THE CULTURE OF A MODERNIZING TRADITIONAL SOCIETY (ETHNICAL ASPECT)

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Abstract. The intensification of world processes has acutely raised the problem of transitional or modernizing societies and cultures. In this regard, the question of the culture of a modernizing society is actualized. In the article, the concept of "culture of a modernizing society" through the prism of modernization of a traditional society and ethnical aspect is analyzed. The explanatory cultural concept of the present day is developed. In this context, the main characteristic of a modernizing society is culture. It is revealed that culture of a modernizing society is quite plastic, multicomponent, and includes both traditional and innovative (modern) components. The Yakut culture at the modern stage is observed and it is cleared that the Yakut people are going through the final process of acculturation of the Yakut ethnos and the cultural assimilation of its large part.

Keywords: culture; traditional society; modernization; culture of a modernizing society

Introduction

The problem of transmission of culture in the epoch of transitional societies is one of the key issues of nowadays-cultural studies. Preservation of cultural heritage at the modernization era and formation of the cultural foundation is the most important question of our time. In this work, we strive to intensify attention to this problem and emphasize its exceptional importance and relevance.

Indeed, the development of human society at the present stage is undergoing a protracted transition from a society of a traditional type to a modern society. This transition (modernization) is characterized by dramatical changes in the personal and social order. Traditional values are vanishing, and the loss of these traditions and culture based on them would not lead to positive innovative acquisitions.

In this work, the author sought to investigate the manifestations of this transitional epoch in social and cultural aspect. This is the main reason for the relevance of this

study, in which the author made an attempt to present her view of the features of culture of a modernizing traditional society.

Hence the tasks of the work: consider the concept of culture in a traditional aspect, reveal the features of a traditional society at the stage of modernization, and study the peculiarities of culture, especially ethnical, of a modernizing society.

Literature review

The concept of modernization that corresponds to the essence of this work is one of the main approaches to the presented study. The problem of traditional societies and cultures in the light of their transition to modern societies and cultures, and the problem of modernization attract the special attention of researchers (Chilkote 2014; Jacobsen 2015; Sun & Ryder 2016; Xu & Hamamura 2014).

These works identify the general patterns associated with the specifics of societies and cultures undergoing modernization. In the works of these researchers, theoretical experience in analyzing the transition from the traditional to the industrial society is accumulated. Ideas that consider the ethnic aspects of the modern cultural process are also of interest for this study. In particular, the works of researchers are devoted to the study of the features of ethnic cultures and their interaction (Kane & Jacobs 2015).

Researchers advocate retaining the "traditional" versus "modern" distinction precisely because it explains the social realities. They say that a set of beliefs about what is ''modern'' or "traditional", rooted in modernization theory, has been disseminated throughout the world and influences people's understandings (Eisenstadt 2000; Giddens 2013; Inkeles 2019). Such critical works do not take a simplistic view of traditional/modern. They suggest that there is fluidity and complexity in negotiating the dichotomy (Riggs 2012; Sivaramakrishnan & Agrawal 2003).

According to Tonnies, modernization is a transition from community to society (Tonnies 1988); according to Durkheim, this is a transition from a mechanical to an organic state of society (Durkheim 2014); according to Weber – from value rationality to goal-rationality (Weber 2012); according to Simmel – from the eternal past to the eternal present; according to Krakauer – the transition to finding single copies of the general principle of rationality (Frisby 2013).

According to Levy, the essence of modernization is rationalization (Levy 2020). Smelser emphasizes technological shifts, i.e. the transition from family-community relations to economic ones. Therefore, he stresses the destroying the old society nature of modernization (Smelser 2013). Parsons sees modernization as a universal process based on adaptation (Parsons 2012). According to Luhmann, modernization is about differentiation (Luhmann 2012).

These scholars may differ in their views, but they agree that modernization is a crucial milestone on the path of social progress.

Analysis of the literature shows that, despite the wide coverage of modernization itself, the issues of culture of a modernizing traditional society in the ethnical aspect are not sufficiently developed, which dictated the need for this study.

Culture in a traditional aspect

It is known that culture is a specific way of human activity, and tradition expresses one of the essential mechanisms by which this activity is carried out. In order for this mechanism to be carried out, the accumulated experience must be actualized and materialized. And only in this transformed new quality traditions appear in the form of really functioning modes of activity.

We can say that tradition and culture based on it are characterized primarily by such an attitude towards the world, which is based on behavioral and mental automatisms, presupposing habitual (stereotyped) forms of activity.

Accordingly, such culture ensures the adaptation of a person to the natural environment (its "humanization") and change (development) of a person himself, primarily on the basis of tradition (traditional regulations, prescriptions and prohibitions).

In these cultures, the regulation of freedom is carried out by the power of tradition, which ensures the reproduction of methods of behavior developed by previous generations. Traditions operate effectively on the basis of social control, which presupposes the existence of an individual in a relatively closed community. As civilization develops, another type of culture develops - modern (industrial), based on legal regulation. This type of culture is manifested not only in the fact of the existence of a codified system of law, but also in developed and associated with law philosophy, morality and other forms of social consciousness.

The culture based on tradition is usually closely associated with the term "traditional society". It is identified with the pre-industrial era that is a long segment of human history that preceded the industrial (capitalist) formation.

Traditional societies are historically the first. These are societies that reproduce themselves on the basis of tradition and have the past and traditional experience as a source of legitimization of activity.

We find a clear classification of societies made by M. Harris. Pre-modern societies, according to him, are (a) hunter-gatherer communities, (b) agricultural communities, and (c) traditional communities. Traditional society was a non-industrial civilization. A simple division of labor in accordance with a person's sex and class stratification distinguished it (Harris 2001).

The German sociologist F. Tonnies was one of the first researchers who drew attention to the functioning of two distinct types of societies. In his work "Community and Society", he proposed the following typology of sociality: 1) community, "traditional" society"; 2) "modern" society.

"Community" was based on emotional community, and "society" was based on rational calculation, private property and free exchange. He also introduced the concept of "density of social connection" (Tonnies 1988). A community was characterized by a high degree of unity, communal-comradely relations, while modern society was characterized by a relationship of domination and subordination.

S. Eisenstadt wrote "A variety of societies is usually called traditional – from primitive non-literate societies to tribal federations and to patrimonial, feudal, imperial systems, city-states, etc." (Eisenstadt 2000, 45). All of them were considered as frozen forms that change only under the influence of external circumstances or economic and political reasons.

However, tradition and culture based on it can be understood as mechanisms for changing society. The development of culture is expressed in the processes of innovation and stereotyping. Innovation refers to the introduction of new technologies or models of activity, while stereotyping refers to the adoption of these models by a certain number of people within the respective groups.

Therefore, they are something in constant flux and change, and the source of this movement is in themselves. The dynamics of a cultural tradition is a constant process of overcoming certain types of socially organized stereotypes and the formation of new ones. Considered from the systemic-cybernetic point of view, it acts as the core of the process of social self-organization.

Thus, cultural traditions push society to change, and its culture accordingly undergoes innovations.

Traditional society at the stage of modernization
Let us consider how ideas about traditional society and its culture change as its innovations grow. L. and S. Rudolphs, for example, showed that even those "traditional institutions that were previously regarded as purely stable and unchanging, in fact, not only coexist side by side with modern institutions, but also adapt to their requirements, changing at the same time and acting as guides of modernity in the conditions of this traditional social organization" (Rudolph 1987, 93).

Such conclusions led to the creation of the concept of "transitional society", which is still popular in our time. F. Riggs was one of the first to express its main ideas. In his opinion, traditional society "under the influence of the forces of modernization is evolving into a socio-political system of a new type and such a new system, often still characterized as traditional or as transitional, develops its own systemic characteristics, forming an original mechanism of self-reproduction and maintaining stability" (Riggs 2012, 112).

In the course of modernization, there is a transition to a modern society where traditional culture is being replaced by modern culture. What are the main differences between a traditional society and a modern society?

Traditional societies differ from modern ones in a number of features. Among them: the collectivist nature of society and the absence of a distinguished personality; predominant orientation towards metaphysical rather than instrumental values; the authoritarian nature of power; pre-industrial character; the predominance of a special mental disposition – an inactive personality; orientation towards worldview knowledge, not science; predominance of the local over the universal. Many researchers believe that the most important thing in traditional societies is the absence of a distinguished personality. From our point of view, the main feature of traditional society is the dominance of tradition over innovation.

A person in a traditional society is not devoid of private interests, but the possibilities of expressing them here are limited by the universal sacred order established by tradition. It can be said that a person in a traditional society, no matter what private interests he pursues, is primarily concerned with maintaining the universal sacred order. This determines the prospect of his everyday life success and becomes the initial and universal prerequisite for achieving a stable personal identity and a recognized social status.

The main characteristics of traditional societies include, first of all, a high degree of social homogeneity. It is connected with the fact that members of a traditional society are engaged in one and the same thing, because the social division of labor does not exist or it is very weak. Therefore, the social structure is very simple: society is a set of autonomous individuals or families, a kind of "biological cells" living in one territory.

The integrity, stability and reproduction of any social organism is ensured by the work of regulatory mechanisms. In the pre-industrial era, the main regulator in maintaining society as a non-chaos is tradition. Tradition is present and operates at all stages of the development of society, in cultures of any type and in all spheres of social life.

In modern society, regulation of most aspects of social life takes place on a legal basis. At the present stage, not only society is becoming modern, but also a person. Such a person is distinguished by interest in everything new, willingness to change, diversity of views, orientation to information, serious attitude to time and its measurement, efficiency and time planning, personal dignity, and optimism. This individual modernization is a process no less dramatic than social (Inkeles 2019).

For instance, in some cases forced modernization, instead of leading to social progress, can cause a wide range of very deep destructive reactions that threaten to disrupt the identity of individuals, hampering their ability to their human and political relations.

Accordingly, the process of modernization retains the significance of the transition from a traditional society to a modern one (in all its phases and varieties). This transition, starting with spiritual reorientations, fundamentally changes the

basic social, economic and political characteristics of society. This is a transition from the rule of tradition to the rule of innovation, from value rationality to goal rationality, from world outlook knowledge to science and technology, from ethnicity to national states, from rural to urban forms of life.

Culture of a modernizing traditional society

There are no purely traditional and purely modern societies in nature. The modern sociocultural situation today is a long, protracted transition from societies of a predominantly traditional type to societies of a predominantly modern type, which corresponds to the state of the so-called unfinished modernization.

The close connection between the concept of "culture" and the type of society is obvious. Qualitative changes in social life cannot but affect the content and forms of culture. The replacement of one type of social relations with another ultimately, as a rule, leads to a change in the type of culture. In other words, culture repeats, as it were, the subsystems of society.

Accordingly, with the changes taking place in a traditional society, its culture also changes. In a modernizing society, its culture stands out as an independent sphere, acquiring a multicomponent structure. It turns from a relatively closed system into such an open system where, along with intra-ethnic interaction, interethnic interaction begins. There is a transition from the era of local cultures to the era of universal connections and interactions. Society is naturally moving towards the next phase of its development – industrial society.

In the context of a new social situation, the flow of innovations into culture of an ethnic community is increasing. The proportion of international elements is noticeably increasing and, accordingly, the number of national elements in such culture of an ethnos is decreasing. The culture of a modernizing society, therefore, is outgrowing the concept of traditional culture, including an increasing number of foreign components, i.e. combines elements of different types of culture. All or most of the elements of different cultures are involved in the formation of new culture. In a modern society with industrial-urban culture, traditional features are increasingly manifested only in the everyday sphere.

How does culture of a modernizing society correlate with the concept of "world" or "universal human culture"?

The possibility of mutual understanding, interaction between individuals despite ethnic, social, professional and other differences, as well as the presence of a set of moral attitudes accessible to all and recognized by all, testify to the existence of a certain conglomerate of cultural achievements that are of a universal nature. This universality is ensured, first of all, due to the commonality of the main types of human activity, as well as the collectivist nature of human existence.

The world or common human culture does not carry any pronounced ethnic traits. It is universal, cosmopolitan, but ethnic cultures nourish it. This or that

cultural achievement, having originated in the cultural depths of certain people and become widespread, over time in many respects loses the stamp of ethnicity and ethnic coloring. It often ceases to be perceived in connection with any ethnic group and becomes ethnically neutral, international.

Any ethnic or local culture, in the process of historical development of an ethno-social community from a primitive communal system to a society of the modern type, possessing a certain internal unity and integrity, nevertheless consisted of two blocks or parts. The first of them included those elements of culture that were perceived as belonging only to a given ethnic group, and the second included those cultural achievements that were recognized as international or regional.

Culture refers to the type of open systems capable of perceiving and processing information coming from outside. That is why any intercultural contact inevitably led to interaction and exchange. Therefore, in the culture of any ethnic group, along with a specifically ethnic element, there was always an international element, that is a certain amount of assimilated innovations.

Let us note, however, that the complex process of adapting innovations to the peculiarities of the culture of a given ethnic entity over a long period could often lead to a complete ignorance of its other ethnic origin. Then this cultural achievement was perceived as ethnically specific.

All of the above is evidence of how transparent, thin and in many respects conditional is the line that separates ethnically isolated, specific and global, planetary, international elements in the cultural system.

In the culture of any ethnic group in a modernizing society, along with foreign elements, features or elements of traditional culture are preserved. Moreover, among different peoples, in different spheres of social life, their significance and role are not the same. The stability of traditional culture, the slowness and superficiality of the process of perceiving global standards reveal their dependence on a number of objective and subjective factors.

Yakut culture at the modern stage

It has already been said above that in culture of any ethnic group, along with a specifically ethnic element, there was always an international element, that is, a certain amount of assimilated innovations. Thus, in ethnic culture of a modernizing society both of these components can be distinguished, where the proportion of cultural achievements bearing a traditional, ethnic connotation is lower and the sphere of their functioning is narrower than the proportion of modern elements.

What are the consequences of the penetration of foreign elements into the ethnic culture of the Yakuts? First of all, acculturation.

Indeed, in relation to the situation in Yakutia, various stages of cultural assimilation are being implemented in different groups of the Yakut people. So, one group of the ethnos, mostly rural, is in a state of weak acculturation, i.e. connects

native and foreign cultural elements. The other group, that includes separate groups of rural and urban population, is at the stage of advanced acculturation. Finally, a significant group of the urban population is undoubtedly going through a stage of complete, final acculturation.

Obviously, all the above does not exclude the possibility of the transformation of ethnic culture. The influence of ethno-transformational processes and, especially, the processes of ethnic assimilation on various aspects of the social life of an assimilated ethnos is a very poorly developed topic. Though it is the violation of social adaptation, in our opinion, that causes the most unpredictable consequences of cultural and linguistic assimilation, the destruction of continuity and inheritance of the ethnic culture.

As already noted, the loss of ethnic culture causes the impossibility of improving adaptive-behavioural models, that leads to the loss of guidelines in life, the destruction of a clear structuring of the world and, accordingly, a sense of personal security.

Attempts by the bearers of the pseudo-traditional Yakut self-consciousness to find a replacement for the lost sense of ethnic community and a sense of social confidence and security by connecting to other social groups (parties, professional associations, etc.) cannot be successful. The erosion of the ethnic community of the people, that is a stable intergenerational grouping connected to each other not by momentary interests, but by sacred blood ties of genetic kinship, cannot be compensated for by other social associations that are characterized by a significant instability of their members, goals and prospects.

Ultimately, all this determines the marginal nature of the ethnic group and its representatives. With the linguistic and cultural assimilation of an individual, he loses his own cultural identity, and does not master the new culture enough; this gives rise to a conflict of social roles in an individual, and he falls into the category of marginal elements of society. Individuals with a marginal ethnic identity balance between two cultures, not properly mastering the norms and values of either of them.

They experience intrapersonal conflicts, manifested in disorganization, inadaptability, failure, alienation, despair, meaninglessness of existence, aggressiveness.

And in our republic, for the current state of society, that is losing or has already lost national and cultural homogeneity, the phenomenon of marginality is decisive. In a situation where the national culture exists in the form of a ritual (or rather, the external attributes of rituality), a marginal becomes a culture creator.

The number of marginals, outsiders is constantly increasing. At the same time, they understand culture not as a system of values, but as a set of needs. However, it is obvious that it is mass culture, the culture of the consumer society that forms socially passive individuals in the spirit of conformism, a spiritual standard with a low level of intellectual and moral needs.

The state of a Yakut person, ethnically belonging to the Yakuts, but being a bearer of Russian and global cultures, can be defined by a sense of social dichotomy and conflict. On one hand, he does not fully feel like a Yakut, because the entire Yakut-speaking spiritual culture is closed to him, on the other hand, though knowing only the Russian language, he ethnically identifies himself with the Yakut ethnic group. A marginal Yakut is on the edge of the Yakut, Russian and global cultures, without belonging to any of them.

Objectively, the interpenetration of national cultures is a positive phenomenon, since it contributes to the mutual enrichment of each of them. Bearers of a synthetic culture have a broader outlook, they develop a tolerant attitude towards representatives of other ethnic groups and cultures.

On the other hand, a marginal person loses his national roots, his ethnic identity. Being a genetically representative of the Yakut ethnic group, grown up in Russian culture, such a person turns out to be on the periphery of both cultural environments.

Unlike the real bearers of ethnic culture, a marginal Yakut is able to see the "frontiers" of both Yakut and Russian cultures. Living in each of them, he acts as an outside observer of each of them. That does not allow him to fully immerse himself in culture, deprives him of a sense of cultural identity. The result of this state is that a marginal does not fit into the social system, and falls on the periphery of society. Marginals are deprived of the opportunity to participate in the creation of universally significant and symbolic codes of the culture of their people.

As already mentioned, the problem of ethnic and cultural identity, the problem of marginality is the problem of a modern, urban society, that is always multi-ethnic, with an intricate network of social norms and values. Living in such a society, a marginal feels lonely, rejected by society. That quite naturally leads him to think about the meaninglessness of existence.

In parallel with the loss of the Yakut language and as a result, assimilated representatives of the Yakut ethnic group have interrupted transmission of the central cultural theme. The result of this is destroy of the traditional values and grow of the number of outsiders – people with impaired assimilation of ethnic constants. In their minds, elements of traditional Yakut culture and other cultures are randomly intertwined. The traditional consciousness is replaced by a pseudo-traditional one, that is an unsystematic set of certain rules and prohibitions.

Creating a new picture of the world turns out to be impossible. If in the Soviet period it was replaced by communist ideology, then now at the period of de-ideologization of public consciousness, the picture of the world of a large part of the Yakut ethnic group is an arbitrary set of multicultural values and stereotypes that cannot serve as the basis for worldview and effective vital activity.

A cultural transition is most often fraught with the onset of a period of so-called semi-culture, when an ethnos that has completely lost its language retains some

significantly distorted elements of the original culture, and supplements them with the missing, not the best, elements from another dominant culture.

The culture of the Yakuts, being traditional in its foundations, at the same time entered a qualitatively new level of its development, associated with the objective process of massification and globalization. Yakut culture is a synthesis and opposition of two ways of being: traditional and modern.

Thus, it is obvious that at present, in the urban environment of Yakutia, a certain subculture has formed, a symbiosis of external manifestations of the Yakut, Russian and modern global culture. The current intellectual, spiritual state of the Yakut people reflects the final process of acculturation of the Yakut ethnos and is a sign of the cultural assimilation of its large part.

And when it comes to the fact that in Yakutia only the external side of civilization is easily copied, one should be aware that this is a direct consequence of the penetration of modern global culture into the republic, that does not meet with the resistance of the collapsing ethnic culture and partly replaces it.

Conclusion

In a modernizing traditional society, a process of differentiation of spheres of life is taking place. Culture not only stands out as an independent sphere, but also acquires a complex structure, becomes multicomponent. The complication and differentiation of culture is associated with its transformation from a relatively closed to such an open system where, along with intra-national interactions, interethnic interactions begin to play an increasing role, especially in multinational states with the establishment of various kinds of international contacts.

Due to external influences, in particular, a huge flow of innovations into the traditional culture of an ethnic community, the proportion of a foreign element is growing and the weight of an ethnic element is decreasing.

In other words, in the conditions of incomplete modernization, objective prerequisites for the alienation of a person from his own culture arise, i.e. his loss of integrity, since culture itself does not represent an integrity, a traditional system. And this is the main conflict of the existence of culture nowadays.

Based on the foregoing, we summarize the present work as follows:

– Culture in a traditional aspect is characterized by an attitude towards the world, based on behavioral and mental automatisms, suggesting habitual forms of activity. It ensures the adaptation of a person to the natural environment and a change in a person himself, first of all, on the basis of tradition (traditional regulations, prescriptions and prohibitions).

– Analysis of a modernizing society through the prism of a traditional society makes it possible to develop explanatory concepts of the present day. In this context, the main characteristic of a modernizing society is culture. At the same time, it is quite plastic, multicomponent, and includes traditional and innovative components.

– Ethnic culture is multicomponent, as while retaining the traditional components, at the same time, it is increasingly turning into the modern global culture. The modern universal component of ethnic culture occupies most of it. The consequences of it and the essential characteristics of the modern state of an ethnic culture – acculturation and marginalization of the ethnos, especially Yakut.

– The contradiction between tradition and modernity is an inevitable clash in the modernization movement. In any country, the cultural modernization movement creates two structures, thus bringing tradition and modernity into conflict. In a country where the system of traditional culture is deeply rooted, such confrontation is stronger and more lasting.

– In fact, the presence of national tradition in the life of society is inevitable. The essence of modernization is its compliance with the development trends of the modern world, but the successful movement of modernization lies not only in overcoming obstacles from tradition, but also in the constructive use of traditional forms as additional incentives for renewal.

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