

## Socio-Cultural and Cultural-Anthropological Analysis of the Categories Culture and Civilization

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**Abstract:** Notions “culture” and “civilization” are used in ordinary language as synonyms. In the same time division between these notions is the main question for philosophy and culturology. Historical process in Europe and Russia demonstrates that cultural and civilization values not only deviate from each other but are at the different poles of values system. Notions “civilization” and ‘culture’ are understood by the author as combination of material values (civilization) and spiritual values (culture). The author is sure, that being interpreted in such a way these systems acquire tragedy features. In the framework of “civilized” relations a man can degrade to the level of template, social ersatz, will loose his peculiar human characteristics, his individuality. Development of anthropogenic civilization at the expense of culture threatens us by elimination of spiritual values, accumulated by mankind for centuries. The article describes author's understanding of new aspects of the problem of culture and civilization interaction. The article is addressed to teachers and students who study the block of socio-humanitarian competences-that is why the article is written in publicist and, to a great extent, thesis-like style.

**Key words:** Culture • Civilization • Spiritual values • Material values

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### INTRODUCTION

The problem of correlation between “culture” and “civilization” attracts attention of scientists for several centuries, beginning with philosophers who were analyzing the origins of civilization processes and finishing by modern studies [1-22]. Nevertheless, this problem is still up-to-date because the contradictions between culture and civilization have not only been solved, but on the contrary, become more distinct and aggravate the situation.

There are numerous definitions of ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’, for that reason we would like to focus on the idea that *culture is a combination of spiritual values* and *civilization is-combination of material values*. It is very important to accentuate that culture is connected with notions “spirit”, “spirituality” and civilization-with notion “matter”. To some extent this is a formula of the key question of culturology. And this is quite logical: the key question of philosophy is relation of matter to consciousness. In culturology-relation of civilization to culture.

In reality the objects of culture and civilization do not exist separately from each other, the world is an integrity of matter and spirit, objectivity and subjectivity. Why should we separate one thing from the other? Unfortunately we hear this question very often.

The answer to it is contained in student learning course of philosophy and methodology. The science must study *ideal objects*.

Logics and philosophy divide such notions as ‘nature’ and ‘essence’ of phenomenon. Nature of phenomenon can be multi-sided but the essence is always single, because it reflects the uniqueness of phenomenon, its unmatched characteristics which differentiate it from a set of similar objects. In case of objects of culture and civilization their nature is dualistic: we can always find both spirit and matter in them. For example, in regard to a book its material character (paper, binding, paint) is secondary, but its spirituality (information, knowledge, images, emotions) is essential. But for a hammer it is vice versa: its materiality is essential, its spiritual nature, inclusion into cultural context is secondary and not essential.

**Relation to a Man and Nature:** Object of civilization is a man. It is him who is at the center values system of civilization and in this context it is anthropologically-centered. Civilization provides comfort of human life. Of course, the products of civilization often turn to be catastrophes, natural cataclysms and unknown deceases. But in order to be objective we have to admit that all of them are just side-effects, unplanned results of its anthropologic activity.

Culture also can be focused on a man, but not only on a man. It can be nature, God, idea, knowledge, emotions... In other words, anything what you like. Even a urinal bowl as it was demonstrated by Marcel Duchamp. In this respect culture is polycentric.

Relation of culture and civilization towards nature is also very distinct. Civilization explores nature, consumes and conquers it; culture treats nature in a awesome way: it puts nature on a pedestal and worship.

Relation of these two systems to a man and nature is different because it originates from different world-view mindsets. Civilization considers a man as end purpose of nature, opposing a man and nature, subject and surrounding world to each other. Here a man dominates over nature, he controls it, struggles with it and conquer it (it is very characteristic for the West). The system of cultural values, on the contrary, is integrated into nature and surrounding world, in harmonious way (characteristic of the East).

**Pragmatism and “romanticism”:** Pragmatism of civilization is out of the question. Everything that is done by civilization has distinct utilitarian and pragmatic meaning (purpose). On the contrary, the creative works of culture do not fulfill any utilitarian tasks. You can say the music can be used for treatment of people, other people will say that notes-sheets can be burned in a fireplace for heating. But it is very doubtful that Rakhmaninov wrote his *Liturgy* for it. Objects of culture do not have any utilitarian and pragmatic sense, they are ‘romantic’ in this respect. Martin Heidegger while comparing objects of civilization and culture emphasizes an *‘item’*. The item is the result of human labour, but in the same time it is similar to piece of art (made by a man), however it can not “spread the space of the world” (it does not have spiritual contents), does not contain spiritual power [23].

Character of a man, as a rule, is not a combination of pragmatism and romanticism. We look for romantic person for love and friendship. Pragmatists in friendship do not suit us because we do not want to be used by somebody for achieving “bad” mercenary purposes. But in business we would like to have pragmatic partners because “romantics” and money are not compatible.

In Russian and European literature of XIX-XX centuries this dilemma was described many times in the form of the choice of a young woman: whom to marry? As a rule, she has alternative: romantic and poor student and pragmatic rich old man (these images are schematic). It is not an easy choice, but mutually excluding. This is the choice between interesting full life, love, happiness and confidence in tomorrow, well being of herself and her children.

**Realism and Symbolism:** Civilization objects are real because their meanings and essences are within them. Object of civilization is self-representative. A hammer or an ax has no one (or almost no one) additional meanings beyond the limits of their materiality because they do not appeal to spiritual attributes of the world. Another case-stone ax, ancient artifact. It is an object of culture because its pragmatic characteristics are not actual any more and the benefit which can be obtained from its use is tiny. Stone ax becomes an artifact, the symbol of the past.

Cultural objects are in fact symbols, signs. Their essence exists beyond their limits. For example, a painting exhibited in Tretyakov gallery and considered as an object of civilization is just its material form-paints, canvass, wooden frame. We have to understand that in painting itself there is no street, or a forest, or a house. It is physically impossible. The painting *itself* is not saturated with emotions, beauty or harmony-all this is reproduced in our consciousness. The painting is only a symbol, a sign, a kind of translator of a painter's emotions addressed to the recipient.

The same can be said about a man as a symbol of culture. Out of culture framework a woman will be just an anatomic body, combination of muscles, bones and inner organs. She acquires her meanings and essences outside of her material body, out of herself-in characteristics which are given to her by culture. If in the system of civilization values she is a female suitable for reproduction (at most emancipated business-lady), in the system of cultural values she transforms into wife, acquires womanhood features, becomes limitless source of inspiration for poets and painters.

**Universalism and Specialization:** This opposition of categories is probably the most tragic, here the aggressiveness of civilization in regard to culture is revealed most fully. [24].

Everything is clear with culture. It raises a cultural man guiding him for cognition of everything which was produced by the mankind: science, arts, religion,

philosophy. The more man knows cultural artifacts the more universal he is.

It is not so simple with civilization. Civilization is not interested in universalism of a man, its interest is focused on how well he performs his functions as a specialist. And not just specialist, but the specialist of narrow profile, because present-day civilization uses conveyor method. This is the most efficient method of economy and the most efficient method for making a man its slave. The more narrower his specialization is the more man is efficient in terms of labour productivity. Specialist is like a dental abscess-says Kozma Prutkov. K. Marx was more cardinal in his diagnosis: "Professional cretinism" [39]. Modern satirist M. Zadornov introduces the notion of "a specialist in the right nostril", modern psychologists express this idea more correctly and in very complicated way: "Effect of intentional extrapolation", meaning consideration of life in general through the prism of profession.

Indeed, in accordance with Labour Code of Russian Federation modern average man works 5 days a week, 8 hours a day. Let us exclude from his life that time when he is not able to work on his development. 1/3 of life is sleeping. Furthermore, shopping, standing in a queue, presence at meetings out of working time, doing some work about a house and servicing his car, sitting in front of his TV, cooking food... Fitness-centers, Internet, pointless talks on the phone, not less pointless chatting in social networks... This list can be very long and we know all this very well. It is notorious "socialization" and "enculturation".

What remains? Work. Life has turned into work, a man has become a specialist. And this, in turn, means that a man does not live-he works. To be more precise, his life is viewed by himself through the prism of his work. This market orientation becomes dominating. [40] In order to make it clearer we shall provide some examples.

Any man needs world view. He needs values system, principles, ideals. Apart from work he has his habitual life and has to react to issues in this sphere by all means. Contradiction between professional reality and endless diversity of life makes a man to fill-up spiritual niches resulting from social overload by habitually obtained professional experience. The simplest and most common way to overcome this contradiction-extrapolation of professional intentions of a man to his general outlook. This is non-correct identification of professional reality with real life, transfer of job mindsets to all diversity of spiritual processes in general.

A doctor, surgeon, every day saves people's lives, he is obliged to reduce their sufferings; he sees death,

pathology, blood, pain every day. In the same time he has to stay cool and indifferent, able to overcome emotional weakness resulting from seeing deceases and suffering. Every-day operations, cutting alive human flesh with scalpel makes him treat a patient as a "meat loaf", anatomic object. Death and suffering are normal things for him, his job, conveyor.

Every-day flow of mutilated and ill bodies makes the surgeon disregard thinking of his patients as individualities, as human beings who have a name and history. Without such abstraction the surgeon will never become a professional of high class, because his emotions, reflexing and empathy will prevent from successful operations and impact his mental health very quickly. Professional cynicism of doctors is obligatory condition of his good work, his mental health and, therefore, the condition of that great aid which is provided by him for people.

However a man who is oriented to society and deeply submerged into the process of spirit de-integration starts unconsciously to extend this intention beyond of his work limits. Profession becomes an outlook.

For professional officers orientation of their consciousness to elimination and violence is often brings very pitiful effects. When they return home from the war they are not always ready for adaptation for normal life. Finally the heroes of the past battles turn their lives into big battle field and start to fight imaginary enemy.

The last thing which is left to add-all of us have one common job. We all, to a some extent, are economists, accounters, financists. In the beginning of XXI century people's thinking has distinct "money angle" and extrapolation of economic intention has become total. All modern society has revealed new feature: if we use word of a famous political economist the world has turned into "nation of shopkeepers" [41].

**Uniqueness and Copying:** Uniqueness of a piece of art is determined by its nearness to the masterpiece, to the increment in existence, to creation of something unbelievable, what was not created before. A masterpiece by the meaning of this word can not exist in several copies. Copying of a masterpiece leads to a falsification, a kitch. Masterpieces are unique and unmatched.

Civilization, on the contrary is based on conveyor, copying and production in big quantities. With conveyor way of production only a defected item can be unique. If *Sistine Madonna*, as an object of culture, exists only in one copy in Dresden, its image on the stamps, postcards and various advertising booklets can be found in any corner of our planet. Civilization is based not on uniqueness but on standard.

Culture is constantly being pushed out by civilization and modern society become more oriented to the production of things and their consumption. "Civilized" society does not stand uniqueness. And copying of items is transferred to copying of personalities. There is state standard for schoolboys and students. For directors and subordinates-typical position instructions. For Internet users-emoticon templates. For big chiefs-a standard protocol.

Civilization machine is a conveyer which produces people without a face. Modern civilization is like a gigantic mincing machine which is mixing human material into uniform staff of specialists without individual features. Modern man is turned into soul-free mechanism aimed for functioning of modern civilization. A man must not think, feel and believe: he is a mechanism and must work. When he is broken, it is repaired and when it is of no use any more he is thrown away as wasted material.

Modern philosophers and culture-anthropologists while analyzing common linguistic constructions ("philosophy of linguistic analysis") [28] come to conclusion that self-identification of a man has changed several times for the last 150 years. In the beginning of the century if a man fell unconscious people said: "He has lost senses" meaning spiritual, emotional and sensual collapse. In the middle of the century self-attitude of a man changed and in the same situation people say: "He has lost his consciousness". "Sensual" a man has turned into "thinking" man. But another half of century elapsed and we observe one more change of self-attitude: We have evolved from Homo Sapiens to Homo Mechanicus. Now we say: "He is switched off".

**Rationality and Restrictedness:** Rationality of civilization is out of question. Non-rational economy is inefficient, weak economy. Contradictory law system is not good for people, non-rational business will result in losses, non-rational economic activity is defective. In other words, civilization uses rational, analytical and logical abilities of human psychology.

But, as it was stated by physiologists, human brain has 2 hemispheres. And only one of them stands for rationality. The second one-for artistic and image perception of the world. And it is this hemisphere which realizes itself in full in culture, in translation of spiritual values.

Culture does not disapprove rational approaches to the world. Artists study the canons of art, scientists-the methods of scientific research, theologians-religion, writers-literary techniques. But the essence of spiritual culture is aspiration for unexplained; it tends to aesthetic, artistic-image perception of the world, to emotional-

psychological experience of a man. And in this regard the culture is *organic (natural)*. It involves both hemispheres intending to use human psychology for 100%. In this context civilization needs only one hemisphere, atrophying the second one, turning a man into thoughtless and spiritless slave.

## CONCLUSION

In a short article it is not impossible to touch all sides of tragic interrelation between culture and civilization. We have outlined this problem in general.

What is the solution of the problem? It is clear, that it can not be simple. Theoretically we can only give general, strategic recommendations for creation of full-value national political program of perspective cultural development of Russia.

**Thesis 1:** *The existence of the problem must be understood by everybody, on all levels.* Today we hear a lot about recession of Russian culture. Moreover, political decisions of our government only aggravate this situation, consciously or unconsciously. Way out of this "cultural deadline" is viewed by us in disclosure of its reasons, in philosophic and culturological comprehension.

**Thesis 2:** *Recognition of cultural values of Russia as its main asset.* Russian political figures are concentrated on solution of economic problems, on competitiveness of Russia, its political influence on world processes. Development of spiritual culture is not considered as prioritized task.

If development of economic processes in Russia can depend on market economy, culture processes must *be regulated*. We mean censorship. Patriotic education, change of the course in mass media, sound concept of spiritual future of our country. We must avoid the processes of westernization, Americanization, globalization in the sphere of culture in order to preserve our national cultural assets and dignity.

And in order to perform these measures culture must be supported, financed and, first of all, *understood* by the state, in all its diversity and integrity.

**Thesis 3:** *We need legislative document which will legalize status of Russian culture in Russia.* In conditions of multi-national, multi-religious and multi-cultural state it is not so simple. We observe unbelievable dissoluteness of our citizens, the bearers of other cultural tradition. De jure we are citizens of one country with equal rights.

De facto-culture-historical development of Russia was based on the Russian, to a great extent, Orthodox culture, on leading role of Russian people in Russian history and sovereignty. If this leadership status will not be formalized in laws we can prepare ourselves for further inter-cultural conflicts, the loss of Russian identity, disintegration of our state.

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