

The Philosophical and Religious Idea of Fear and Flutter in Russian Language Consciousness

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Abstract

This article was dedicated to the study of concepts of “fear” and “flutter” in ethical-philosophy and ethnic-linguistic exposure. Here, traced stages of “fear” development and important shifts in semantic content of this concept related to the impact of Christian worldview are noted. The highest manifestation of fear - “fear of God” - emerges namely due to expansion of orthodox Christianity; this, in its term, leads to its special form - flutter. These concepts have different semantics in routine and philosophic discourses. Use of cognitive interpretation method, accounting of language semantics and national concept-sphere interaction also allowed the transition from contents of meaning to contents of concepts in the course of study. Studying methods for representation of “fear” and “flutter” concepts in contexts of works of known Russian Philosophers - Berdyayev, Solovyov, and Shestov - gives an opportunity to most complete characterization of their conceptual essence. In this article, different forms of fear manifestation were detected and described via complying to standard (pathological fear, anxiety), duration (scare, phobia, cowardice), and degree of intensity (panic, horror). The fact that in Russian consciousness, fear is clearly delineated in routine and religious senses was related to main conclusions. Fear was also associated with the present and it performed adaptive and social functions. Within philosophic understanding, Flutter was a derivative of fear, but it was more related to the future, since it was directed at achievement of piety and inspiration. The result so f this work could make contribution to the elaboration of the issues of ethnic-linguistic, linguoculturological, and cognitive science.

Keywords: Religious-philosophic discourse; Language conscience; Semantics; Etymology; Concept.



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1. Introduction

Worldview of Russian nation has been forming within multiple centuries under a strong impact of religious tradition. As long ago as in the period of paganism, concepts of life included many fundamental conceptions related to basics of human existence and concept of “fear” was also included. *Fear* belongs to basic emotions experienced by many living beings; however, the nature of this emotion may be different. Studying conceptual contents of this phenomenon suggests an integral approach and also accounts for multiple factors, among which, there are psychological, cultural, philosophic, linguistic, and social ones. In this regard, examination of concepts of “fear” and “flutter” as universal concepts with historical roots, reflecting social experiences of different nations, seems to be the most actual. (Bakittizhamal *et al.*, 2018) On the background of common human concepts, understanding of *fear* and *flutter*, inherent for Russian nation is detected more clearly. Study of these concepts also allows detecting methods of interaction of language, consciousness, mentality, and national culture interaction. (Antúnez, 2003) Such an approach is very authentic in contemporary linguistics, because it has a wide application on works of multiple Russian and foreign scientists such as Kolesov (2006), Stepanov (2004), Croft and Cruse (2004), Kovecses (2006), Taylor (2008), etc. Linguists of Kazan federal university are also actively studying conceptual contents of separate concepts and language categories: Mardieva (2014), Schuklina (2016), and Safin *et al.* (2017) etc. The significance of historical approach to studying semantic processes in their connection with mentality processes also increase. “Cognitively-oriented historical semantics has made considerable progress in the theoretical account of meaning change” (Gyori, 2005).

2. Methodology

In the course of analysis of language unit sense content, a complex approach is used and also history of a certain nation as well as history of language and literature, textologic, ethnographic, sociological and other data are taken into account. Application of methods of semantic-cognitive analysis also suggests considering interaction of language semantics and concept-sphere of nation. As this cognitive interpretation is used in the course of the study, a transition from content of meanings to content of concepts is conducted. Method of etymological reconstruction allows restoring the most ancient Slavic conceptions of fear and flutter and characterizes origins of respective

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lexemes meaning. From traditional linguistic methods, in the course of work, descriptive method, method of component analysis, and method of contextual analysis were used; as well, historical method in which the evolution of the concept significant for Russian language conscience had been traced was employed.

3. Results and Discussion

This article was dedicated to the study of concepts of “fear” and “flutter” in ethical-philosophy and ethnic-linguistic exposure. Here, stages of “fear” concept development were traced that result in the highest manifestation of fear - “fear of God” - *flutter*. Philosophic text by known Russian thinkers and philosophers were also used as materials for this study.

The concept of “fear” and ways of its language presentation had been an objective of study in linguistic concept multiple times, while the concept of “flutter” had been studied insufficiently. In most cases, lexeme *flutter* in most cases is represented in religious contexts, where it serves as stylistically marked forms related to book tradition.

For deeper comprehension of studies into these concepts, the etymology was addressed and two most popular points of view on the origin of the word *fear* were delineated. According to Fasmer, the word *fear* had original semantics of “stupor” because it was etymologically connected with Lithuanian *stregti*, *stregiu* “freeze, turn into ice”, Latvian *stregele*, “icicle”. In Fasmer’s view, Latin word *strages* was in the sense of “devastation, defeat, plunge into ground” and Latvian *struostet*, *struostit* was in the sense of “threat, warn starkly” Fasmer (2004).

The known researcher of these concepts, Stepanov, in his book “Constants: Russian Culture Vocabulary” also shed light on the viewpoint of Vayan on the origin of the studied word. According to Vayan, Russian and Slavic *fear* contained the same root as *suffer* and *passion*; therefore, it represented the unity of two concepts, “passion” and “suffering”, in conceptual plan Stepanov (2004). Therefore, from Vayan’s point of view, sense contents of concept *fear* included suffering.

According to etymological dictionary of Fasmer, the word “*flutter*” was connected by origin with Latvian *Triplet*, “to shake” Fasmer (2004).

Confirmation of this point of view was also the fact that in “Materials for Ancient Russian Dictionary by Sreznevskiy, one of the meanings for the word *coward* was “flutter” Sreznevskiy (1972); i.e., this lexeme expressed semantics of trembling and shuddering.

In the conscience of Ancient Russia man, the conceptions of “fear” and “flutter” were approaching each other. In the dictionary by Sreznevskiy, the first meaning of the word *flutter* was “fear”, and the second one was “pious flutter” Sreznevskiy (1972). At this point, the explanation of the word *fear* via *flutter* was not observed, except for related adverb form *fearfully* meaning “with flutter, with obedience” Sreznevskiy (1972). This tendency was actual for contemporary Russian language, where semantics of the word *flutter* was defined via “fear, horror” but there was no meaning for “flutter” noted for interpretation of the word *fear*.

This is stipulated by the fact that the formation of *flutter* has narrower meanings; moreover, it entered Russian language consciousness as the result of expansion and establishment of orthodox Christianity; at this point, the word *fear* always had wider meanings and meant a condition that accompanied a man at all times. Since the most ancient times, a man experienced all kinds of fear which was related to arrangement of a human personality: people always experienced fear for their health and health of their kin, fear of natural cataclysms, fear of unpredictable events, fear of death, fear of material losses, fear of solitude and misunderstanding, fear of communication, etc. As the result of orthodox Christianity, the word *fear* obtained a more special, religious, and philosophic sense and it became a component of more stable work combination “fear of God”, in which its composition gained a sacral semantic and then it was fixed with this new semantics in consciousness of religious people. At this point, the word *flutter* obtained an abstract and religious sense too; its semantics formed mostly under the influence of semantics of the word *fear*.

According to the known Danish philosopher-theologist Kierkegaard, the concept of *fear* may be manifested through two hypostasis in the form of “fear-phobia” and in “fear-vertigo”. The first type of fear - “fear-phobia” - had specific causes and it was stipulated by real-life circumstances, such as fear for one’s life, fear of getting old and ill, fear of public opinion, and fear of public speaking. The second type of fear - “fear-vertigo” - had no rational explanation, this fear was existential, and it was a fear of unknown forces Kierkegaard (2012).

While relying on this theory, the specificity of these concepts functioning in particularly Russian philosophic contexts was considered, in refraction through Russian language consciousness and Russian mentality. Imagery content of the concept was also composed of a combination of cultural symbol and national image in the word. In Russian linguistic culture, only a special conceptual field was distinguished: “Fear - Hate - Yearning - Sin - Atonement”. In accordance with the etymology of the word *fear*, connected with *suffering* - *passion*, Stepanov (2004) distinguished *fear* joined with yearning, feeling of sin; and, eventually, with atonement.

There was also a certain differentiation of fear types that were distinguished by different basics: dependently on irritant, fear might be external and internal, dependently on complying with standard - normal and pathological fear, dependently on duration of experienced condition - short-time experience (*scare*) or long-term one, expressed as a stable character feature (*phobia* or *cowardice*), and dependently on degree of intensity - insignificant (*scare*) and significant (*panic* and *horror*). Increased emotionality, inherent or Russian people, also stipulated depth and force of feeling of fear, its suffering nature, and its impact on spiritual balance. The development of “fear” concept occurred in several stages: from external manifestation to internal expression: *shame* emerged from *cold*, *fear* is developed from *stupor*, and *anger* and *rage* were born from *fire*. Feeling of fear was also connected with the present and fear conducted adaptive and social functions and had a certain object. Differently from fear, *flutter* was directed into the future, since it suggested a certain goal; piety and inspiration might be considered as such. The state of *flutter* had no

certain degrees of manifestation, as this condition itself represented the highest point of emotional experience and performed only one function - cognitive. Russian man was always eager to know the source of flutter, because the process of its experience required more soul and spiritual forces than fear.

Religious and philosophical concepts of fear and flutter in the works of three Russian philosophers who developed a point of view of Kierkegaard including Berdyayev, Solovyov, and Shestov were also considered.

Berdyayev shed light on human fear as a strong anxiety; this complied data of contemporary explanatory dictionaries, where force of fear and its unaccountability were also underlined. *"Fear lies in the basis of life of this world. When speaking deeper, in Russian one should say – horror...Among many definitions of a man may be his definition as a creature experiencing fear"* Berdyayev (1991). Human's strive to undergo analysis from inside inevitably leads to fears-dreads. In this example, the internal fear was described, "fear-phobia" promoting crisis of personality and stopping development.

This philosopher also reasons on interaction of such seemingly opposed conditions as *fear* and *bravery*. In certain conditions, a man can fear and fight one's fear at the same time. *"It is wrong to think that bravery and fear except each other completely. A man may reach high condition of bravery in a certain life sphere, leaving other sphered in state of fear"* Berdyayev (1991). In this case, different perception of *fear* in routine and religious senses is highlighted.

In the case of high intensity of *fear* condition manifestation, it turned into grid and got closer to suffering. This happened at apprehension of global events, involving human society, such as war: *"One should desire peace too; one should feel grief and horror of the war"* Berdyayev (1991).

Berdyayev philosophically apprehended the need for striving to internal, spiritual freedom by eliminating existential fear, "fear-vertigo" condition of permanent anxiety stipulated by original sin. *"But everywhere and in everything, a spiritual task remains the victory over the fear that destroys a man"* Berdyayev (2011).

As well, Berdyayev distinguished earth fear that, according to his opinion, was directed at inferior world. And religious fear, transcendental one, related to horror of experience of existence and non-existence. *"Fear and boredom are directed not at superior but at inferior world. Fear, always related to empirical danger, should be differentiated from horror that is not related to empirical danger but with transcendental, with yearning of existence and non-existence"* Berdyayev (2011).

Understanding of *flutter* may be not only religious but also a wider one. *"I am interested in fate of subject in whom universe is fluttering, sense of existence of a subject who is a microcosmos"* Berdyayev (2011). In this example, the universe by itself becomes subjected to experiencing *flutter*. Using philosophic metaphor, Berdyayev determined the sense of a human existence that was made equal to sense of existence of the universe. Human apprehends existence via fluttering of the universe, universe finds embodiment in human. In this case, it should be stated that *flutter* was understood not as hesitating or trembling but as feeling of horror, entwined with rapture.

Moreover, Shestov developed the idea of Kierkegaard about "fear-vertigo", fear of nothing. *"The fall had been disturbing human thoughts from the most remote times. Fear of Adam was not motivated by anything; nevertheless, it turned out to be overwhelming"*. Occurrence of such a condition was connected with the name of Adam whose fear was not motivated by anything. Along with infiltration of biblical dogmas into Russian consciousness, fear of nothing became a Fear of God. This *fear* that occurred on religious stage, led to pious *fluttering*.

"Fear-phobia" manifested itself in a situation when fear of not completing life chores, non-conducting of one's intention, turned out to be even stronger than fear of death. *"It seems than death is scary, but when one remembers about lie, thinks about life, than dying life is scared"*. Extreme degree of aesthetic fear development occurs on case of spiritual degradation of individual: *"When feeling that there is no God, human suddenly comprehends a nightmarish horror and wild madness of earthy human existence"*. For an individual, negation of God may lead to soul crisis, as sense of life is lost. (Vakhitov et al., 2017).

About purely aesthetic fear related to external world, there are cases in polemics of Soloviev with church. *"Truth in not feared more anywhere but in field of our church management..."* It was also noted that distortion of Christian orders could lead the church itself to fear of the truth.

4. Summary

Within philosophic contexts, understanding of fear and flutter is subordinate to religious idea and even stipulated by it. The most ancient senses laid in the semantic basis of words fear and flutter have been preserved in Russian language consciousness for ages; at the same time, they are constantly developing and evolving, similar to surrounding life itself. Being as concepts of common human content, they cover all aspects of human life, and they find their conceptual manifestation in each of them. Two types of fear: "Fear-phobia" and "fear-vertigo", distinguished by Danish philosopher Kierkegaard, could also find their reflection on classic Russia philosopher thought. Their sense volume extended, on one hand, and specialized, on the other hand, due to occurrence of Christian ideology. The concepts of "fear" and "flutter" were also developing in parallel; at this point, the concept of "flutter", originally related to religious contexts only, extended beyond its frames. According to the results of this study, different types of fear manifestation were distinguished - by compliance to standard, duration, and degree of intensity. Clear demarcation of *fear* in routine and religious senses was the characteristic of Russian mentality.

5. Conclusion

In the results of the analysis of evolution of "fear" and "flutter" concepts in Russian language picture of the world, it was found that *fear* and *flutter* were not absolute synonyms; rather they were characterized by closeness of

semantics but different on connotative and stylistic spheres. This circumstance had roots laid as deep as that in etymology of respective lexemes. In pre-Christian period, flutter and fear were concepts with closer senses; however, they further obtained semantic specialization. In spite of the fact that a significant number of synonyms for *fear* and *flutter* had been used in philosophic contexts (particularly, *phobia*, *horror*, *dread*, *anxiety*, *passion*, *embarrassment*), they were strictly divided by spheres of application, meaning conditions manifesting both in routine plan and in consciousness, and faith of nation.

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