

OSWALD SPENGLER'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

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This article discusses the views of Oswald Spengler, the founder of the philosophy of life, on the philosophy of history.

Key words

philosophy of history, laws of life, culture, thought, symbol, civilization.

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматриваются взгляды Освальда Шпенглера, основоположника философии жизни, на философию истории.

Ключевые слова

философия истории, законы жизни, культура, мысль, символ, цивилизация.

Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) is one of the great exponents of philosophy of life and philosophy of history. Spengler's philosophical views are a subjective idealistic feeling. It tries to explain based on experiences and intuition.

Spengler, like other representatives of the philosophy of life, puts forward the concept of "life" as the starting point of his teaching. Like his followers, he opposes the rationalistic understanding and explanation of life. Spengler denies the universality of life and believes that the essence of human life is manifested in individuality, subjectivity, feelings, experiences, and intuition.

Spengler interprets life as a historical event. That is, history is a way of life of a living entity. He sharply distinguishes and contrasts history and nature. According to him, nature is an inanimate, unchanging, motionless sphere, in which law, cause and effect, number, space, reason, and logic rule. History, on the other hand, is the realm of movement, formation, time, and life. Life is free of laws, programs and rationality. According to Spengler, history is dominated by subjective experiences, instinct and intuition. History can only be described by observation and feeling. On this basis, Spengler tries to distinguish historical and cultural knowledge from natural sciences. In his opinion, historians of the 19th century, in the spirit of positivism, natural-scientific approach to the socio-historical process, destroyed the border between nature and history and, in fact, tried to subordinate history to nature. According to Spengler, just as nature and history are sharply differentiated from each other, natural sciences and historical knowledge are also sharply differentiated from each other. History cannot be studied on the basis of reason and the methods based on it. That is, if natural-

scientific knowledge is the product of mental activity, then historical knowledge is the result of live observation and intuition.

According to Spengler's views, each type of culture is a unique historical event, which, as if, like every person, goes through the stages of birth, childhood, youth, old age and death. Spengler does not consider this process to be legal. Maybe the mystic believes that it is fate. The idea of destiny occupies one of the central places in Spengler's teaching. According to him, all past cultures, including the present Western culture, have the same fate: birth, childhood, youth, old age and decay, there is no other way. As Spengler points out, fate is not a scientific concept. That is why it cannot be scientifically justified and explained. The concept of destiny can only be experienced from within. Anyone who does not have the ability to feel from the inside, emotional intuition, should not be engaged in the analysis of history. Because everyone can learn nature. But to be a scholar of history, it is necessary to have a special intuition. Only a historian with this ability feels the passage of the historical process, directly observes the progress and movement of history, as if experiencing it himself. Therefore, the strength of the true historian lies in the analysis of the historical process using the method of unconscious, intuitive observation. Only selected people are armed with this method [1].

Thus, according to Spengler's views, everyone is capable of intellectual-theoretical thinking. Sensual-intuitive observation is ordered only for special, selected people. So only selected people understand the historical process. Others must accept the knowledge of the historical process created by them.

Relying on the method of historical analogy, Spengler rejects the ideas put forward by many historians and philosophers, such as the common unity of human history, historical regularity and social progress. First of all, Spengler asserts that there is no common history of humanity, and there was only separate cultural units that were independent of each other. Spengler's philosophy of history is based on the principle of interpreting the uniqueness of each type of culture. According to this interpretation, there was no single universal culture. Each culture arises and dies as a separate organism. Since cultures are independent of each other, human history does not follow a single path of development. It shows 8 independent cultures: Egypt; Babylon; China; Indian; Greek - Roman; Mexico - Maya; Byzantium - Arab; Western Europe.

Spengler touches on each type of culture listed and evaluates them. According to him, the cultures of Egypt and Babylon flourished in the early periods of history, rose to the heights and left a certain legacy, historical monuments, and remained in the history of the ancient world. Ancient Chinese and Indian cultures are close and similar to each other. Some aspects of them are still preserved today. But they are losing their characteristics under the influence of European culture. Although some aspects of the ancient Greco-Roman culture are still preserved today, they have lost their original meaning and have already become a thing of the past. Spengler was one of the first to include the Mexican-Mayan culture among the full-fledged cultures. Spengler adds this culture to the list of living cultures and believes that it has been left almost without a trace in the history of the past. Spengler tries to unite two religions with different characteristics: Christianity and Islam into one culture. In this, Spengler took into account the emergence and formation of two religions, that is, Christianity and Islam, in one geographical area, as well as the unity of their base points, symbols and metaphors. According to Spengler, Byzantine-Arab culture is currently experiencing a period of depression. Western European culture is trying to impose its principles and ideas on him. However, the Byzantine-Arabic culture has not yet perished. It still has the ability to create new, vibrant

principles and values. Western European culture, which currently dominates the field of history, is experiencing a high stage of its development. However, this culture is also gradually fading away. Today, he is entering the stage of civilization and is shaking from the inside [1].

According to Spengler, each type of culture goes through four main stages during its development. The first is the mythological-symbolic or birth stage, at this stage the main ways of perceiving the world are put in the form of myths, symbols, archetypes, the basic metaphors of culture, intuition are formed. In this period, there is still no clear understanding of symbols, no attempt to analyze them and give an order of laws and rules. This period is the stage of sensing the period that follows. Second, the first stage of culture - at this stage, such unique, unique inventions and discoveries are made, through which the culture tries to further develop the sense of the world existing in myths and symbols. Spengler gives an example of this: "In ancient Greece, such unique tragedies arose that no other culture has invented such a phenomenon. Ancient Greek culture absorbed mythology and turned it into a work of art. Such a work of art forces the audience to live together with the characters of the work, to grieve, and on this basis to experience catharsis and affect changes. The third is the metaphysical-religious culture, at this stage all the powers that exist in a certain soul are activated and realized, each culture has reached its level of ascension. At this stage, each type of culture has created a complete system of social institutions, norms, rules, and values that reflect its essence. During the period when all these spiritual values are created, high religions such as Christianity will appear, and religious faith will rise. In this period, philosophy, art and law also appear and develop. It is also during this period that higher political structures such as nation-states emerge. This indicates that every culture has risen to the top. Fourth, the stage of aging and dying of culture, this period can be extended. But, during this period, the culture will inevitably suffer. The paradox is that at this stage everything seems to be going well on the outside. That is, when viewed from the outside, it seems that the culture is at the peak of its development. During this period, it is also possible for one culture to conquer and subjugate several other cultures. However, some irreversible, irreparable circumstances are happening inside it. At this stage, once vibrant, flourishing aspects have now become lifeless, artificial, inactive states. During this period, spiritual life gradually fades away. Religious faith weakens, philosophical ideas become shallow, art declines, nausea. Dry rationalism and materialism become the basis of society's outlook. The outer side of life begins to dominate the inner side. Cultural achievements of the recent past still arouse interest in people. But they are also gradually forgotten. People will return to a purely biological existence, which is beyond the soul and history. All knowledge begins to focus on describing the external side of life, on the development of materiality. In this way, people are gradually alienated from themselves. Culture becomes civilization, a system of rigid norms, bureaucratic orders and instructions. Natural foundations, energy will fail, and despite the triumph of technology, this culture will fade.

Spengler, speaking of cultures with unique, unrepeatable characteristics, believes that a separate soul lies at the base of each of the listed cultures. Therefore, the Spenglerian spirit is not a constantly developing, interrelated universal spirit in the form of a Hegelian absolute, general, folk spirit, but a separate spirit that is the basis of the uniqueness of each culture. This spirit also differs from the Hegelian spirit, which has a rational content, in its mystical character. For example, in his opinion, the basis of Greco-Roman culture is the Apollonian spirit, the basis of Byzantine-Arab culture is the spirit of wizardry, and the basis of Western European culture is the Faustian spirit [2:202].

According to Spengler, the soul that forms the inner essence of every culture creates its own world of symbols that are alien and incomprehensible to other souls in the process of active self-expression. Therefore, according to Spengler, the ideas and knowledge of people about the things and events in the whole world are symbols of souls that have a separate, unique character. According to the philosopher, all forms of social consciousness such as myth, religion, art, philosophy and science are manifested as a whole system of interconnected symbols of the spirit of a certain culture. In this way, Spengler denies that all the mythological, religious, artistic, philosophical and scientific knowledge of the human being about the world has an objective content, and claims that all of them are the symbolic expression of a certain inner world of the soul. Spengler tries to connect all symbols, that is, all types of knowledge, with inner feeling, faith-based religion, to derive from it. According to him, the forms of world symbols such as science, philosophy, and art are the expression of the content of the soul, and the first form of deeper symbols originates from religious feelings [3: 244-252]. Thus, according to Spengler, philosophy, science, art, and all culture arise and develop from this primary, deeply religious psyche. All forms of a certain culture are the expression of a special spirit, which has its own characteristics, they develop according to the direction given by this spirit.

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