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Values as structural element of culture and morals

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Annotation: *this article deals with analysis of values as structural element of culture and morals. The author adduces data of her study of dynamics manifested in value orientation of the Russian youth and considers problems of spiritual and moral values transfer.*

Key words: *culture; values; value orientation; values hierarchy; agents of spiritual and moral transfer.*

There is no unanimity among researchers in understanding of culture and its structure. Yet many sociologists and specialists in culture studies consider values as one of the principal elements of culture structure. In this respect sociology of culture has much to do with sociology of morals that studies values by sociological methods. Values accumulate and embrace models, norms, principles and concepts of the best, most powerful ideas of culture.

Social transformations that occurred in the world in the late 20th century and early 21st century make the problem of value study in conditions of culture crisis one of the most urgent problems of the contemporary social and humanitarian knowledge. Crisis of traditional values is one of cultural crisis' numerous manifestations. In a period of social consciousness stability generations of people have a stable world image and are released from necessity to comprehend it critically. In times of crisis an individual is demoralized, embarrassed, confused. He/she is deprived of moral basis and ground because old basic values lose their relevancy while new values are not formed yet.

According to data of all-Russian polls about one third of respondents belonging to senior age group (31% of the total) acknowledge that values "are getting old and obsolete" and do not correspond to dynamics of the current life. A study performed by the all-Russian center of public opinion studies in June of 2014 demonstrated that over a half of young Russians (57%) do not have idols or heroes whose example they were ready to follow.

According to J. Ortega y Gasset, the following phenomena are signs of cultural crisis: 1) concepts and norms lose their obvious persuasiveness and are getting dead for people who are forced to make use of these values; 2) the high culture is imposed on masses in mechanic ways. In their turn, masses that are becoming cultured (or, rather, are acquiring a pseudo-culture) are losing their organic quality. Their true nature and essence are distorted and perverted by the high culture [11].

Study of social mental health and sanity (these issues have not lost their urgency in our days) has something in common with issues of cultural crisis. One of the most important criteria of culture stability is the inner

self-perception of a personality. In periods of crisis a disintegration of an individual and a society occurs and a specific, peculiar situation is being formed. E. Durkheim defined this situation as "anomie". In result of this process a human loses a feeling of stability, certainty and conditions for manifestation of various forms of deviant behavior emerge [5].

All-Russian studies that were performed from the beginning of the 1990s reveal anxiety of a considerable part of Russians who are concerned with weakening of moral norms and values in the Russian society. Russians recognize decline of morals as one of the most significant losses Russia suffered in result of the late 20th and the early 21st centuries reforms. Russians assess changes that took place in human relations very negatively and point out growth of peevishness, aggression and cynicism and loss of such qualities as unselfishness, honesty, sincerity and friendliness. A considerable part of Russians feel a serious concern about growth of legal and moral nihilism. Russians see oblivion of universal human principles of moral relations in this process of moral degradation that is fraught with danger to life of every single individual as well as to life of society at large. And such perception is quite justified

As Academician T.I. Zaslavskaya noted justly, transformation of majority of post-Communist societies brought about not a creation but destruction of spiritual and intellectual life and culture. This landslide finds its manifestations in decline of quality of life and deterioration of conditions of formation and development of a personality, science, and education, in erosion of moral criteria, in dissemination of illegal forms of social practices, crime, and corruption [4].

Piotr Sztomka defined social changes occurring in post-Communist societies as cultural trauma [16]. The trauma arises in the process of schism, confusion, and disorganization of the universe that previously was organized and regulated. Extent of the cultural trauma impact on a society depends on profoundness of schism and in many ways is connected with the old order or with desire and urge to preserve that old order. The deeper the gap between old milieu organized in customary way

and conditions caused by traumatic events the greater is the role of trauma. The more the trauma affects the basis of collective order (the sphere of fundamental rules, norms, values, expectations) the more it is felt.

Crisis of culture manifests itself in crisis of traditional values that accumulate images, norms, principles, and concepts of what is better and most influential in culture. Traditional values that constitute the basic content of morality present a steady and settled basis of national culture and mentality, of social identity. Sociology defines traditional values as values that accumulate concepts of the better and the most authoritative in form of norms, principles and models. Notions of good, of meaning of life, conscience and justice belong to universal ethical values.

Transformation of traditional values passes the principal phases phase of disintegration, phase of bifurcation, and phase of mobilization. The phase of disintegration characteristics are doubts in values and their significance and validity. The phase of bifurcation presents to a society various options including a return to traditional values and rejection of these values. In the course of the third phase, that of mobilization of forces, a new system of values begins to form in public conscience. A new system of values is based either on traditional values or, on the contrary, on new norms and values [12].

Problem of value bearings in a society that undergoes reforms remains to be invariably urgent throughout all history of sociology at large including sociology of morals. Ad scientific knowledge developed concepts of values and value bearings (orientations) did not remained unchanged and could be interpreted and explained differently [6].

Traditionally values are perceived as material or ideal objects that are the most important for a personality, as established concepts of something the most important and desired good that is correspondent to vital needs, intentions, interests of a person, a group of people or a society. A number of schools in treatment of content and nature of values have emerged in sociology. E. Durkheim, one of the founders of sociology, was convinced that

values, in the first place, were ideals and the end of values was transformation of realities values belonged to. As M. Weber understands values they are the most important motive of social activity. Thus an activity is based on belief in self-sufficient value of a specific behavior irrespective of such behavior's consequences. As M. Weber thought, the very essence of culture manifests itself in values.

T. Parsons defined values as concepts of the most desirable type of social system. Values prompt agents of action to make or accept certain decisions and ensure preservation and reproduction of cultural models.

Thank to efforts of W. Windelband and H. Rickert, the concept of "value" is strongly established on sociological science and occupies one of the key positions in theories of various kinds as well as in performance of applied empirical studies [14].

According to N.O. Losski, the spiritual basis is the most important prerequisite of values existence: "Values are possible only if basics of being are ideal and spiritual at the same time". N.O. Losski treated value as "being in its self-experienced or experienced by the other human creatures meaning for fulfillment of the absolute completeness of life" [10, p. 152]. M. Scheler, N. Hartmann and M. Heidegger associated studies of axiology with the spiritual being in the first place.

M. Scheler in his axiological studies points out that precisely spiritual values are the highest form. Unlike material values and contrary to them, the spiritual values are indivisible ones. One can distribute material goods among people only by dividing these goods. The more we divide material values, the less they are valuable. Value of indivisible spiritual goods does not depend on number of people who own them.

Within this article framework it was necessary to analyze values, in ontological sense of being but in aspect of an individual's attitude to goods of various kinds, that is in relative aspect. The very attitude of an individual to the world, good, being are expressed in values and ideals. Therefore it is necessary to take into account relativist treatment of values: "A value is what feeling dictate to accept as prin-

ciples that are above everything and what one may strive for, contemplate, respect, recognize and revere' [2, p. 152].

It should be noted that the realm of values has a specific order. This order finds its manifestation in the fact that values in relation to each other comprise certain hierarchy and that hierarchy makes some values either "higher" or "lower" than other values [15]. Significant attempts to distribute values along hierarchical ranges and ranks are contained in works of German theoreticians of values N. Hartmann and M. Scheler. In his attempts to establish criteria of values' elevation M. Scheler defines a number of features that determines "higher" position of a value in value hierarchy. M. Scheler thought that if a value is less divisible, more durable, more long-lasting and the less a value is determined by other values, the higher its position in hierarchy. A value is "higher" to the extent it is less relative and the greater satisfaction it gives to a person. According to M. Scheler, values of lower meaning are "more ephemeral" and short-run while higher values are "eternal". For instance, the value of life calls for infinity of time. At the same time the lower is a value the short-run it is.

Elevation of values depends on profoundness of satisfaction that it brings to those who share it. A value that occupies a higher position in the hierarchy provides a greater satisfaction. At the same time M. Scheler did not identify profoundness of satisfaction with acuteness of pleasure [15]. In result a value is higher the less its relativity is the less it is related to specific bearers of values. The more a value is indivisible the more spiritual is it. So, according to M. Scheler, the Divine is the most indivisible and therefore the highest value.

Taking all these criteria into account M. Scheler places values in accordance with hierarchical ranges. The lowest range covers values of the pleasant and unpleasant. The second range includes values of life sentiments. Values of the Noble and the Mean fall in this range. M. Scheler referred spiritual values of the Beautiful and the Disgusting of the Just and the Unjust and values of the Truth cognition to the third range. The fourth range consists of moral values expressed in contra-

distinction of the good and the evil comprise. The fifth, highest range includes values of Sanctity and the Divinity. These values are absolute. They are indivisible, eternal and fill a human soul with the most intense feeling of satisfaction [15].

It should be emphasized that M. Scheler makes a distinction between spiritual and moral values and places moral values at a higher level of hierarchy than spiritual values.

If in M. Scheler's conception spiritual values are connected primarily with cultural and aesthetic values then D. Hildebrand, in his turn, tried to formulate the essence of moral values and defined five distinctive attributes that distinguish moral values from values of other kinds. Hildebrand refers an attitude to freedom and responsibility, personal character, attitude of consciousness, universal imperative and obligatory character, and attitude to punishment and reward to attributes of moral values [3].

A person's scale of values comprises the core of a person, A human being is characterized as a personality depending on values he/she is oriented to and on whether values selected by a person coincides with values that are deemed as the most significant and preferable by a society or not. According to N. Hartmann, values are ideal subjects that have the absolute significance. Values exist objectively and their existence does not depend on availability or unavailability of a person able to cognize them. In his "Ethnics" N. Hartmann undertook an attempt to construct the universal system of values and tried to arrange their classification and hierarchy that combined principles of interconnection and autonomy.

According to ontology of N. Hartmann, the real being consists of several strata that have hierarchical organization. The system of values Hartmann developed is not a linear one. On the contrary, it is multidimensional and arranged along several axes. A place of every value is determined by two fundamentals: "the elevation" of a value within hierarchy and its significance or "validity", "strength". Lower values are load-bearing values. These values are more simple and basic. They are fundamental, universal and possess a more im-

perative force for an individual. High values are specific and have more certain content.

The power of a value lies in its unconditional, absolute nature and mandatory nature of imperative force emanated by a value. A value is a comparative characteristic of some good's worth. Concepts of good and evil and notions of life meaning, happiness, justice and consciousness (these notions are closely related to concepts of good and evil) are universal moral values that permeate all history of humankind and are shared by all nations and cultures.

Such values comprise the main and principal content of morality and are integrated in the single complete unit by religions, Weltanschauung types and modes of world perception. It is impossible to find out content of moral phenomena without moral values. Norms and values are refreshed and made actual in public consciousness and behavior only if they penetrate customs and habits accepted in a society and its moral life. In the current interpretation the principal meaning and sense of a value lie in the fact that value imparts life sense to aspirations of people, groups, and social entities. Values facilitate integration of society and indicate a choice of options in decision of important social problems. Thus values set a focus of social aspirations.

Value bearings have become in sociological science an analogue of philosophical concept of values. Ideas of value bearings were introduced in scientific circulation in the 1920s. Spread of value notions is connected with U. Thomas and F. Znaniecki. These scientists considered value bearings as the highest form of a set presentation that demonstrates relatively stable and social determined selective attitude to an aggregate of ideals, to material and spiritual goods, to their attainment and to life bearings in behavior and consciousness of people. The purpose of value bearings lies in the fact that they as generally accepted social bearings in social consciousness and social behavior acquires various extents of significance, urgency, and meaning for representatives of different social groups Sure, social bearings depend on gender, age, place of

residence, vocation and Weltanschauung sets. Thus values transform into value bearings that reflect their subjective interpretation given by an individual, a group, stratum, by community etc.

So value bearings are complex entities and specification of forms of values, their transfiguration into rather clear and distinct indices. Three main components (cognitive, emotive and behavioral) can be separated in value bearings. Cognitive component is the element of knowledge. Emotive component is emotional element that follows from evaluation. Behavioral component is connected with value bearings implementation in the process of life activities. Unification of components of three kinds allows evaluating them objectively in all their diversity. However avowal of attachment to various spiritual and moral norms is far from real behavior of people [11].

Dynamics of value bearings of the youth is subject matter of study we carry on for past 17 years among students of higher and secondary education institutions of Moscow city and Moscow region. According to our young respondents, such values as family, collectivism, patriotism, love, friendship, justice, work for Motherland's benefit, social justice, respect to people, health, faith, morals, spirituality, self-renunciation, commitment belong to traditional values. Innovative values, in their turn, are presented in the youth conscience by self-realization, individualism, money, power, glory, education, self-development, independence, love, freedom, creative work, health, friendship, social status, leisure. As answers demonstrate, some values (for instance, love, friendship and health) young respondents referred to both traditional and innovative values.

Our study allowed separating certain trends. First, a peculiar "entwinement" of traditional and innovation values is observed. The same phenomenon was observed in the 1970s and 1980s. The highest positions in hierarchy of value bearings occupy such basic values as "family", "friendship", "love" and "health". This index contradicts numerous allegations about crisis of family. It is obvious that in the current conditions family performs the role of shelter from social cataclysms and of the

most important incentive for development of personality. Layer of traditional values that is preserved ion consciousness of the youth in many respects fulfill a function of protective mechanism and this mechanism creates a feeling of some stability.

Second, system of the youth's value bearings has undergone serious changes in past 15 years. An active process of self-determination and acquisition of new value bearings is occurring in conscience of young people. The young generation demonstrates orientation to its own forces and abilities, individualistic values that are close to the Western mentality. Significance of such values as carrier, interesting creative work, ability to "pinwheel" in order to survive etc. is increasing in consciousness of young people. In the first place, the present-day youth connects life success with, with such values as "good education". "capacity to attain one's goal" and "persistence". Orientation towards modernist values promotes the present-day Russian youth's optimal adaptation to changing social conditions.

Third, a drastic decline of importance of socially significant values (such as, for example, "opportunity to be of use for other people" and "respect to other people") in the youth should be noted. It is a very disquieting fact that such value as "labor to the benefit of the Motherland" had the lowest rating throughout past 15 years. It is a very vivid demonstration of the shift that goes on in the youth conscience: socially significant values are giving place to individually significant values. Withdrawal of a young person into his/her own "narrow" circle is, on one hand, is an important prerequisite for a person's adaptation to the social reality but, on the other hand, it is an isolation from the society in the circle of private interests [8].

Moral values in a nation's mentality, the young people's attitude to moral values and norms, ability to see the perspective are, in the last resort, defined by an individual's moral socialization. Detection and exposure of the most important social groups and institutions that convey spiritual and moral values constituted one of tasks of our sociological study "Peculiarities of the youth moral so-

cialization in present-day Russia" (the study was carried out in 2012–2013 with participation of Moscow region students. Within our study framework it was important to identify principal agents of spiritual and moral values transfer in present-day Russia [2]. As the survey demonstrated, the most important agent of spiritual and moral transfer was family (family was mentioned in 81.2% of answers to respective question). At the same time formal education performs insignificant role in transfer of spiritual and moral values. It can be said that school and institutions of higher education distanced themselves from the process of upbringing and focused their activities and efforts only on transfer of certain volume of knowledge. Unfortunately, mass culture did not come into circle of agents involved in transfer of spiritual and moral norms and values. None of respondents mentioned role of cinema, theater, visual arts as mass culture elements and agents of spiritual and moral values transfer.

Though media and church exert some influence on the youth consciousness their influence on process of the Russian youth's moral values formation is not significant. Yet education institutions, media and church remain to be important channels of spiritual and moral values transfer and their role in cultural development of the young genera-

tion will certainly increase. It is interesting that, as studies demonstrate, young people themselves define channels of different moral values transfer quite definitely. For instance, development of respect young people connect with family and school, formation of love, trust, sincerity and understanding they connect with communion with friends and development of tolerance they connect with mass media. Young people think that formation of responsibility and friendship is the priority of school while the church nurtures faith and love. We think it is important to form clear understanding among institutions transferring spiritual and moral values (including social institutions of culture) in what sphere they can exert the greatest impact on moral development of the youth.

Nowadays Russia undergoes the stage of mobilization. As some politicians and political scientists note, the post-Soviet period runs down and a new stage of the Russian society life is beginning. New stage means new perspectives and, sure, new problems including problems arising in the sphere of spiritual and moral values. Is present-day Russian society capable to elaborate a system of values based on traditional values? Or will the Russian society follow the path of modernist values actualization? These are questions of great immediacy and relevancy.

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International marriages in Moscow megalopolis: the problem of an inequality of the matrimonial relations

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Annotation: analyzed of social and cultural inequalities, which consequences show in international marriage. The special attention gives to theories of a social inequality of M. Weber, T. Parsons and E. Durkheim through which prism the substantial nature of unequal international marriage defined. Each criterion of a social inequality which is shown in international marriage in the Moscow megalopolis – wealth, social prestige, birth, division of labor, age, education – is confirmed by statistical data, results of the secondary sociological researches conducted by the Russian and foreign research centers, and also legal standards of the Russian legislation. It establishes that the most significant criteria of an inequality influencing on stability of international marriage in the megalopolis are criteria of prestige, age and education. It shows of comparison of Russian, European and American tendencies of marriage, which have impact on manifestation of an inequality in international marriage. The conclusion about the objective nature of an inequality in international marriage, which does not influence on subjective motivation of a choice of the foreign marriage partner.

Key words: social inequality, international marriage, national identity, marriage, matrimonial relations.

The modern world faces with the new social calls caused by uneven distribution of resources and the growing cross-cultural intensity. In general view, the social and economic inequality can define how distinctions between groups with the high and low income in certain community [5]. The problem of social inequality becomes the integral element of society as reflection of its political, economic and cultural structure. Most visually, it shows in the megalopolis as “the city of great opportunities”. Moscow is the largest on number city of Russia and Europe, the center of the Moscow city agglomeration and the largest center of migration in East hemisphere [14]. The megalopolis is the center of gravity

various according to the social status, an ethnic and national identity of individuals which work in borders of one social space. The ethnic origin corresponds to ethnicity and ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is a component of social identity, result of cognitive and emotional process of understanding of by the representative of an ethnic community, a certain degree of an identification with it and separations from other ethnic communities. Ethnic identity is also an assessment, the importance of membership in it, the shared ethnic feelings. Positive distinctions in favor of the group give to her members the high subjective status or prestige and thereof positive social (or ethnic) identity. In norm the positive eth-