. It is supposed that all people have similar life experience that makes all levels of sign interaction possible.

And here we will try again to examine the above-mentioned characteristics and concepts of civilization from *causal-genetic perspective*. Otherwise, the key characteristics that we have discussed (such as self-identification, pattern, cultural foundation and general level of reality) can be viewed as particular factums (result-bringing causes/reasons), which bring civilization its phenomenological content. Let us consider the *factums* one by one.

*First*, we have every reason to believe that *self-identification* is a result-bringing cause. The civilization that develops in an evolutionary way, we mean here axiological (ideological) and syntagmal (by stages) development, comes to the comprehension of the constitutive role of different *forms of integrity* of its social (*subject-subject*) organization. One of such *forms of integrity* (the largest and all-embracing) is ethnical organization. Thus, civilization can be defined as a *unity*

*of subjects* who interact in a specific historical space-time continuum and who have ethnical self-consciousness, the basic phenomenon of which is ethnical self-identification. It manifests itself both in specific (adheres to some particular community group) models of perception of other people living in the world (behavioral shear of civilization in its hierarchy dimension; *the axiology or pragmatics of behavior*) as well as in standard (typical for the whole community) models of world perception (with a fixed line/pattern of behavior; *the syntagmatics of behavior*). The main characteristics of the models are their representativeness, their information value for the referent group (ethnos or other significant groups). The mechanism of forming, developing and maintaining ethnical self-consciousness (taking into account the above-mentioned causes of the phenomenon) is based on the unity of the representative and communicative components (traditions and ceremonies, behavioral stereotypes and stereotypes of world perception, which convey a certain hierarchy of norms and values, social roles, ideals relevant to different stages of the development of civilization). It is clear that self-identification is not only an interior but it is also an external characteristic of the civilization. It determines the identification of the place of a civilization within the global civilization.

*Second*, we have every reason to believe that *cultural foundation* (reality specific for a certain historical type; program determining connections; reproduction and variations of all different forms and types of behavior and activity typical for a specific type of social organization) is also a result-bringing cause. Civilization develops in a revolutionary way as well (all its quantitative factors develop into qualitative, new structures and systems are given rise to). While developing in a revolutionary way, we mean idea-biased structural

and paradigmal (system) development, the civilization makes different units of its sign-subject organization fixed. The most significant unit (the largest and all-embracing) is pattern.

Diversity of cultural foundations arises from the necessity for the culture to absorb historical experience, which is fixed by different sign systems (verbal – grammar, lexical – semantic and so on, as well as non-verbal). Every language represents a specific perception of reality and constitutes a certain speech behavior. When a language dies, the joint experience of people who used this language perishes as well.

Historical experience is also fixed with the help of typical structures, which are not less representative for the civilization. When typical structures (social mythology, religious ideas, elements of magic and others) intersect with exclusive culture languages (codes describing all aspects of the civilization), patterns are created. We should point out again that formation of a new pattern is a kind of revolution. Patterns are the phenomena born in the heart of culture. They serve as proto-knowledge, which describes the experience of reflecting reality by consciousness and through language. Patterns connect different facts, events and ideas. Comprehension of a pattern is a more complicated and a longer process than perception of reality because it is full of abstractions of a higher level (cultural meanings and categories). It is the collective thought, the way to which is difficult and thankless.

When we analyzed the process of formation of ethnical identity, we used the concepts “representation” and “communication” (manifested level of content – actual content of the civilization). On the other hand, the process of forming of the pattern may be described in such terms as controversy between structures and adaptation of

different borrowings by the system (potential level of content – latent content of civilization).

*Third*, we have all reasons to believe that *the general level of reality* (it is the basis for creating of meanings as it is a mixture of all levels of consciousness – social as well as personal) is a result-bringing cause. The civilization that develops ideologically (axiologically) and idea-biased (structurally) fixes its forms (phenomena) of the subject-object organization (when exclusive forms of comprehension of the real world – individual structures – interlace with the type models of relation to the world – social evaluation). The most significant of the forms (the largest and all-embracing) is reference.

*Forth*, we have all reasons to believe that *the referential world* (as a foundation for production of meanings – the mix of all levels of sign interaction) is a result-bringing cause. The civilization, which develops in syntagmal and paradigmatic way, sets its forms (phenomena) of sign organization (in the interlace of speech and in typical language forms). The most significant of the forms (the largest and all embracing) is sign reference.

To sum up, we should point out that *the phenomenon-biased content of civilization* is based on such phenomena as identity, pattern, prototype and sign reference. Accordingly, we can distinguish four aspects of phenomenon-biased content. It arises on four levels: the level of social reality, the level of material reality (the general level of reality), the level of social-sign reality (the level of cultural foundations) and the level of object-sign reality (the level of functional signs of the civilization). All these levels are the causes of such content-dimensions of the civilization as existential dimension, type dimension, material and functional or functional-sign dimensions. Each dimension includes specific phenomena of the development of the civilization, such as pat-

tern (the phenomenon of typological dimension of the civilization), identity (the phenomenon of existential dimension), reference (the phenomenon of material dimension) and sign reference (the phenomenon of functional-sign dimension). Examination of each phenomenon gives us the following static characteristics of content dimension of the civilization as:

**Existential content dimension** – information about ethnical (*subject-subject*) identity of the referent group; knowledge (axiological/*pragmatic* and *syntagmal*) about the specifics of interaction among subjects or, in other words, knowledge about value-motivational features and realization of advancing dynamics of development in speech;

**Type content dimension** – information about the specifics of manifestation of ethnical identity of the referent group in the sign (verbalization). In other words, it is knowledge about social context, fixed in speech experience and represented in structural and system organization of language;

**Referent content dimension** – information about *subject-object* identity;

**Sign-referent content dimension** – information about functional sub-system.

Civilization is a set of certain patterns and ethnic groups, referents and their signs, which interact constantly. All these processes are “the a-priori” of the civilization, they constitute its foundation, they determine and transform its development, they help to recognize the civilization as a kind of a living being, they determine content components of the civilization, they are result-bringing causes of the civilization, they help to explain the turning points in its development, to foresee and predict these turning points.

## A Bit More about Causal-Genetic Approach to Civilization Studies

Thus, we have approached to civilization studies accepting the fact that civilization can be treated as a holistic, communicative, functional, complex sign that has its own material and ideal essence, form and content attributions. This is as if we treat civilization as a text or discourse. If we focus our attention on civilization content research it is logical to apply to civilization research and the perspective and methodology of the causal-genetic perspective/theory/methodology. It was first presented in 1993 in the article “The text content: from analysis to synthesis; from structure to system” in journal “Philosophical and Sociological Thought” (Ухванова 1993).

*The causal-genetic approach (perspective)* to research presupposes that text/discourse content is viewed as that caused by factums (result-bringing reasons) and factors (permanent reasons). The knowledge of the factums and factors of the content helps to learn more about and to understand the content elements out of which text/discourse content (and in our case, civilization content) is being formed. The formed elements are organized further on both idea-biased (causer by factors) and phenomenon-biased (causer by factors) in a number of sets (ways), thus becoming element of the genetic code of the content.

*The causal-genetic model* represents, together with the nucleus of the content (composed of four interdependent and interacting elements), the sets in which content elements are organized in the process of its function with a view on their interdependence and interpenetration.

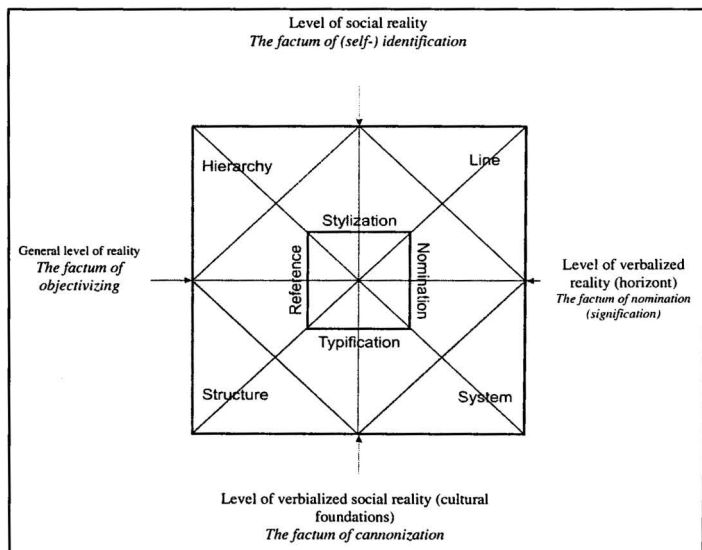
*The causal-genetic theory* is the system of knowledge about the text/discourse/civilization content viewed within the dynamics of its development, analytical and synthetic vectors, coding and decoding.

Applying the techniques elaborated within the causal-genetic approach we can present existing models of the civilization as factors (permanent causes). These factors determine the content of the civilization within such functioning content dichotomy sets as the sense and the essence, the meaning and the significance, the object-biased and the subject-biased content schemes. This analysis is very important for many reasons. On the one hand, it will help to work out an adequate scheme of such a many-sided and contradictory idea as the civilization. It will also help to choose a precise research model to describe specific civilizations. Obviously, there exist other possibilities, the discussion of which is further ahead.

Thus, the civilization within causal-genetic perspective is a certain historical process and at

the same time it is a historical phenomenon. In its first meaning the civilization is a self-organized set of axiological, paradigmatic, syntagmatic and structural content parameters or types of content. In its second meaning the civilization is a self-organization of referent or sign-referent content coordinates.

Causal-genetic perspective in examining of the civilization as an idea and a phenomenon sets the possibility to make a synthesis of the existing theories and approaches to the development of the civilization. The causal-genetic model unites the theories, which were considered to be basically adversarial. It works both on the level of civilization static (representative, phenomenological characteristics) and on the functional level (categorical, ideal and



Picture 3. Civilization content caused by four factums (result bringing reasons)

organizational characteristics). The approach allows examining the civilization as a result and a process, in other words, as a product and as a living-developing phenomenon. It

emphasizes its multi-dimensional, multi-sided nature, and at the same time it provides methodological basis for examination of the problem in details.

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## CYWILIZACJA JAKO ZNAK: NOWE PERSPEKTYWY BADAŃ NAD CYWILIZACJĄ

### Streszczenie

Jednym z kluczowych problemów badań nad cywilizacją stał się temat przyszłości cywilizacji Wschodu i Zachodu. Niektórzy badacze propagują ideę ich wzajemnego oddziaływania, wyrażającą się w postaci dialogu (polilogu) lub przenikania się cywilizacji. Inni z kolei uważają, że cywilizacje niewiele mają ze sobą wspólnego, toteż konflikty są nieuniknione. W rezultacie wyodrębniono cztery modele rozwoju cywilizacji: model europocentryczny, model równoległego rozwoju Zachodu i Wschodu, model konfliktu cywilizacji oraz model dialogu kulturowego. Czy należy je uznać za podejścia holistyczne, ale otwarte na różne realizacje? Autorki prezentują syntetyczne (a raczej synergetyczne) podejście do problemu rozwoju cywilizacji oparte na perspektywie kauzalistyczno-genetycznej.

**SŁOWA KLUCZE:** cywilizacja, znak, perspektywa kauzalistyczno-genetyczna, cywilizacja jako idea, cywilizacja jako zjawisko.

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## CIVILIZACIJA KAIP ŽENKLAS: NAUJA PERSPEKTYVA CIVILIZACIJOS STUDIJOSE

### Santrauka

Civilizacijų studijose viena iš svarbiausių problemų yra Rytų ir Vakarų civilizacijų ateities problema. Vieni mokslininkai siūlo jų bendradarbiavimo idėją, pasireiškiančią dialogo (polilogo) forma arba vienos civilizacijos viešpatavimo forma. Kiti mokslininkai mano, kad civilizacijos turi mažai ką bendro, todėl konfliktai yra neišvengiami. Šiuo metu siūlomi kelti civilizacijos vystymosi modeliai: Europos centristinis modelis, lygiagretaus Vakarų ir Rytų vystymosi modelis, civilizacijų konflikto modelis ir kultūrinio dialogo modelis. Ar galima manyti, kad tai holistiniai, bet skirtingiems realizavimo variantams atviri modeliai? Autorės pateikia sintetinį (tiksliau, sinergetinį) požiūrį į civilizacijų vystymąsi, pagrįstą kauzaline genetinė perspektyva.

**REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI:** civilizacija, ženklas, kauzalinė genetinė perspektyva, civilizacija kaip idėja, civilizacija kaip reiškinys.

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