

CONCEPTS «WAR» AND «PEACE» IN THE OLD RUSSIAN LANGUAGE PICTURE OF THE WORLD: GENESIS OF ANTONYMIC RELATIONS

The article is devoted to evolution of systematic relations in the lexical system of the Russian language that is studied in the light of cognitive linguistics. The article discovers the origin of the «war» and «peace» concepts, their historical development in the Old Russian language picture of the world and peculiarities of their verbalization in the Old Russian language. The conditions for functioning of the words actualizing «war» and «peace» concepts are revealed in the Russian business texts of the XVII century. The author underlines the historical nature of the concept as the basic lingua-mental unit. The article covers transformations that the conceptual structure is exposed to in connection with the development of thinking in the course of historical process. The article depicts the ways those transformations are reflected in the lexical system of the Russian language. The war and peace lexemes serve as the example for considering the formation of the linguistic antonymic opposition. The dependence of lexical paradigmatics on historical cognitive-linguistic processes is shown.

The research proves that the conceptual and lexical war – peace opposition is the result of formation of the corresponding abstract notions. The isomorphism of «war» and «peace» frame-structures revealed in valent characteristics of language representations of concepts in the XVI – XVII century texts demonstrates that the representations of the late Middle Ages treat them as rather uniform notional formations being a pair of correlated subject-subject relationship principles, opposed on the basis of a number of attributes. At the same time there is a historically determined equipollent semantic opposition within the frameworks of which «war» and «peace» are treated as notions possessing their own positive attribute ('counter-action' and 'inter-action' accordingly). The privative semantic opposition ('peace' = not-war, absence of war') also represented in the contemporary Russian language picture of the world, is a new formation of the late Middle Ages and arises under the influence of changing social and economic priorities of the Medieval society that led to destruction of ancient Slavic ideas about the world as a ritual agreement.

KEY WORDS: Old Russian language picture of the world, etymology, mythological thinking, concept, notion, image, semantic syncretism, semantic opposition, antonyms.

The research of the *language picture of the world* has recently been conducted in various directions, however, among the variety of the offered approaches and techniques there is an obvious lack of the research focused on studying the language picture of the world *in dynamics of its historical development*. Meanwhile the importance of such research is undeniable: as far as cognitive linguistic study of the modern language allows answering a question how the person sees the world through a language prism, diachronic retrospective research helps to understand why s/he sees it in the given way.

In a diachronic research of the language picture of the world, as well as in modern synchronic research, the key notion is the *concept* – *a certain mental structure explicated by means of language, a set of knowledge about a subject or a phenomenon, generated as a result of historical cognition of the surrounding reality.*

The concept has a very complex structure. The structure of the concept usually consists of the *notional* element and the *image-bearing* element; and the relationship between them can be generally characterised as the relationship between *the essence* and *the phenomenon*. In other words the concept is thought as an abstract, "pure" idea, a semantic "skeleton", whereas the image represents a way of existence of this idea *in human consciousness*.

In a historical prospect the degree of these elements' participation in concept formation is evaluated by researchers in different ways. «The concept is being born as an image, – Z.I. Popova and I.A. Sternin notice, – but, having appeared in a person's consciousness, this image is capable to move ahead with abstraction steps» and thus gradually to turn «from a sensual image into an actually cogitative one» (2002, с.70). Does it mean that in the course of conceptual representations formation there is a stage when there is an image, but there is no concept? This question, obviously, has no unequivocal answer.

On one hand, the image and notion are two different means of world-view and correlate with mythological (evident-sensual) and rational (logical-conceptual) thinking types accordingly. From this point of view the historical transition from a mythological thinking to a conceptual one signifies changing a sensually perceived image with an abstract notion.

On the other hand, *the notion is the essence* of the subject or the external world phenomenon reflected in consciousness, and the image is just its embodiment, which does not replace the essence itself (Колесов 2002, с.304). In this case the notion is interpreted as a category characteristic for the concept at the very initial stage of formation. The given assumption is logically consistent in case the notion is considered to be not constant but dynamic, a historically changeable formation with an abstraction as the highest point of its development.

In special literature the idea of existence of notional formations with various degree of abstraction has already been expressed (see, for example, Кожина 1999). This idea founded the basis for the division of *naive* and *scientific* notions. In addition, the initial «determination» of the notion as one of substantial forms of the concept can be explained by primordial heterogeneity of

human consciousness and, hence, only a relative domination of this or that type of thinking in times of different historical periods (Лотман *и др.* 1973, с.291-292 and Меркулов 1999, с.71).

Obviously, it is necessary to speak not about historically consecutive change of the image with the notion but about various parity of these structural elements of the concept in the process of the development of thinking. Thus it is necessary to bear in mind that in the process of evolution the connection of the notion and the image was a subject to both quantitative and qualitative (i.e. substantial) changes.

In ancient mythological consciousness the dominating role belonged to a sensual image: the person could imagine subjects and phenomena only in their concrete, "real" representation. The perception of the "essence" in archaic consciousness is possible «only through a "thing" and only due to the presence of a "thing"» (Колесов 2002, с.300). As a matter of fact, archaic consciousness represents the consistent system of notions (or, more precisely, pre-notions as they cannot be identified with modern abstractions) hidden in a concrete-sensual cover of an image. Thus the image and the notion are inseparably inter-linked in a myth. As O.M. Freydenberg notices, in this "thought system" the image and the notion are «not two pieces of cloth, outwear and underwear, but a uniform semantic integrity that can be anatomised only by science» (1998, с.229). Consonant to this is the idea of V.V. Kolesov that «we are already "spoil" by logical-notional understanding of our culture and are not capable of seeing the volume and particular semantic syncretism of the initial image» (2002, с.349), in which «the matter simultaneously appears as the nature (essence), as its substance and as the essence existence» (2002, с.304).

Historically there is a separation of an *idea* from a *thing*, i.e. formation of an abstract notion in the modern sense as a «thought in which the general and most essential properties and relations of reality subjects are reflected» (Горский 1961, с.93). Notion history can be represented as a «history of its clearing from a mythological image, from the laws of thinking and from the semantics which it should have overcome and broken off» (Фрейденберг 1998, с.576). However, formation of actual notions was a century-long process. Even having gone beyond a myth, the ancient consciousness does not lose concreteness at once, and due to that at a certain historical stage there is a parallelism of two various forms of thinking, that is revealed in interconditionality and inconsistent symbiosis of the "released" notion and the rethought image.

Undoubtedly, all similar transformations could not but be reflected in the language, causing paradigmatic and syntagmatic words connections. The knowledge of the concept structure formation, of peculiarities of human beliefs about this or that fragment of reality, shown in texts of various epochs, appears to be especially valuable as it can explain many mysteries of the modern language, can help to resolve many contradictions which are found out in the course of modern language picture of the world research. In order to illustrate the above mentioned ideas it is necessary to provide some specific examples.

It is well-known, that dichotomizing structuring of the world is the major feature of thinking. The image of the world in a person's consciousness is presented by oppositions of "life" and "death", "good" and "evil", "light" and "darkness", "beautiful" and "ugly", etc. where each of the opposition members is value-marked and connected with an idea of "bad" and "good". The knowledge of the world as a unity of two opposite beginnings is fixed in the language picture of the world and explicated through antonymous relations of corresponding concepts names, opposed at a level of lexical meanings. Thus values of names of those members of oppositions which are realised by native speakers as "bad", "negative" or "undesirable", are derivative from meanings of "positive" members names and are defined through them. So, *life* – is 'a condition of an organism at a stage of growing, development and destruction, and *death* – is 'the absence of life', *light* – is 'an optical irradiation', and *darkness* – is 'the absence of light', *good* – is 'all nice and positive', and *evil* – 'bad, ill', in turn, *bad* – 'that does not signify anything good', *ugliness* – is 'unattractive appearance'.

Word meanings of antonymous pair *война* (*war*) and *мир* (*peace*) in the modern Russian language, however, do not correlate with the given scheme. A word *война* (*war*) is a name of a "negative" member of opposition, has its own semantic sign: *война* (*war*) – is 'the armed struggle between the states'. At the same time, the word *мир* (*peace*), naming positive phenomenon, has no independent semantic sign and is defined through negation: *мир* (*peace*) – 'the absence of war'. In order to explain this fact it is necessary to appeal to the history of "war" and "peace" concepts in the Russian language.

Y.S. Stepanov notices that understanding of "peace" at an Old Russian epoch «is still far away from modern understanding of peace in a diplomatic sense, as an absence of war or war termination» (1997, c.96). What is "peace" for Old Russian and – wider – Old-Slavonic language consciousness? Etymological research shows, that "peace" for an ancient Slav was uppermost the

agreement. Certainly, it is the agreement not in the known to us sense – as the official agreement or the contract, but, more likely, an idea of unity, fellowship, expressed materially and corporeally in the ritual act of exchange. Besides, relations of participation (or, otherwise, complicity), defining mythological-continual perception of the world provided indissolubility of ideas about *peace* as the 'agreement, certain sacred obligations' and the *world* as the 'primary collective of people, "co-participant" to the agreement (ritual)'.

Formation of the Old Russian statehood led to integration and formal complication of social relations, without changing, however, their essence. For this reason throughout all Old Russian period ideas about *мир* (*world*) as a collective of people (and, more widely, on the basis of association by contiguity and due to the same principle of participation, as the space occupied by them) and *мир* (*peace*) as the "agreement", providing existence and functioning of this collective, are still closely interconnected, «are mix up and represented in this and in that way, more often through "и" [letter]» (Степанов 1997, с.95).

The second word under research is the word *война* (*war*) that is genetically a short form of an adjective of a feminine gender with the meaning 'peculiar to *вой*'. As it has been said above, at early stages of historical development any qualities and properties were perceived by a person in indissoluble unity with their carriers, that was caused by non-differentiation of concrete and abstract, by understanding of an attribute as something rather real that finds its expression in a subject and is its integral part. The attribute and its carrier in that case are not just simply closely connected, but are identical to each other. In the view of ancient people *война* (*war*) was not only a feature or quality of military people, but military people as well. This most ancient syncretic meaning is reflected in the internal form of word-combinations such as *итти воиною* (*to wage war*), where on one hand there is an idea about moving of a group of people united on the basis of the "eagerness to fight" attribute (compare in modern Russian *идти толпой / группой* (*to go in a crowd / in a group*) - according to A.A. Shahmatov's terminology it is an instrumental case of quantity or collective); on the other hand, *итти воиною* - means 'to go for the purpose of performing or committing military actions'.

Taking into accounts the results of the etymological research, the absence of "peace" – "war" opposition in the system of fundamental to archaic thinking binary attributes can be explained in the following way: initial meanings of the words *война* (*war*) and *мир* (*peace*) are inseparable

from ideas about people (i.e. are understood specifically) and their characteristics, in case these characteristics are of different levels, not supplementing but not excluding each other. "Peace" is first of all a way of uniting people and simultaneously a result of such association while "war" is a functional attribute, 'that is peculiar to *вой* (to an army)', perceived inseparably from the carrier.

In the context of further development of antonymous relations of words *война* (*war*) – *мир* (*peace*) one should pay attention to a remark of F.P. Sorokoletov who notices that in the XIV century Old Russian language there was a word *немиръ* (*non-peace*), synonymous to a word *война* (*war*) (1970, с.319). It must be specified that in the XIV century *война* (*war*) and *немиръ* (*non-peace*) are yet not synonyms whereas *война* (*war*) was still closely connected with a view of military people and their actions that was brightly shown in the language of that time. So, "combinations *ити, выходити, ххати, наххати, etc. воиною*" (*to wage war, to stage war*) (Сороколетов 1970, с.318) were the most typical conditions for realisation of a word meaning *война* (*war*), that is not characteristic for the lexeme *немиръ* (*non-peace*). For us, however, the fact of existence of a word *немиръ* (*non-peace*) as member of the opposition *миръ* (*peace*)– *немиръ* (*non-peace*) is more essential as it allows to come to a number of important conclusions about development of the concept with the same name:

- . During the specified period (XIV century) «peace (мир) – the agreement», as the principle of association of people was perceived separately from «world (мир) – collective (community) → space occupied by it» which expands its borders in the Middle Ages. The result of the development of a "spatial" line of «мир» («peace») concept is the formation of the «world = Universe» notion.
- . The existence of the language opposition *миръ* (*peace*)– *немиръ* (*non-peace*) indicates the formation in the system of medieval world-view of a particular category which is patrimonial in relation to specific categories "peace" and "non-peace", as far as «negation operation is nothing but an operation of subtraction from a class of wider volume a class of a narrower volume included in it, the result of which is the dichotomizing division of the initial class into two its subclasses formed on the basis of presence or absence this or that sign among the members of this class» (Михайлов 1987, с.19). In the sum "peace" and "non-peace" cover the volume of this category which can generally be identified as «public mutual relations» or «interaction of social subjects».

It is obvious, that the listed processes of derivation of peace-"agreement" from subject views of the world as a collective and *миръ* (*peace*)– *немиръ* (*non-peace*) opposition development reveal

a direct connection with cultural-historical processes of transformation and alienation of social relations occurring at the general background of formation of the Old Russian statehood. Certainly, "мир" (peace) at this time is not an abstract concept yet but just a potential to it: the principle of association distracted from subject views, the idea of the social relations supported with the contract. «Мир» (peace) means living "together", on the basis of common rules and according to the accepted agreements. What concerns the semantic contents of the notion "non-peace", it should be interpreted according to the Christian model of world-view that becomes a dominant of Old Russian mentality in XIV century. As it is known, privative oppositions are not peculiar to this model, any its fragment is marked, i.e. possesses its own substantial sign (Колесов 2002, с.225). Russian Middle Ages understands "non-peace" according to biblical «The one who is not with Me, is against Me» (Matthew, 12:30); "separately", "not together" here imply struggle and destruction. Such understanding of *немир* (*non-peace*) created a condition for the subsequent synonymisation of "non-peace" and "war" notions.

Formation of the notional opposition "peace - war" occurred according to the general principles of thinking where the form with negation is a necessary intermediate link of the informative process. In the "curtailed" form the same processes can be observed in the speech-thinking activity of a modern person, in particular, when there is a necessity for as much consistent as possible transfer of a course of reasoning. So, for example, negative forms are characteristic for scientific texts while in fiction texts the preference is given to their "positive" synonyms (Михайлов 1987, с.36). The same occurs in ontogenesis, in the process of transition from "semi twilight" of mythological consciousness which, as a matter of fact, is indifferent to existence of contrasts (in a myth light easily becomes darkness, a man can become a woman, etc.), to discrete, logical-conceptual understanding of the world. From this point of view the existence of an intermediate link "peace - non-peace" should be considered as a necessary condition for further formation of antonymous relation «peace – war».

In terms of world-views characteristic for the period of XVI – XVII centuries, "peace" and "war" are rather homogeneous notional formations, two relative principles of subject-subject relations, that is supported by similarity of lexical compatibility of words *война* (*war*) and *мир* (*peace*) in the texts of that epoch: *Миръ меж обЪими коронами* (В-К 2, с.151), *воина меж обоими норвецкими коруны і меж их подданными* (В-К 3, с.23), and by the use of the words

expressing concepts "war" and "peace", in the antonymous contexts: *чают что в две недѣли война или мир межъ ими будет (В-К 5, с.58), миру там быть а недружбе перестать (В-К 3, с.165); миру нелзѣ статца и кроволитие еще немало будет (В-К 4, с.141).*

The features of "war" and "peace" concepts verbalisation in the texts of XVI-XVIIth centuries are also a good demonstration of that. The distinctive feature of Russian language consciousness in the epoch of the late Middle Ages is analytical representation of uniform sense by contextual connection of synonyms varying the general semantic dominant. The concept "peace", for example, can be expressed by a number of words: *дружбу и любовную ссылку меж обѣми народы держати (В-К 4, с.204); надѣмся на млсрдого бга ... чтоб доброе соединене и дружба ояг была по прежнему (В-К 5, с.113-114).* The concept "war", in turn, can be explicated in the following way: *супротивство и несоединене меж обѣих великих гсдрствѣ (В-К 2, с.50); меж обоими коруны ссоры частые и нелюбе и супротивность (В-К 3, с.28).* The independence of the separately taken word as a part of such synonymic rows is relative, the word here is significant "only so far as it is a means of expression of some fragment of the general sense of "war" or "peace", actualizing this or that shade of meaning.

It can be underlined that a part of semantic "signs" composing analytical notion "war" are the negative forms of corresponding "attributes" of the concept "peace" ('friendship' – 'non-friendship', 'association' – 'non-association', 'love' – 'non-love'), and this is also an example of the derivative and relative character of the concept "war". At the same time definition of the contents of the concept "war" via negation of attributes composing the contents of the concept "peace" show their clearly formed comprehension as mutually exclusive types of social mutual relations and interactions.

Along with view of "peace" as relation of compatibility and interaction, opposed to "war", the texts of an epoch of the late Middle Ages also have the other understanding of "peace": *желаю покою и тишины подданных ... чтоб имъ опочинути от такои жестокои войны (В-К 3, с.176).* In opposition to "war" as 'counteraction' "peace" offers *тишину и покой (silence and rest)*, i.e. 'absence of counteraction'. Such understanding of "peace" is a new trend of XVII century. For the first time the formula *тишина и покой (silence and rest)* for a world designation appears in texts of Boris Godunov times (Панченко 2000, с.17).

Thus, along with historically caused equipollent opposition within the frameworks of which "war" and "peace" act as notions, each possessing its own substantial sign (accordingly 'counteraction' and 'mutual or joint action'), the opposition of privative type where the notion "peace" only excludes "war" attributes without opposing its own substantial attribute ('counteraction' – 'absence of counteraction') arises and receives its further development .

The opposition of this (last) type formed the basis of modern views about "war" and "peace" according to which "peace" is just an absence of war. Apparently, the explanation lies outside the language, in historical changes of cultural and social and economic bases of life activities which defined various parity between a state of war and a state of peace in various epochs.

It is known, that since the most ancient times wars were a necessary condition of existence of the person. It could not be otherwise in case of extensive development of product relations when means of subsistence could be received only by development (capture) of the increasing territories. War for the ancient person was a normal condition while «peace sometimes came as occasional, temporarily solution of almost constant conflicts between cities or states» (Бенвенист 1995, с.240).

With manufacture development social priorities change. The territorial factor loses the importance as with a new way of development of production relations the possibility of manufacture functioning and free exchange of goods are much more important. Peace becomes a necessary condition of ability to live, war start to be considered as deviation from the "norm".

As a result of the process when peace starts to be perceived as normal, usual and even an ordinary social condition, the senses historically making the contents of the notion "peace" are reduced and not allocated by "naive" domestic consciousness as essential signs of peace condition. For the modern language consciousness "peace" is first of all the 'absence of war', though at diplomatic level "peace" keeps positive signs of medieval notion (friendly relations, diplomatic agreements (treaties), embassy exchange, etc.).

Sources:

В-К 1 – Вести-куранты 1600 – 1660 гг. Москва, 1975; В-К 2 – Вести-куранты 1642 – 1644 гг. Москва, 1976; В-К 3 – Вести-куранты 1645 – 1646, 1648 гг. Москва, 1980; В-К 4 – Вести-куранты 1648 – 1650 гг. Москва, 1983; В-К 5 – Вести-куранты 1651 – 1652 гг., 1654–1656 гг., 1658–1660 гг. Москва, 1996.

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