

CULTURE AS A QUALITATIVE CHARACTERISTIC AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF IDENTITY AND SOCIETY

Peter Ponomarev^{*}, Andrey Roudenko^{**} and Victoria Kotlyarova^{***}

Abstract: The paper conducts retrospective analysis of appreciation of a cultural phenomenon, considers the role of culture in life of individuals and society, analyzes conceptual approaches to define culture offered both by foreign and domestic scientists, describes analytical and synthetic definitions of culture, and notes its key aspects. The paper also considers the tendencies in studies of a cultural phenomenon in detail. The description of scientific characteristics and the structure of culture is of key importance. The paper emphasizes the inextricable connection of culture with the individual, his social being, and also its leading role in social evolution. In conclusion, the material points a spiritual basis of culture, interconditionality and interinfluence of culture and society, personal culture and supersubstantiality.

Keywords: culture, society, supersubstantiality, individual, identity, dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

From the earliest times people tried to define culture. There was the concept that was used with enlightenment definition in Sanskrit. In Latin the word culture originally meant cultivation, processing and was used at that time as a farming term (land processing, soil cultivation). The Roman speaker and philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero in his writing *Tusculanae Disputationes* (45 B.C.) was the first who used it for purposes of an impact on human mind (Drach, 2001). The meaning of the concept of culture historically underwent some changes. So, in Ancient Greece by culture was understood a set of skills and abilities, manner, observance of the Greek tradition. In Ancient Rome during the Middle Ages the concept of culture was used in the meaning close to the modern word civilization, to the tenor of urban life more precisely. During the Renaissance era it was used in the meaning of universal individual improvement, in the 18th century – as the process of education of minds. In the 19th century some German philosophers saw in culture a form of spiritual self-expression of the individual and society (Oganov, 1996).

There are now about 500 definitions of the concept of culture. Numerous scientists have been unsuccessful to define culture in common. Multidimensionality and polysemanticity of culture are explained by the fact that culture expresses the unique world of human being that is inexhaustible and many-sided as well as the

^{*} Doctor of science, professor of department Social and humanitarian disciplines, the Board the state technical university (branch), Shakhty, Russia, ponomarev_p@mail.ru

^{**} Doctor of science, professor and head of department Social and humanitarian disciplines, the Board the state technical university (branch), Shakhty, Russia, amrudenko@list.ru

^{***} Doctor of science, professor of department Social and humanitarian disciplines, the Board the state technical university (branch), Shakhty, Russia, biktoria66@mail.ru

individual. Besides, a phenomenon of culture is considered by scientists of various areas of scientific knowledge that causes a variety of approaches to its studying.

Wide application of the concept of culture in various relations allows us to consider it in quite different meanings as sweepingly a social institute and the level of society development, a characteristic of the level of personal development, a set of value norms, the process of transfer and reproduction of social experience, and so on.

Analytical definitions of culture traditionally note its subject content or function. In the first case it is considered as a set of values, norms and institutes. In the second case it is considered as the process of development of ontological individual forces, abilities on the course of conscious activities for production, distribution and consumption of certain values.

Synthetic definitions emphasize that culture is a difficult public phenomenon, covering various parties of spiritual activity of society and creative individual self-realization. It is a historically developing set of material and intellectual values created by the person, norms, ways of the organization of behavior and communication, the process of creative individual activity (Drach, 2001).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research methodology will reveal and expand a scientific notation of the role of culture in life of individuals and society. The goal was achieved by using methodological and theoretical approaches of various sciences. The key methods that the paper used were systematic, historico-logical, problematic/chronological analyses, synthesis, and integration of separate provisions into the theory.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF CULTURE IN WESTERN EUROPEAN SCIENTISTS' WORKS

In historico-philosophical literature of European countries the term culture was introduced into scientific discourse from the latter half of the 18th century. From the very first in the academic language culture was understood as the sphere of development of human being, human beginning in the individual and opposed to natural being. Culture generally meant everything that is created by mankind unlike natural phenomena.

In 1871 E. Tylor was the first who anthropologically defined a phenomenon of culture as set of knowledge, arts, morals, the right, customs and other features inherent in the person as to the member of society (Gurevich, 2001).

Since the 18th century there was the opposition of culture to the refinement of morals of the natural man (Jean-Jacques Rousseau) that later passed into the opposition of culture and life. The view of culture as play-acting (A. Schopenhauer) and personal creative vital aim inhibition (F. Nietzsche) gained currency. Denying

the common historical process of cultural continuity O. Spengler suggested the ideas of cultural originality.

I.G. Herder notes in his works the internal integrity of culture, various types of cultures. Under the influence of his ideas the comparative-historical studying of cultures began, concrete analysis of traditions, beliefs, and customs were conducted.

In German classical philosophy (I. Kant, G.W.F. Hegel) the sphere of culture lies outside the realm of socio in the narrow sense, the sphere of interpersonal dealings. It is an area of freedom of human spirit subjecting to common internal laws of development.

Hegel considered the world of culture as otherness of Mankind Mind, the wisdom of peoples. According to Hegel, the process of introduction to the culture has two interconnected sides: its rise to joint experience and knowledge and their subjectivization in unique single forms (Hegel, 1959).

Subjects of cultural activity can be individual, collective and patrimonial (mankind) therefore culture can be considered and studied at the following levels:

- (a) individual culture;
- (b) culture of a social group (nation, professional group, labor collective, and so on);
- (c) culture of mankind (Hegel, 1997).

At the end of the 19th century a phenomenon of culture is widely considered in works of sociologists, anthropologists, ethnographers (E. Tylor, A. Kroeber, V. Malinovsky, A. Radcliffe- Brown, and others). An approach to culture as to a set of samples, activity paradigms, hidden in the ethnos life is formed. A communicative aspect of culture and also the problem of cultural heritage transfer and intra cultural contacts are of special importance in cultural anthropology. The language is of particular concern when studying a nature of culture.

S. Freud was the first who paid attention to the study of problems of relationship of the individual and culture. In theories of Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism culture is defined as a product of sublimation of unconscious psychical processes fixed in a sign form. In the 20th century under the influence of these concepts the look at culture as at a repressive mechanism in relation to the individual is formed (H. Marcuse).

In E. Cassirer's works describe culture as set of symbolical forms reflecting supreme human values which are not reduced to each other (myth, language, history, religion, art, science).

In course of time the concept of culture included two aspects. On the one hand, culture was understood as a means of individual exaltation, improvement of spiritual life and personal integrity, extirpation.

In the other meaning culture was understood as real and historically changing way of life which specifics is caused by the reached level of development of human mind, science, art, identity, and education.

In domestic and foreign scientific literature there are more than twenty conceptual approaches to define culture. Some of them will be now considered.

An axiological conception of culture considers it as a reflection of spiritual human nature, expression of spiritual values and mankind ethical standards.

An activity conception considers culture as a set of human activity ways and also the highest level of learning any sphere of activity (speech culture, brainwork culture and so forth). An activity approach assumes functioning of cultural samples as the aspects and forms of human activity.

A semiotic conception considers culture as a set of signs, transferring and storing information. A sign and symbolic aspect of culture helps to understand it as a communication system, allows us to connect the stages of human history, to find a form of contacts of the individual and society, the individual with the other one, the individual himself.

In a sociological conception culture characterizes a certain step of development of any people, society.

A summative conception considers culture as a sum of products of activity and communication of people.

A heuristic conception limits understanding of culture and considers it as creative individual activities for self-, nature, and society actualization.

A personal conception considers culture as a way of individual progress in social space and time, as the individualifestation of human subjectivity in relation to nature, society, own requirements (Maksakova, 2001). In our opinion, various conceptual approaches, having, in fact the same methodological meaning, should not be made absolute or opposed, but used, proceeding from an idea of systematicity, assuming their equal objective scientific value and practical applicability importance.

DEVELOPMENT OF VISIONS OF CULTURE IN RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS' WORKS

In Russia the concept culture was introduced into scientific discourse later than in Western Europe and only by the end of the XIX century. Great contribution to making sense of a phenomenon of culture was made by philosophers of the silver age (N. Berdyaev, A. Bely, V. Ivanov, L. Shestov, V. Rozanov, P. Florensky, and others) So, P. Florensky considered culture as the life created by the individual. N.A. Berdyaev considered that in public life the spiritual role of culture is leading. Exactly this role realizes the purposes of society. The value and quality of public life depends on the qualitative level of culture. A. Bely considered that culture is a lifestyle, and in this style it is the conscious life creativity: culture is defined by

human self-comprehension development, it is a story about development of self, it is individual and universal at the same time... culture is always the culture of any self (Belyi, 1991).

Thus, inextricable connection between the culture and the individual, his social being is approved. The conception of Russian religious notionalists considers the individual as a culture epicenter, its supreme spiritual value. The individual finds his spiritual essence, becomes a part of mankind, comprehending culture and creating it. They think that culture allows the individual to rise above his limited life and reflect space, nature, history in himself with the utmost completeness.

Further development of a view of culture was the dialogue conception of culture of M.M. Bakhtin and V.S. Bibler that considers a dialogue as a basis of individual cultural life.

The view of culture in this conception three-aspect:

1. culture is a form of simultaneous life and communication of people of various, last, real and future cultures, a dialogue form and mutually generation of these cultures;
2. culture is a form of self-determination of the individual in the identity horizon, a form of self-determination of our life, consciousness, thinking, that is culture;
3. it is a form of free determination and redetermination of the destiny in consciousness of its historical and general responsibility;
4. culture is an invention the world for the first time (Bondarevskaya, 2000).

According to M.M. Bakhtin, culture penetrates the whole human life, it is activity, directed on the possibility of activity that is self-change work. Brooding about the problem of a dialogue M.M. Bakhtin concluded that the meaning can be kept current only being in contact with the other (foe) meaning, at least to the question in internal speech of a conscious man. Each time it must be in contact with the other meaning... The actual meaning belongs not to one (single) meaning, but only to two met meanings. There cannot be a meaning in oneself - it exists only for the other meaning, namely, exists only together with it. N.S. Bibler, developing M.M. Bakhtin's ideas, writes that each man is a potentially complete culture, capable to be livelong developed (Bibler, 1991).

CONTRIBUTION OF MODERN DOMESTIC SCIENTISTS TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURE THEORY

Significant contribution to development of culture the theory was made by domestic scientists: S.S. Averintsev, L.G. Ionin, L.E. Kertman, M.S. Kagan, Yu.M. Lotman, E.S. Markaryan, V.M. Mezhev, V.E. Davidovich, G.V. Drach, and others.

One should note the following tendencies when studying a phenomenon of culture. One of them is to analyze the ratio of culture and nature. Some authors stand

them in opposition to each other (L.N. Tolstoy, and others). The others see nature continuation in culture, considering its emergence as the result of development not only of society but also nature. So, V.I. Vernadsky considered culture as natural and inevitable manifestation of life, but not as something foe to natural phenomena. P. Florensky claimed that culture organically includes nature and therefore raises and feeds the individual. Modern scientists have the similar views. So, N.Z. Chavchavadze considers that culture energy is obtained from nature.

D.S. Likhachev's view of the individual and nature as two various cultures which existence is interdependent is original.

The second tendency is expressed in aspiration to consider culture, first of all, as a very specific and self-valuable sphere of human being. Thus, attention is focused on that special role which outstanding people in cultural creativity have.

There is also a tendency to understand the life content which is characteristic for mankind in general, for concrete communities (peoples and countries, production and informal associations and so forth) and for each person as culture (Maksakova, 2001).

There are also researchers who do not include the whole life of people in the concept of culture. According to A.S. Karmin, culture is a social information coded in various sign forms, namely, information support of people's life (Karmin, 2001).

A semiotic approach to define culture is presented by scientists of the Tartu-Moscow School (Yu. Lotman, B. Uspensky, V. Toropov, and others)

So, Yu.M. Lotman considers culture as a mechanism aimed to develop and store information. In his opinion cultural learning of the world is a transfer of a phenomenon from the world of facts into the world of signs. The individual never contacts with the physical reality face to face. There is always the symbolical reality generated by him, the world of symbols and signs between him and this reality. Semiotic space is multilayered crossing of various texts, developing into a certain layer.

A layer of the reality is under this layer in hierarchical correlation. A sign and symbol have a certain meaning, expressing a concrete thought. The meaning is a defining function. It allows supporters of the semiotic concept of culture to consider it as a set of meanings (Borodavkin, 2004).

V.F. Shapovalov pointed three main aspects of the concept of culture.

Firstly, the consideration of culture as a sphere of free self-realization of the individual, a sphere of creativity.

Secondly, a view of culture as valuable attitude towards the reality;

Thirdly, a view of culture as the unreal world, created by a thought, spirit and human hands unlike of nature (Shapovalov, 2000).

V.I. Maksakova considers that culture has the following layers: informational, technological, axiological. (Maksakova, 2001). In our opinion, universal ethical knowledge and also self- knowledge present a framework of the information layer.

The technological layer of spiritual and moral culture is formed in the course of learning of skills and abilities of optimal social communication.

The axiological layer includes common professional moral values, internalized in the course of learning and practice.

SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF THE PROBLEM OF INTERRELATION AND INTERINFLUENCE OF CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Making philosophical sense of society and its culture gives a chance to organize activity in the field of education in the most optimum way. In this regard V.V. Davydov said: the formation and functioning of culture as a specific social phenomenon is aimed at the development of human individuals (Davydov, 1986).

The conception of culture as a subsystem of society emphasizes dialectic interrelation, interdependence and interinfluence of culture and society.

The view of culture in correlation to society within an activity approach is interesting. E. Markaryan considers culture as a function of society. M.S. Kagan defines culture as a product of activity of society and society as a subject of this activity. According to supporters of this approach, culture is as a way of activity, and public relations (society) presents a field of this activity that testifies to their dialectic interrelation and cross-cultural interaction (Drach, 2001). Thus, one should consider that culture and society are interdependent and are various aspects of activity. The process of interaction and influence of society and culture is double-directed. Thus, one should note that the culture priority in the social development causes successful progressive development of society.

As one of the main reasons of stagnation and degradation in all spheres of society M.S. Kagan considers the low cultural context in all its aspects – work culture, moral culture, management culture, and so on. He notes that a change of the current situation in Russian society demands not only the transformation of social relations, but also the increased culture context. M.S. Kagan also emphasizes that now exactly cultural factors are quite often considered as key in the history of mankind by comparison with the factors socio-economic and socio-political (Kagan, 1996).

K.S. Stepin has the same opinion about culture in the social development. He connects culture with its social contents and considers that social changes are impossible without changes in culture. He writes: Culture for me is a genome of social life. A new type of society demands a new cultural matrix. As a genome defines what an organism will be, so a type of culture defines the way activity of the individual will be reproduced (Stepin, 1993).

L.N. Mitrokhin considers that under the crisis, crucial moments of society exactly culture, of course, including traditions, ceremonies, way of life keeps society, does not allow it to be scattered, promotes organic reproduction and preservation of the national originality (Mitrokhin, 1997).

The hypothesis of I.A. Rakitov that says that culture of any human association has a kernel and a protective belt confirms and proves L.N. Mitrokhin's opinion. A kernel is the content of this culture. It, possessing the high stability and minimum variability, expresses the self-identity of society, ethnos. A protective belt is a peculiar filter passing information from a kernel into all structures of a social organism and at the same time adapting and even not allowing in some cases information from other cultures to a kernel. It is more changeable and less steady than a kernel. It allows culture of a concrete community to keep its original content in the course of interaction (dialogue) with other cultures (Maksakova, 2001).

Yu.N. Davydov's approach to culture that considers it as a basis, harmonizing relations of two opposing parties is original: nature and society. On the one hand, society carries a threat to the existence of nature, on the other hand, nature tries to absorb society. According to the scientist, culture can help to find that universal dimension that would not break own internal dimension of each opposing party.

L.A. Temnikova points out the social culture presenting a special social system within which activity of individuals and groups on the realization of their requirements according to the sociocultural norms and technologies is carried out. A set of moral ideals and samples, moral standards and values in the field of behavior of subjects, and also moral and legal, social and psychological (traditions, customs, fashion, and so on) mechanisms playing a regulatory role in social relations presents a substantial party of this concept. It is interesting that in this regard a spiritual and moral factor is considered in society as a really functioning social mechanism (Temnikova, 2000).

The views of V. Nalimov and M. Kagan of a phenomenon of culture are of interest. M. Kagan believes that culture is a system that is a dimension and way of the formation and development of intrinsic forces of the individual during his social activity, and V. Nalimov considers that the main objective of culture is a social therapy (Kagan, 1996).

We fall in with above-mentioned authors' views. At the same time one should emphasize that we pass methodological positions of researchers (T. Vlasova, B. Sukhodolsky, and others) who use an axiological approach when determining a phenomenon of culture. So, B. Sukhodolsky considers that culture is a set of certain values, and T. Vlasov more specifically defines this phenomenon and believes that culture is a set of values of identity and society (Vlasova, 2001). T.I. Vlasova's view is the closest to our view of a phenomenon of culture.

THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

We consider culture as a social phenomenon causing a spiritual and moral orientation of the system of social values, ideals, orientations influencing the condition of spiritual life of society, the level of development of intrinsic forces of the individual. At the same time we consider that culture can carry out an effective social therapy successfully only conditioned upon the high level of spiritual and moral culture of the members of society. One of the ways to achieve this purpose is effective educational practice aimed at moral and spiritual people training. The educational process of educational institutions of all levels must make high spiritual and moral values and ideals to be deeply experienced, comprehended and internally accepted by young people and became a compass in their social life. A young specialist of the high level of spiritual and moral culture broadcasting humanistic examples of spirituality and moral in the course of social interaction will have great moral influence on surrounding people that, eventually, will have a revitalizing impact on the spiritual condition of society.

The construction and development of identity are influenced by natural, social and cultural factors. And the uniqueness of identity is defined to a greater extent by culture as its appropriation by the individual is carried out freely. Therefore, among determinants, causing the construction of identity, culture is a backbone, integrating the two others, and not just a self-acting force. Culture is an indicator of the level of development of a social quality in the individual, and also a measure of his ability to be on stream in society to the utmost. Social competence of the individual in many respects depends on his cultural level.

One should note that sociality of the individual is influenced by culture. The personal construction is carried out in the course of socialization, learning and education. The process of adoption of certain culture happens both at conscious and unconscious levels. At the same time culture is not only the sphere of public and individual consciousness connected with self-consciousness, its integral component is also the socially unconscious, belonging to the social heritage (Arnoldov, 1993).

Scientific literature often considers the concepts culture and identity in conjunction with each other. The individual out of culture loses the sense-making bases of life. Ya. Shepansky considers that personal culture of the individual is a set of his personal examples of behavior, its methods of activity, products of this activity, his ideas and thoughts, namely, as a matter of fact all that characterizes his identity.

The same position has V.S. Bibler who considers identity as a certain regulatory idea of life of the individual in culture as an idea of finding, realization, actualization of his inner world (Borodavkin, 2004).

At the same time, E.V. Bondarevskaya notes that a status of the individual in culture is still explained by an object orientation that says that culture is built on over the individual, but does not express in his own life, creative life, spirituality, freedom (Bondarevskaya, 2000).

The quality of activity of the individual depends on his individual culture. In a view of the content of individual culture we fall in G.I. Vlasova's view who points out here five components:

- spiritual and moral;
- civil;
- intellectual;
- esthetic;
- valeological (Vlasova, 2001).

At the personal level culture performs the following functions:

- (a) integrative (promotes the inclusion of the individual into public life);
- (b) differentiating (allows the individual to take a certain social status and to carry on a dialogue with society);
- (c) life-purpose (helps to define a hierarchy of values, sense and purpose of life, promotes vital self-determination) (Arnoldov, 1993).

The level of culture of the individual is shown in his communication, behavior, functioning of emotional-volitional and intellectual spheres.

Among many problems concerning culture of the individual the question of his spirituality holds an important place.

E. Taylor's idea that the research of culture is the study of a thought of the individual, expressed in the work *Primitive culture* (1871) was mostly developed by N. Berdyaev. He wrote: any culture is the culture of spirit; any culture has a spiritual basis... (Berdyaev, 1990).

The concepts culture and spirituality are not only similar in meaning, but also make dependent on each other. Culture does not exist without spirituality, and the spirituality does not exist without culture. Loss of spirituality attracts loss of culture, its transformation into a civilization. The loss of culture promotes the loss of spirituality, its transformation into guessing and information. Thus, debased social life of society is correlative to its loss of culture (Kutyrev, 2001). The concepts culture and spirituality are used to characterize the individual as a subject of his inner world and social activity, and also social life and society in general. In a variety of its practices culture is not always spiritual. Cultural practices approve these or those norms but not all norms are ideal (Apresyan & Guseinov, 2001). Nevertheless, being in close and dynamic interaction, characterizing, in fact, an identical object, these concepts reveal its various aspects. Culture, characterizing the level of spirituality of the individual, reflects the qualitative level of its social

activity and orientation. (Ponomarev, Roudenko & Samygin, 2015) Spirituality, defining the qualitative content of culture of the individual, reflects the condition of the inner world of a certain individual and spiritual life of society. In the common cultural context spirituality is an ideal due, determining a direction of the humanistic development of the individual and society. Considering spirituality and culture from the perspective of dialectics of the purpose and means, one can conclude that culture is a spirituality educational tool, and spirituality is a purpose of the development of individual culture

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, defining culture as a qualitative characteristic of activity of the individual and the reality created by him axiological, sign, symbolic and activity aspects which allow to consider culture as a set of ideal samples, values, a communication set, a way of activity are emphasized as the most important in order to understand the role of culture in life of the individual.

Culture is a necessary condition of the existence of human society. The individual and culture are seamless concepts. Culture is an integral component of the individual. On the one hand, the individual is a creator of the supernatural world, on the other hand, it is formed under the influence of a cultural and social environment. The concept of culture holds an important role in the research of integrity of society, mechanism of social relation functioning, relationship of society and nature. Culture allows us to understand and determine life-purpose orientations of the individual, his possibility of a moral choice, freedom border.

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