

REVIVAL OF VLADIMIR GENING'S FUNDAMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY: POSSIBLE SOLUTION OF CONTEMPORARY METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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Fundamental Archaeological Theory based on materialistic dialectic was created by Vladimir Gening in the second half of 1970s – 80s. Its applying and further development were stopped now, but returning to this theory would help solving a lot of actual contemporary archaeology problems.

Introduction

One of the most unexplored problems is the history of Soviet theoretical archaeology in 1960-80s years. If theoretical discussion and approaches in Soviet pre-war archaeology which covered by different schools' represents in post-soviet area (Gening 1982; Klejn 1993; Lebedev 1992) where someone researches results were published in English (See Trigger 1989: 423-24), then the pos-war Soviet archaeology history studies were made by only one. It calls "strong archaeology" (by Leo Klejn's terminology) or cultural archaeology (by Vladimir Gening's terminology). There are Gleb Lebedev and Leo Klejn. Bruce Trigger cited their article (Bulkina & all 1982) in which post-war soviet archaeology description is identity in many respects to Gleb Lebedev's monograph (Lebedev 1992). But Leo Klejn was an active participator of discussion about object and subject matter of archaeology, which has took place in the USSR in 1980s years. Therefore position of his opponents – Vladimir Gening and Yuri Zaharuck were presented with distortions in his researches. Vladimir Gening's theoretical elaborations were mentioned in passing and criticized but own achievements were praised. That discussion was not completed. Klejn's critic of Gening's theory had grown into critic of Marxism and communist ideas, while the latest attainments of Fundamental Archaeological Theory (FAT) were not critically analyzed. (See about discussion in detail – Palienko 2009a). After Vladimir Gening's death in 1993rd his theory made no mention at all. For western archaeologists FAT stayed unknown practically. Therefore the article poses a problem to fill this lacuna area of researches partly.

Definition of archaeology

Applying of the Marxist paradigm in Soviet archaeology during 1930-s enabled to reconstruct social processes in the past, but there were no special methodology created at that time. This archaeological trend was named "sociological or social archaeology" (See Trigger 1989: 236, Gening 1982). Accumulation of the archaeological dates in 1960-s determined an elaboration of USSR archaeology theoretical problems.

Vladimir Gening was one of the greatest Soviet theorists. He developed FAT based on materialistic dialectic in the second half of 1970s – 80s. The first step in

FAT creation was to define archaeology as a science that means determination of object and subject matter of science. Vladimir Gening's definition of archaeology is the science studying historical development of separate ancient society's social structure by regularities of this process expression in society's material world and saving remains in archaeological sites. (Gening 1983)

Vladimir Gening formulated postulates of archaeology – axiomatic initial in cognitive activity under study of that science object theses.

1. Archaeology as a social science studies concrete historical process using doctrine about social economical formation that is key category in Marxist conception of historical development determining materialistic understanding of history.

2. Archaeology studies the history of ancient separate concrete societies using as initial sources remains and materialized activity traces that are remains of material world had been an obligatory component of that societies' social system.

3. Archaeology is social historical science studying historical process comprehensively in all fields of ancient societies' vital functions within remains and saved activity traces. In this regard archaeology ranks with the history and sociology studying social structure of all sides of human life.

4. Archaeology along with ancient societies researching also considers independent development of material world – “second nature” that is an integral component of human being. Material world is historical interests as an object accumulating main human progressive achievement in field of material production and outward things perception.

5. Archaeology studies mainly early formations such as: primitive communal, slave-owning, feudal – which are differs by extremely low level of productive powers, particularly handicraft dominating and relatively slow rates of social development.

According to these points Vladimir Gening elaborated correlation scheme of levels, aims, tasks and archaeological perception methods (See Table 1).

Archaeological culture theory

Historical perception aim of concreteness in archaeology is to reproduce past historical reality realised in individual ancient societies not only from direction of general social development historical regularities but in diversity riches realizing this regularity. Based on this point Vladimir Gening elaborated archaeological culture (AC) theory that could help to reconstruct the picture of concrete historical originality forms resulting of historical process inside individual ancient society (Gening 1985).

But specificity of archaeological knowledge is determined by specificity both final object and immediate object of research. Archaeology cognizes the final object – concrete ancient society as far as collects material remains of this society's vital functions. Before studies archaeology must reconstruct whole social system imaging as functioning alive system in day-to-day being that is an initial existence level of social system – life mode.

But theoretical reconstruction of any system supposes separation of researches, initial category and its elementary “cell” that is material world or materialization. This is system component and its integral development result in which results not only activity but spiritual world (thinking) and immediate system quality carrier (person) are concentrated. Vladimir Gening considered artefact was an elementary “cell” – the simplest abstraction in archaeological perception system. Artefact might be used as a tool for theoretical reconstruction of concrete whole – ancient society.

The next problem is marking out a Main Unit of Scientific Analysis (MUSA) in archaeological perception system including AC viewing as ontological and gnoseological systems. In primitive society MUSA is a commune that is a basal social economical cell in the first case, in the latter case MUSA is an archaeological site means totality and mutual occurrence of monumental and mobile archaeological remains (artefacts).

AC building system consists of two stages are rise from concrete to abstract and from abstract to concrete. The first stage includes determinations and typological constructions. Few ranges of synchronous and on the same territory located sites including monumental and mobile are sorted out the functional groups in which types are marked out. The monumental buildings typology based on their constructional features, mobile artefacts – on formal features of functional homogeneous groups.

AC system on the source studying systematisation level represents sources as certain structure – system of interconnected components. In V. Gening’s opinion this system creation reduces to discovering strong correlations between types of monumental and mobile remains. Accordingly when gnoseological AC structure was built, any categories of archaeological sites represent initial MUSA. Because they include information complex permissive to research AC both source studying level marking out interconnected artefacts complexes with time and space correlation and notional level reconstructing different vital function fields of concrete historical communes (societies) on this base.

Vladimir Gening had elaborated sociological matter of AC category expressing discrete ancient society (Gening 1987). The simplest degree of AC system on the empirical level is resemblance of artefact forms while internal category is resemblance of artefact creators. If artefacts are fixed by research results, remains of materialised social reality, accordingly resemblance of artefact determines resemblance of their creators’ material carriers meaning certain category of social structure. Resemblance of AC creators is autonomous ancient society – social historical organism (SHO).

Based on system approach, Vladimir Gening defined AC as complex of similar sites locating on the common territory reflecting position of single ethnic group on the certain social economical development level.

AC–SHO system structure is a ground for elaborating system of middle level perception categories and going to empirical operational level that inserts immediate sources to perception system. In this meaning AC is a central category of archaeological perception with its theoretical and empirical levels unity.

FAT basis

Vladimir Gening considered that law of AC–SHO functioning underlies FAT (Gening 1992). Its objective matter reflects social historical vital function reproduction making by of social needs in objective practical activity process. Mechanism of social needs materialization was sketched out as matrix calling grate of social needs materialization (GSNM) (See Table 2).

Its every cell positioning on the crossing of objective practical activity components separate structural links reflects interaction of two the simplest elements as a result of which social relationship certain elements is created. In general GSNM represents materialization mechanism as an integral activity process directing to social needs satisfaction. Rule of each cell is a primary objective materialization elementary law (MEL). These laws express the simplest relations that take place in integrated complicated integrity forming specific result. It's a product being able to satisfy social system qualitative different needs representing vital function materialization. It is possible to discover materialization regularities as the most important law of AC–SHO objective development only having penetrated to the materialization mechanism on the level of everyday life.

Materialization law was formulated in general by Vladimir Gening. In his opinion social needs of individual, communes and separate societies (AC–SHO) materialization is determined by specific of needs function in different activity fields, ethnical historical traditions, ecological and social economical conditions of each society life according to his formation development degree. There is V. Gening's general formulation of FAT: law of separate society (AC–SHO) function determinant is material vital function that is situated according to social production mode development degree in concrete natural and historical conditions and object practical activity directed to transformation of natural matter to material world for social needs satisfaction. This is law of vital function by the way of uninterrupted social needs materialization and every concrete historical society functioning law.

Vladimir Gening separated materialization principle as a socioarchaeological perception basal internal principle of archaeological level. From the standpoint of archaeological conception moving specific this principle allows to separate three basal points:

1. Principle of material world social determination (artifact), its each element is an element of social vital function and contains certain social relations. This principle confirms appropriateness of material world research for social system analysis including AC–SHO in its each approach and cut uncovering substance parameters of its sphere and the whole of integrity.

2. Principle of materialization system unity. As a social system obligatory component, material world reflects the state and interaction of other systems component by the rules (laws) that provide system qualitative stability, its structureness in integrity of life mode. Based on this, artifacts materialization analysis is a ground of social system initial perception mode – social system life mode reconstruction.

3. Principle of materialization structure levels as a reflection of social laws and different levels organization in social life every phenomenon. In every MEL at

closer structural genetic examination characteristics and laws of three levels could be disclosed: first is peculiar to them as a social phenomenon in its abstraction, second is their manifestations on the social historical development certain levels, third is as a rule functioning in concrete historical society. Just this structure allows to use material world – artifact as internal cognition source for any level social laws.

Vladimir Gening considered that GSNM is central component of researching system functioning and FAT in its methodological function is characterized by high structural isomorphism to theoretical construction elaborating on a base of archaeological sources research. Its means that any concrete social historical theory about any AC–SHO development regularity both a whole and in concrete situation (Vladimir Gening separated this into category of archaeological theoretical knowledge – ATK) is constructed and elaborated on base of FAT by its specification, inclusion of dates need for concrete problem solution. In other words, ATK is always a modification of FAT and their structural isomorphism is of main heuristic value, because it allows to extend FAT theses to archaeological research practice.

Main scheme of social historical research in archaeology was designated by Vladimir Gening. On the initial level hypothesis is created foregoing ATK. When in use of hypothesis processing to theory there is appeared an intermediate link – theoretical model that reflects main theory thesis. Main model component is its empirical scheme in which all main sociological definitions need produce in materialized forms basing on social activity integration conception, when every field of alive activity (in form of sociological definition) has dialectical opposition – corresponding materialized world.

Theoretical model and its empiric scheme are frame for filling with artifacts on the basis of material world totality delineated in the empiric scheme. Artifacts after complex operational processing based on special elaborated research methodic form empirical base of theory. Final researching level consists in empirical scheme replacing by empirical base in theoretical model. That is factological dates include in it. At the same time many links turn out not to be identical, that forces to correct theoretical model. The main thing on this level is empirical base (artifacts complex) coordination with hypothesis without antagonisms. It is basis of scientific explanation construction – concrete social historical conception of investigated problem. There is final aim of any archaeological research (getting ATK).

In conclusion

FAT was used in practice, particularly social structure of Scythian society was explored by archaeological sources used this approach. Vladimir Gening elaborated FAT conception in general, and next task should be creating of middle level theory for adaptation of FAT to certain historical periods and coming out to empirical level. Department of archaeological research theory and methodology in Archaeological Institute of Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic Science Academy worked on these problems.

After Gening's death in 1993rd theory department was broken up, and methodological problems researches were stopped almost completely in Ukrainian archaeology. One of its causes was transforming of social mind in USSR. In the archaeology it was expressed as retreating from Marxism, that declared by word of mouth, to new-positivism and new-Kantianism and falling away into empiricism. (See about transforming of paradigms in Soviet Upper Paleolithic archaeology in detail (Palienko 2009b))

Applying of FAT and further development were stopped, but the potential of theory was not exhaust. Therefore returning to the theoretical heritage of V. Gening would be able to solve a lot of actual problems producing by use the contemporary methodological paradigm and this way archaeology may be raised to the new level of quality.

Table 1. Correlation scheme of levels, aims, tasks and archaeological perception methods (Gening 1983: 205)				
Perception level	Perception aim	Perception task	Special scientific methods	
			internal structural (ISM)	common structural (CMM)
Theoretical level of archaeological perception (TLAP)	Determination of concrete ancient societies' formation development degree	TLAP-III Correlation of reconstructed social organism with surrounding and fixed formation degree	ISM-V Analytic methods for comparing an individual social organisms with each other and an ideal formational model	CMM-IV Methods for correlation of reconstructed social organism with fixed formation degree CMM- III Methods for reconstruction of social organism and activity fields (forming an archaeological culture)
	Reconstruction of individual ancient societies' concrete historical development	TLAP-II Social organism reconstruction; synthesis and structural genetic analysis of social structure TLAP-I Life mode of individual group reconstruction; analysis of their social activity	ISM-IV Methods for historical sociological analysis of activity fields and social organism (archaeological culture) ISM- III Methods for describing and analysis of social structure elements on the life mode level	
Empirical level of archaeological perception (ELAP)	Forming of research empiric base	ELAP-II Empiric regularity discovering, artefacts classification and typology (Empiric objects and empiric schemes forming) ELAP-I Artefacts collection and fixation	ISM- II Methods for discovering and analysis of empiric regularity, empiric schemes and base forming and formal statistic analysis of empiric objects ISM- I Methods for excavation, fixation and describing of artefacts	CMM- II Methods for reconstruction of the life mode (transforming object information to sociological) CMM- I Methods for empiric objects forming and empiric facts formalisation and typology

**Table 2. The structure and matter of social vital function materialization elements
(Grate of social needs materialization – GSNM) (Gening 1992: 78)**

Component of subject practical activity	Social historical factors				
	social	ethnic	functional	technical	ecological
society	Law of social needs subject forming that is an initiator of consumer products creation activity for to satisfy the requirements	Law of saving ethnic historical tradition of materialization (Law of traditions heredity in forms and ways of needs satisfaction)	Law of materialization functional conditionality by needs of concrete vital functionality forms specific	Law of according technical level development and social needs satisfaction technology with society development social level	Law of social ecological determinism: social needs accordance with ecological conditions of needs subject environment
knowledge	Law of knowing a need, necessity of its satisfaction and forming the aim of activity for consumer goods production by subject	Law of keeping in social mind images of needs satisfaction special forms and ways	Law of modeling consumer products functions and mode of their production according to social fields needs	Law of forming transforming activity model: saving technological experience in technological knowledge about appropriate field	Law of accumulating knowledge about environment including knowledge about possibilities of basing on practice natural material transformation for consumption
activity	Law of choosing a doer for consumer goods production activity. Way of including / excluding a doer in activity	Law of saving tradition to select and to include doer in needs satisfaction activity	Law of activity structural organization according to social fields need specific	Law of realizing transforming activity model based on heredity of consumer products creation doers' experience	Law of choosing natural materials and environment according with experience of consumption activity doer
means of activity	Law of property in means of activity connected with a getting of consumer products	Law of saving traditional property form in means of activity	Law of activity means accordance to aim of attaining activity products function adjusted quality	Law of according activity means with technology for social needs satisfaction products receiving	Law of choosing activity means to natural material processing possibilities
natural material	Law of property in natural resources	Law of traditional needs adaptation to local natural conditions	Law of rational choosing natural material quality according to subject of consumption functions	Law of rational choosing natural materials processing technologies for getting of consumer products	Law of choosing native material for consumer products creation
subject of consumption (material world)	Law of consumer products property and distribution	Law of distribution traditional forms and ways of consumer products consumption	Law of social needs satisfaction, subject of consumption accordance with examples had been modeled for needs satisfaction	Law of transforming given subject satisfying social needs from selected natural material	Law of activity waste formation, cutting off materials with unnecessary features and quantity

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Vladimir Gening was one of the greatest Soviet theorists. He developed Fundamental Archaeological Theory (FAT) based on materialistic dialectic in the second half of 1970s – 80s. It would have to be the methodological ground for social problems researches using archaeological sources. V. Gening elaborated the archaeology structure problems, the archaeological research procedure, social reconstructions general methodology during that period. His disciples attempted to apply FAT in practice.

The main Gening's opponent was Leo Klejn. The discussion about object and subject matter of science took place in soviet archaeology in the second half of 1980s. But Klejn's critic of Gening's theory had grown into critic of Marxism and communist ideas, while the latest attainments of FAT were not critically analyzed. Applying of FAT and further development were stopped after the USSR disappearing and Gening's death in 1993rd, but the potencial of theory was not exhaust. Therefore returning to the theoretical heritage of V. Gening would be able to solve a lot of actual problems producing by use the contemporary methodological paradigm and this way archaeology may be raised to the new level of quality.