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The concept of "Russian European" appeared in the 19th century, Vl. Solovyov was the first who gave its definition in his work "Three conversations on war, progress and the end of world history". In contemporary philosophical discourse, this concept was returned by Vladimir Kantor, who defined the "Russian European" as the Builder of the great Russia based on European-Christian values. Thus was held the line from Pushkin, who said that the first European in Russia is the state, via Vl. Solovyov to the philosophers of the Russian Diaspora F. Stepun, S. Frank, N. Berdyaev, and G. Fedotov.

The concept of "Russian European" has a strictly cultural orientation; any attempt to give a political assessment is untenable. So the political relations between Russia and West do not determine the contacts of Russian thinkers to Western intellectual culture. We usually consider the influence of European thought on Russian, but there was a feedback effect. In fact, in the XX century only Russian philosophers have been able to identify the dangers of totalitarian regimes, the majority of Russian thinkers saw in Hitlerism traits of Bolshevism. The position of Russian European has always been clearly defined, it is defending and protection of the European-Christian values in any country genetically linked to Christianity. This position helped Russian intellectuals, who were forced to leave their homeland, to relive the catastrophe of the twentieth century.

The concept of "Russian European" is deeper than a simple division of Russian intellectuals on currents and groups. So, for example, during the confrontation between Westerners and Slavophiles Westerners were considered "Russian Europeans", while at the same time, the opponents were European educated and studied in the same German universities. Today, the growing of politically based interpretation of Russia as non-Europe is returning Russian society to the problem of historical choice and civilizational self-determination. To make a choice without cultural and philosophical reflection of the previous experience of Russian thinkers – Russian Europeans is impossible. It makes the work of rethinking the intellectual heritage of Russia and work on the formation of a new generation of "Russian Europeans" is extremely relevant and practically important. Today "Russian Europeans" are rare phenomena, but they certainly have a place. As a century ago their main difference is not the blind imitation of external forms of European life, but a critical view from inside (self-criticism) on Russia and West, which for the "Russian Europeans" equal parts of united Europe.