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European culture in Russian thesaurus: VI. A. Lukov's concept finalized

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Encyclopedic essays of subjective cultural studies, which appeared in a three-volume collection, had been written by the outstanding Russian philologist and culturologist Vladimir Andreyevich Lukov (1948–2014), mainly for encyclopedic publications — the New Russian Encyclopedia, the encyclopedic dictionary “Sociology of youth”, electronic encyclopedic publications “World of Shakespeare”, “Modern French literature” and others. Presented as an encyclopedia-thesaurus, three volumes of essays by VI. A. Lukov are brought together by the facts, personalities and stories that have entered the Russian culture. Such was the type of encyclopedia VI. A. Lukov had designed, but it was not implemented in his lifetime. Thus, the concept of subjective culturology is brought to life and applied to the specific case of interaction between cultures.

Key words: thesaurus approach; Lukov Vladimir A. (1948–2014); European culture; Russian culture; mutual reflection of cultures; culturology

This article had started as a summary of the book which appeared under the title *European Culture in Russian Thesaurus* (Lukov, 2018), is based on a number of encyclopedic articles and entries which the prominent Russian philologist and scholar of culture Vladimir Andreyevich Lukov (1948–2014) contributed to various editions. Vladimir A. Lukov's contributions revealed the role of the subject (a person, or a group, who represent a culture as a unified entity) in the very composition of an encyclopedia, their impact on whether it will include certain terms — and concepts as well. He saw concepts as notions which fully develop their meaning only in conjunction with impressions that people of a specific culture experience in their everyday lives. These notions then, in a sense, appear in their minds as cultural codes.

Vladimir A. Lukov never wrote an encyclopedia explicitly based on these ideas. But he prepared an encyclopedic array of materials on Western literature for the New Russian Encyclopedia and other editions, including those less wide in scope (*M. Yu. Lermontov: An Encyclopedic Dictionary; The World of Shakespeare; Modern French Literature; Sociology of Youth*, to name just a few), and also those aimed at specific reader age groups, such as teenagers (e. g., *The World of Literature and Pushkin*). In his monographs and the textbooks he wrote for philology majors he also appeared as an encyclopedically minded author.

Consequently, in compiling the multi-volume edition of Vladimir A. Lukov's articles, we relied on his understanding of European culture as part of world culture. Among other things, it meant that some features of this culture remained glossed over, while others — including the author's analysis of the contributions made by such great writers as J. W. Goethe, P. Mérimée, A. Pushkin, E. Rostand, O. Wilde, or W. Shakespeare — have received quite an extensive treatment.

The encyclopedic texts by Vladimir A. Lukov which formed the basis for this reconstruction reveal the workings of the methodology of the thesaurus as a person-oriented knowledge system. According to Vladimir A. Lukov, thesaurus is a *knowledge construct* present in the mind of every person, and common for various groups and social communities. This construct serves two basic purposes. Firstly, it acts as a guide in the cultural environment. Secondly, it promotes *self-development* and creativity. In both cases, the individual or collective subject needs knowledge which helps solve their orientational and supra-orientational tasks, rather than any or all knowledge in the world. Such a kind of system is different from science as a construct. While scientific systematization of knowledge progresses from the general to the particular and singular, thesaurus constructs move from the *proper* (Rus. 'svoi', also translated as "one's own") to the *different* (Rus. 'chuzhoi'). To enter a thesaurus, an entity must be *appropriated*, i.e. made part of one's own. Such change of perspective also implies that thesauri work as *subject-organized humanitarian knowledge*. Thus, a thesaurus can be defined as a full systematic collection of knowledge appropriated by a specific social subject and deemed important for interacting with the environment. It also includes knowledge by no means directly orientational, but expanding the idea of self and the world, or helping its subject live a joyful, colorful, varied life.

As an accumulation of knowledge, a thesaurus is by default *incomplete*. At the same time, it is absolutely *sufficient* for the uses its subject can imagine — both orientational and supra-orientational. At the heart of the thesaurus lies a *world picture*, i. e. a certain understanding of the self and one's world. This understanding, in its turn, rests upon a system of values proper for the subject. Accordingly, the building blocks for the thesaurus are found in *concepts* — specific combinations of notions and impressions which have acquired mental and emotional coloring.

In his encyclopedia contributions, Vladimir A. Lukov elaborated *thesaurus theories* as applied to literary and cultural studies (see: World culture in the Russian thesaurus, 2015; Thesaurus and thesaurus sphere, 2017). Five of these theories can be outlined as (we believe) most important for the humanities.

1. *Thesaurus theories in studies of culture, or subject-based culturology*. According to Vladimir A. Lukov, two closely intertwined and mutually complementary, yet different disciplines coexist within the discipline of culturology. They can be defined as *subject-based* and *object-based culturology*, respectively. While the latter focuses on world culture as it is, the former studies cultural thesauri — a part of world culture which an individual or collective social subject has, firstly, for a number of reasons come to know; secondly, appropriated and mastered it in a creative way in the course of social construction of reality; and thirdly, can bring it up at a given moment. Culture in its entirety cannot be comprehended and made use of by either an individual or the society in general. Subject-based culturology aims to study the rules and history of the rise, interaction, coexistence, confrontation, decline and change of cultural thesauri (Lukov, 2008a). This is the reason why many of the texts in the three volumes focus on transitional periods (such as Pre- and Neo-Romanticism) between two larger cultural models. Vladimir A. Lukov drew a firm distinction between

stable and transitional periods in the history of literature, which helped him develop a concept of “three-century arcs” as expressed in his texts.

2. *A thesaurus theory of genres.* Of key terms and categories in literary studies, Vladimir A. Lukov saw genre as the most attractive and promising. He defined genre as a *thesaurus-based system of comprehending the new*. In the same vein he rethought the notion of *genre systems* and introduced *genre generalizations* — a term which describes the process of bringing and tying together different genres (often originally belonging to disparate kinds and types of art) in order to exercise a non-genre general principle (not uncommonly, a problem-based one) (Lukov, 2006a).

This theory has found its application in Vladimir A. Lukov’s study of dramatic genres in French literature at the turn of the 19th century. Rather than trace the histories of specific genres or careers of particular authors (or groups of authors), he focused on the shift in the genre system in the context of changes in French culture, in general, and in the aesthetic thought of this transitional period, in particular. This opened new horizons for the analysis of both this specific case in literary history and the study of aesthetics as a whole.

3. *A thesaurus theory of concentric circles of literary influence.* In order to outline the preferences made by the subjects of Russian cultural thesaurus, Vladimir A. Lukov in his study of Russia’s book culture introduced the notion of ‘concentric circles of literature’ (Lukov, 2008b). The encyclopedic texts presented in these volumes reveal the system of such concentric circles within Russian literature. Another example can be found in Vladimir A. Lukov’s numerous articles on Shakespeare and such related phenomena as “the cult of Shakespeare”, “Shakespeareanization” and “Shakespeareanism”.

4. *A theory of personal models of the author in literary texts.* As the articles collected in these volumes show, in order to trace the individual pattern of a writer who had a lasting impact on literary history, we should study all aspects of their relations with reality they were in touch with — including literature, public or private life — seen through the lens of interaction between the pattern. This, in turn, implies the following:

- a) the author must set up a pattern of literary work, or sometimes both of work and lifestyle, which would be deemed important by his contemporaries and later generations;
- b) a writer should be studied through the links that tie him to the patterns developed by authors which preceded him and/or lived at the same time, as well as to generic models of authorship. Directly or indirectly (e. g., via an intermediary), these patterns must have influenced him, or, on the contrary, had no impact on him — so that his reactions could have included emulation, negation or even indifference;
- c) the writer’s life and creative work should be shown as internally correlated;
- d) correlations between the writer’s personal model and those of his contemporaries or later authors which experienced his influence, should not be ignored.

In the author’s personal pattern of writing Vladimir A. Lukov saw a specific object of literary studies: rather than addressing the author’s individuality (which belongs to the sphere of the singular) or extending biographical research, a literary scholar should move from description to theoretization by finding what elements of the pattern have significance for a specific culture (Lukov, 2006b).

Due to the nature of the thesaurus approach, Vladimir A. Lukov focused on great writers’ biographies primarily in the context of personal patterns of authorship of specific kinds of literary works. Numerous examples can be found in the biographic entries he wrote for encyclopedic projects.

5. *A theory of thesaurus spheres*. According to Vladimir A. Lukov, a thesaurus sphere is a specialized entity within a cultural thesaurus (universal, general, collective or individual) which accumulates as much information as possible pertaining to one of the constants within the core of this thesaurus (Lukov, 2014). The main example presented in the three-volume collection is the “Shakespeare sphere” (*Shekspirosfera*), and others can be found in clusters of cultural phenomena of varying nature (such as the literature’s reflection in cinematography).

These five directions in setting up a thesaurus-based methodology largely reflect its applications in the fields of philology, culturology, philosophy and sociology of culture.

As noted above, cultural world picture forms the heart of the thesaurus, a kind of its core. In the light of thesaurus approach, it can be seen as the most general image of the world, which includes logical notions and visual impressions set into a form of cultural constants and dynamic chains and structures (discursive practices, codes, etc.). Accordingly, the structure of *European Culture in Russian Thesaurus* is built around the Russian cultural world picture. Among the European culture, according to Vladimir A. Lukov, a special importance belongs to those of France, Germany and England. This is true not only for literature, but also for architecture, painting and other culture-shaping fields, such as landscape gardening, or park design.

This collection of articles and encyclopedia entries, now appearing together under the title *European Culture in Russian Thesaurus* comprises Vladimir A. Lukov’s contributions to the study of literature and culture of European societies – France, Germany, United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Romania and others. Tangentially, it also covers non-European cultures (Japan, China, India, USA, Latin America), as well as the literatures of ancient India and China. Whenever a certain phenomenon of a non-European culture is shown as appropriated by the European or Russian thesaurus, the author mainly focuses on the information which has formed a part of European cultural canon.

Vladimir A. Lukov showed that the European influence on the Russian thesaurus was manifold. As borderlines between nationalities, periods of time, genres of art and the everyday lives of individuals and peoples disappear, and specific circumstances of cultural interactions get blurred, the *proper* still persists. It preserves its shadow boundary, ever changing, always unstable, but demarcating the *proper* from the *different* and from the totally unacceptable *alien*. In subject-based culturology, this lies at the very foundation of the thesaurus and of its core – the cultural world picture.

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ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ КУЛЬТУРА В РУССКОМ ТЕЗАУРУСЕ:
РЕАЛИЗОВАННАЯ КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ВЛ. А. ЛУКОВА
ВАЛ. А. ЛУКОВ

МОСКОВСКИЙ ГУМАНИТАРНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ

Энциклопедические очерки субъектной культурологии составлены на основе статей выдающегося российского филолога и культуролога Владимира Андреевича Лукова (1948–2014), написанных в основном для энциклопедических изданий — Новой Российской энциклопедии, энциклопедического словаря «Социологии молодежи», электронных энциклопедических изданий «Мир Шекспира», «Современная французская литература» и др. Представленные как энциклопедия-тезаурус, три тома очерков Вл. А. Лукова объединяют те факты, персоналии, сюжеты, которые вошли в русскую культуру. Такой тип энциклопедии задумывался Вл. А. Луковым, но не был им осуществлен. Таким образом, его концепция субъектной культурологии реализована на конкретном материале взаимоотражения культур.

Ключевые слова: тезаурусный подход; Владимир Андреевич Луков; европейская культура; русская культура; взаимоотражение культур; культурология

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