

DOI: 10.7596/taksad.v6i5.1265

Citation: Kondratiev, K., & Smirnov, R. (2017). Economic Man in the Dynamics of Time and Expanse Perception. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 6(5), 47-53. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v6i5.1265>

Economic Man in the Dynamics of Time and Expanse Perception

Konstantin V. Kondratiev¹, Roman K. Smirnov²

Abstract

The article considers the issue of time perception by an economic person as an independent direction in the field of its study. The urgency of addressing this topic is conditioned, on the one hand, by the lack of its systemic coverage in literature about an economic man, and on the other hand, by the fact that the perception of time by an economic person not only develops the principles of his activity, but also influences the nature of their changes. Our study is built in accordance with the systemic, comparative-historical and dialectical method, the principle of historical and logical element unity. It is substantiated that an economic man could not appear in antiquity due to the lack of favorable conditions for his appearance, which will take shape only during the late Middle Ages and will be associated with the development of human existence secular vector. The contours of a bourgeois existence in the modern conditions of a postmodern situation are outlined. The mechanism of the bourgeois activity subordination is revealed to both linear and scattered-situational ways of time perception. The role of bourgeois activity is highlighted separately (through the transformation of the principle of uncertainty into the norm of life) in the change of the linear time model by its scattered-situational interpretation. The study concludes that A) The dialectical nature of the influence on each other concerning the way of time and bourgeois activity perception. B) The scattered-situational model of time does not mean an end, but a new stage in the history of bourgeois, whose characteristics are the following ones: the combination of features characteristic of both of modernity epoch and the epoch preceding modernity; the transformation of the market from the method of a person's personality oppression into the instrument of his self-creation.

Keywords: Time perception, Cyclical, linear, Scattered-situational model of time, Economic man, Bourgeois.

¹ Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, Kremlevskaya. E-mail: kons-kondrat@yandex.ru

² Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, Kremlevskaya.

Introduction

In this paper we will consider the issue of time perception (in its close relation with space) by an economic person as an independent trend in the field of his study. The urgency of addressing him is conditioned, first of all, by the lack of systematic coverage of this issue in the literature devoted to an economic man, and secondly, to the fact that the perception of time sets the principles of an economic person activity and influences the subsequent logic of their changes. So, the purpose of our article is to reveal the role and the significance of time perception as the factor that influences the organization and the change of fundamental features that determine the activity of an economic person in society.

Our study is based on the following works of domestic and foreign authors: Z. Bauman (2008), D. Brooks (2013), M. Weber (1990), W. Sombart (1994), K. Laval (201), V. Katasonov (2013), L. Boltansky (2011), S. Surikov (2015), A. Toffler (2002), P. Mason (2015) and B. Latour (2014).

Methods

The study is based on the following set of methodological approaches: systemic, comparative-historical, dialectical method, the principle of historical and logical element unity.

Discussion

Let us indicate briefly what will be meant by an "economic person". An economic person is an element of the study optics concerning the content of human consciousness in relation to the sphere of economic relations, which makes it possible to identify and systematize the rules of economic behavior of people, as well as to study a specific set of elements that form the content and the specificity of these rules in the social-historical locations under study.

This definition is broad in its scope and includes various spatial, institutional and chronological forms of an economic person manifestation. Therefore, in order not to try to grasp the immensity, we will consider an economic man by the example of one of his forms - the West European bourgeois existing in the space of market relations.

According to the studies by W. Sombart (1994), M. Weber (1990), A. Rand (1997), K. Laval (2010), one can single out the following set of fundamental features defining a bourgeois: the subordination of all aspects of life to a desire for enrichment, the systematic nature of work and prudence, ethical and legal rationalism.

Having defined the notion of an economic person, let us consider the model of time perception in European civilization in the chronological sequence, let's single out the inherent features that have influenced the development of bourgeois features and their subsequent evolution.

In European culture, one can identify three successive models of time understanding:

- A cyclical model, characteristic of the Ancient world of antiquity;
- A linear model, which dominated the Middle Ages until the end of the 20th century;
- A scattered-situational model, typical for the modern situation of postmodernity, evidenced by us nowadays.

The ancient cyclic time model was characterized by the following:

- An autarchic existence of a person in a long, bodily, localized world, tactile by its characteristics, in which an external aesthetic mode of expression prevails over the inner meaning of a man's existence.

- Spatial alignment of the local world in a horizontal plane, and as a consequence, the presence of a miracle in it (the events that disrupt the usual course of things) as an integral part of an ancient Greek daily life.

- Preservation of the existing world order principles, the violation of which is the return to primary chaos. Hence, the uncertainty is always evil for the ancient Greeks in comparison with the constancy of order, and mind, as the instrument of its understanding and systematization, is always higher than the miracle concealing the threat of this world order destruction.

Consequently, a market person could not arise and survive as a full-fledged subject of social relations in these conditions.

The linear time model, which replaced the ancient cycle, brought the following changes:

- A closed, corporeal world of antiquity is replaced by an open, qualitatively homogeneous space. It is not static, but is in constant movement, the logic of which can be known and by controlled by a man's mind.

- Autarchy is replaced by an independent person who transforms his and surrounding being freely, who does not think more than his activity without a direct or indirect interaction with the world. At the same time, its internal semantic, goal-setting aspect prevails over the external, situational, aesthetic way of its expression in the implementation of this activity.

- The forward movement toward an intended goal (or goals) controlled by a person's mind in the form of qualitative results, leads to the replacement of the horizontal alignment of space by the vertical method of its organization.

- The social norm is the projective way of a person's existence with an inherent accent of life for the sake of future or "tomorrow".

Within this model of time they develop favorable conditions for the emergence of an economic man as a freely functioning bourgeois, striving for an active, consistent, infinite profit increase.

Today we witness the transition to the third, scattered, postmodern way of time perception, which brings the following changes with it in comparison with the linear model of time:

- An open, qualitatively homogeneous space of modernity is changed by the world of qualitatively dissimilar local situations, whose connection becomes less clear for a person.

- The lack of principles understanding that determine the change and the interaction of situations with each other, leads to: a) the rejection of the progressive movement in favor of his scattered existence, which makes the projective way of a person being senseless and subordinates his activity to the principle of situational response; b) to the collapse of the vertical way of space aligning in the horizontal plane. So, nowadays we can observe the processes of eclectic mixing of high and low in the sphere of social relations, culture once again; an increasing degree of appeal to a secret, sacred knowledge, a miracle in general; The prevalence of external forms of expression (in the form of culture visualization) over inner meaning, etc.

- The uncertainty of a person situational existence (a situation is a certain set of constants existing in time) introduces not only the factor of unpredictability in his life, but also allows him to open the fullness of life for him (free from the burden of alienation and routine) for himself in the "moment".

In these realities the classical model of a bourgeois loses its relevance, however, the abovementioned does not mean its end, but only reframing, due to which the path of coexistence, the co-evolution of an individual and the market reveals, which is not devoid of its contradictions.

Results

A. Each of the presented time models makes its essential influence on the development of conditions which favor or impede the emergence of an economic person, and also determines their unique set, in the context of which the trend of the bourgeois activity is organized.

B. The linear model of time had the following effect on the totality of features inherent in a bourgeois:

- The meaning of the projective existence of a bourgeois, according to the apt expression by W. Sombart, consist in the permanent "an itch for gain" (1994).
- The achievement of this goal requires serious efforts in the form of systematically organized labor, the feature of which is its routine nature.
- The successful systemic work activity involves planning and calculation based on the principle of uncertainty, as the condition of a person action freedom in the situation where there is no predetermined way to the intended goal achievement.
- The ethical and legal component subordinates all aspects of the bourgeois life to the striving for profit, and also prescribes a set of rules, principles and orders of conduct acceptable for the sustainable existence and development of business. The heart of this regulation is a hidden fear of the future, veiled by the ethical demand for rational, prudent behavior in life. It consolidates the projective mode of bourgeois existence, restricts the choice of ways for success achievement, shapes the denial of the desire for consumption, which makes one enjoy today at the expense of the cause interests.

C. The content of an economic person is not only determined by the conditions of a linear time model, but he also influences the change of this model by his activity. Let us consider the mechanism of this influence, which is based on the uncertainty principle, in detail.

The uncertainty factor presented in human life always, but if the cyclic mode of time perception treated it as the challenge to an existing order, then in the linear model of time it becomes the prerequisite for an existence aim choice possibility by an individual and the way of its achievement through planning and calculation procedures. Otherwise, following the principle of uncertainty threatens to make a stable meaningful model of an individual existence a senseless one. However, the principle of uncertainty for a bourgeois is more than the prerequisite for activity choice freedom, it is also the source of creativity, non-standard approaches to the search of ways for profit, a powerful incentive for business development, encouraging an individual to live today and spend the available funds for pleasures provided and encouraged by the market (on his part). Hence the desire for financial success always required from an economic man to observe the balance of systematic, calculating and routine movement towards him and the uncertainty factor associated with the adoption of situational, original decisions working in the framework of the moment. At the same time, under the conditions of market relations emergence and spread, which act as the medium of the bourgeois existence, the emphasis in this balance was made on the first one - the routine movement towards the goal of enrichment. But as the market developed, absorbed social relations gradually and made a mass phenomenon from an economic man, the emphasis in this balance began to shift towards the latter one - the situational, random ways of success achievement, which was one of the important reasons for the transition (since the end of the 20th century) to the third, situational, scattered model of time understanding.

D. The scattered-situational understanding of time brings the following changes in the content of an economic person features:

- "An itch for gain" is transformed into the thirst for the permanence of maximum pleasure obtaining from one's own life, suggesting the unity of satisfaction feeling from self-realization in the matter and the level of material comfort associated with it (Dyson, 2011; It Worked, 2016).
- Systematically organized routine work activity was gradually replaced by the principle of a constant personal involvement of a person in labor, which turns into the instrument of a person enrichment, his self-realization, and the disclosure of his inherent potentials. To put it differently, from now on, not a man exists for the sake of labor, but labor serves the interests of a man (Bauman, 2008).
- The projective way of doing business, inherent in the linear model of time, gives way to the project, situational strategy of an economic man existence, which requires a high degree of adaptability from him to often changing situational conditions of business in an unpredictable manner (Latour, 2014).
- In the conditions of a projected, discontinuous being the procedures of planning and calculation become especially demanded in the activities of an economic person, since it is impossible to understand the principles that determine the specificity of the existing situation and achieve the maximum possible result at minimal costs without their support.
- The ethical-legal component prescribes the rejection of the routine way of life as an inadequate existence, in favor of a hedonistic model expressing itself primarily through aesthetic forms. This refusal is based on a positive value principle of uncertainty. So, now, unlike other models of time perception, the uncertainty factor is not a threat to the stability of a man's life, but the instrument of gaining oneself, the way of overcoming various forms of alienation, the source of unlimited pleasures associated with the infinity of an individual self-development. However, the mentioned above does not deny the difficulties associated with the process of a person self-realization in market situations, but in comparison with the linear model of time, these difficulties are no longer the source of a personality destruction, but, on the contrary, an indispensable condition for its self-improvement, a way of acquiring oneself.

Conclusions

1. One of the important prerequisites for the emergence of bourgeois during the late Middle Ages is the emergence of the secular vector of human existence, which determined the freedom of his actions in his own interests.
2. Two models of an economic person can be distinguished in the context of time perception:
 - The first one, may be designated conditionally as the bourgeois linear model. It is characterized by a systematic, routine movement towards the goal of permanence enrichment, the feature of which is the fear of the future, forcing a person to neglect the fullness of life nowadays for the sake of existence in "tomorrow".
 - The second can also be conditionally described as a scattered-situational model of an economic man. Unlike the first one, it is characterized by a situational, projected existence, oriented to life in "nowadays", and not in "tomorrow".
3. The transition from the linear model of time to the scattered way of its understanding is related with the consequences of an economic person activity who transformed the uncertainty factor from the condition of a person's freedom to choose his own path into the norm of modern life. Consequently, the interaction of time and activity perception by bourgeois has a dialectical character, where the principles of time perception have an impact on the character of bourgeois activity, and this activity makes an effect on the change of these principles.
4. The scattered-situational model of time does not carry a threat to the existence of bourgeois, since:

- It retains complete freedom of a person's action in accordance with one's own interests within the boundaries of a scattered situational existence (within the framework of the law, of course);
- It does not exclude, but presupposes the activity of a person in market conditions, which turns within the projected existence of the bourgeois into the instrument of one's own personality development or, in other words, in the way of his ontological justification.

5. Personal involvement of a scattered-situational economic person does not exclude, but presumes the preservation of capitalism exploitative essence. So, in the conditions of commercial activity subordination to the sphere of personal interests of a person, the power of capital not only disappears, but also becomes stronger due to the scattered, projected way of life of an individual, turning into the factor developing his personality.

Summarizing the mentioned above, we note that the factor of time perception by an economic person avoids abstract reasoning about his end in favor of specific forms study concerning the manifestations of economic consciousness in various areas of social relations. Therefore, outside the context of this approach, which makes it possible to single out both the special and the general one in the principles of individual economic behavior, it is impossible to have a full analysis, the development and the fruitful use of an economic person concept within the modern scientific discourse.

Acknowledgements

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

References

- Bauman, Z. (2008). *Liquid modernity*. Trans. from English. Ed. by Yu.V. Asochakova. St. Petersburg: Peter.
- Boltansky, L. & Chiapello, E. (2011). *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. *Logos Philosophical and Literary Journal*, 1(80), 76-102.
- Brooks, D. (2013). *Bobo in paradise: Where does the new elite come from?* Trans. from English by D. Simanovsky. Moscow: Ad Marginem Press.
- Dyson, B. (2011). *Citaty.info*. Accessed on 11.02.2016 URL: <http://citaty.info/man/braian-daison>
- It Worked (2016). *Lessons of Success from Ivanka Trump*. Accessed on 11.02.2016 URL: <http://itworked.com.ua/article/view/50/>
- Katasonov, V. Yu. (2013). *Capitalism: History and ideology of monetary civilization*. In O.A. Platonov (ed.). Moscow: Institute of Russian Civilization.
- Latour, B. (2014). *Reassembling the social: an introduction to actor-network-theory*. Trans. from English by I. Polonskaya; Edited by S. Gavrilenko; Nat. research university "Higher School of Economics". Moscow: The publishing house of the Higher School of economics.

Laval, K. (2010). *Economic man. The essay on the origin of neoliberalism*. Trans. from French by S. Ryndin. Moscow: New literary review.

Paul, M. (2015). The end of capitalism has begun. *The Guardian*. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jul/17/postcapitalism-end-of-capitalism-begun>

Rand, A. (1997). *Atlas Shrugged*. Trans. from English by D.V. Kostygin. St. Petersburg: Cult Inform Press.

Sombart, W. (1994). *Bourgeois: Studies on the history of the spiritual development of a modern economic man*. Trans. from German and prepared by Yu.N. Davydova, & V.V. Sapova. Moscow: Nauka.

Surikov, I. E. (2015). *Polis, logos, space: the world through the eyes of the Hellenes. Categories of ancient Greek culture*. Moscow: Russian Foundation for Assistance to Education and Science.

Toffler, A. (2002). *Future shock*. Trans. from English by A. Toffler. Moscow: AST Publishing house AST.

Weber, M. (1990). *Selected works: M. Weber*. Trans. from German and afterword by Yu.N. Davydov. Moscow: Progress.