Transformation of a Personality Value System: Theoretical Aspect of the Problem

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Abstract: The problems, related to the study of personality value structure in the process of society transformation are handled in the article. A special attention is paid to the transformation of value systems in the context of transfer from traditional to industrial and from industrial to post-industrial society. There are also represented main features of traditional, modern and post-modern values.

Key words: Values · Personality · Personality value system · Social transformation · Modernization

INTRODUCTION

The requirement for the existence and development of any society is a set of ideal formations, which are considered as value systems. Every society has its axiological understandings about the direction of social development, about man and his place in the social system, "right" mode of living etc. A specific main type of values, which is considered to be necessary, is being approved. Values dominant in a specific society are the tool of social regulation; they create the most stable frame for the social system.

Value systems are quite stable, but at the same time metamorphic formations, i.e. the process of value system transformation is characteristic for any society. The main source of these changes while transferring from traditional to modern society was the extension of industrial method of manufacture and while transferring from modern to post-modern society - the extension of post-industrial method. This means that the change of technological methods of production, which was gradually taking place during the social development, is characterised by deep and qualitative transformations not only in economical but also in social structure and in personality value system respectively.

As the result of re-thinking of these great changes in social science, there appeared a range of theories, which recreate the inner logics of the social development and the nearest prospects, which determine the development. One of these is the theory of post-industrial society; it has recently gained acceptance and it has serious forecast potential.

The theory of post-industrial society was formed as the result of all-around analysis of the whole new situation of mature industrial countries. The efforts of the originators of the theory were aimed at finding out characteristic features of a new society. The vast majority of researchers thought that the main features of this society were as follows: extreme speed-up of technology development, decline of the role of material production, development of the information and services sphere, change of the motives and character of human activity, appearing of a new type of resources engaged in production, significant modification of the whole social structure. One of the most extensive definitions of post-industrial society were given by D. Bell: "Post-industrial society, - he writes, - is the society in the economy of which the priority transferred from primary production of commodities to tertiary industries, conducting of studies, organisation of educational system and improvement of the quality of life; in this society the class of technical experts has become the main professional group and, which is the most important, the implementation of innovations greatly depends on achievements of a priori knowledge. Post-industrial society...presupposes the formation of intellectual class, which representatives act on political level as consultants, experts or technocrats" [1].

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However, it should be noted that the doctrine of post-industrialism is in some aspects excessively objectivistic as it doesn't to the researcher a tool for analysis of reasons of the development, which have led to the establishing of industrial and then post-industrial society. The transfer from one society form to the other is considered as something taken for granted, but not as the process, which has inner logics and controversies. Thus, long with the unbiased approach to the analysis of features of modern social development it is necessary to use a subjective one.

In this case it is about the necessity of modern changes description in the frame of post-modernism concept. Its followers pay attention to the fact that modern social relationships differ extremely from traditional mass society; this opinion is close to the one of post-industrialism theorists. The concept of "post-modernity" appeared in connection with the desire to underline the difference of a new social order from "modern" one, to point out the controversy between the "contemporary" and the "modern".

Defining a period, which began in the end of the XVII century, as the era of modernity, the researchers, identified it with the era of formation and development of capitalistic production in western countries. Their opinion that from the beginning of the post-war period there appeared tendencies in the development of industrial countries, allowing to speak about the formation of a new order (post-modern order), is very interesting. By the middle of 1950 this viewpoint was shared by P. Drucker, Ch. Write Mills, A. Toynbee [see: 2, 3, 4]. Such a way of concept formation meant that new society would inevitably be matched against the old one, as the society of new opportunities against the society of a limited freedom. In the frame of this theory, as it has been mentioned by A.Touraine, modernity is thought as the era, "which denies the very idea of society, destroy it and replace it with the idea of constant social change" and "the history of modernity is the history of a slow, but constant increase of separation of personality, society and nature" [5]. On the contrary, post-modernity is defined as the era, which is characterised by the growth of cultural and social diversity and breakaway of the early prevailing commonality, as well as of principles of clear economic efficiency.

Post-modernism initially denies the principle of system organization, wholeness and structural order of society. It considers a social reality as a multiplicity, consisting of separate, single, isolated elements and events. In the period of post-modernism the society loses the features of totality, similarity to this or that model; it becomes a complex of local, spontaneous ad badly coordinated processes. Instability, uncertainty and polysemy of processes, which are developing in the society, is considered not as the display of system pathology, but as the feature and condition for its existence. The diversity of elements in the system makes it stable to multi-version future.

The display of these regularities can be also seen on the personality level. Individual mindsets, qualities, values, habits, which are the suppositions for effective functioning of the society, are being formed, i.e. the mutual influence of institutional, organizational and personal levels is being held. Comparative study of mature countries let P. Sztopka build an analytical model of a modern personality [see: 6, 7]. It has the following features:

- Openness to experiments, innovations and changes. This can be manifested in different forms: in the form of readiness to take new medicine or to fall back on the new method of health improvement, to accept a new form of wedding ceremony or a new type of youth education;
- Readiness to pluralism of meanings and even to approval of such pluralism. A modern man is able to accept the existence of different viewpoints. He/she is not afraid that opinions of others will change his/her own outlook;
- Commitment to the present and future, but not tot the past, time-saving, punctuality;
- Confidence of a modern man that he/she is able to organize his/her life in such a way that it is possible to overcome difficulties, created by the life;
- Planning of future actions for gaining of intended goals both in social and private life;
- Appreciated value of formal education and study.

To our mind, this is a model of ideal personality, which conforms the time requirements, as it has features peculiar for the culture of the society in general. It's also necessary to point out that modern conditions of the society under transformation make impact on human personality.

Thus, being initially oriented not only and not so much as to study of objective characteristics of modern society but to study of place and role of a human in this society (and recently-to the changes of personality attitude to institutions and forms of this society), the theory of post-modernism connects the social order
under formation with a new value system, personalities' actions, including non-materialistically motivated actions. Thus, post-modernism admits that the modern production and modern social structure are conditioned not so much by objective factors and specific actions of a human, as by subjective circumstances and the system of motives and inputs, which determine its actions. This concept point out the scale and profundity of modern social changes. At the same time the theses proposed in the frame of post-modernism concept, can be generated with the provisions of post-industrial theory.

The thing is that post-industrialism focuses on the role of technology and scientific progress in society development and theoretics of post-modernism highlights new human qualities, which determine fundamental features of the future society. However neither technology progress can exist without extreme personality development, nor the formation of the new personality is possible outside the economic successes, providing a high level of material well-being of the society in general.

The point where the conclusions of these two theories are met is the provision about the historical change of the nature of the society from pre-industrial (traditional) to industrial (modern) and post-industrial (post-modern). This means that changes, which are gradually taking place during the social development, are characterised by deep and qualitative transformations in the society and in its personality value system respectively. Thus, it is necessary to determine the specific features of each of the above mentioned society types and their most characteristic system of values.

The main features of the historic period, which is determined as pre-industrial (traditional) society, are as follows: main production resource, which was the basic production conditions, raw materials; type of production activity, which is characterised as bag; type of basic technologies, which are identified as labour intensive. On the basis of the above mentioned features D. Bell formed a provision according to which pre-industrial society is based upon the cooperation of a man and the nature, which surrounds him/her. This means that labour power is predominantly engaged in mining industry: agriculture, forestry, mining and fishing. A man uses muscle force and his perception of the world is formed under the influence of the environmental conditions of a specific territory-change of seasons, soil fertility, water supply, depth of location of raw materials etc. Vital rhythms are determined by the circumstances which can't be foreseen [cite by: 8, p. 132].

Communities, which are predominantly natural in form, are formed and function inside the traditional society. Emphasizing this fact the attention should be paid to the character of personal relationships typical for that historical period. In pre-industrial society the main aspect of social binds was the imitation of other people's actions, which means the use of methods inherited from previous generations, which in the long run determines the features of all the elements of the social structure including system of values.

We suppose that there exist a particular correlation between the main features of pre-industrial societies and such value systems as ethic, conventionalism, self-devotion etc. Ethic is understood as the quality of human behaviour in accordance with universal moral and ethical norms. R. Inglehart thinks, that such ethical order determines all the aspects of life in traditional society: he combines the society, creating interdiction on the way of inner violence (a sort of "Thou shalt not kill", which is one of the main principles in any society) and setting norms, which provide the property defence (a kind of "Thou shalt not steal") [9].

In pre-industrial society the humanity had to hope for the discretion of irrepressible environment. The understanding of natural laws were quite vague and that's why people were bound to explain anything that happened by the will of anthropomorphic geists, divinities and gods. Such approach worked in relatively unchangeable agricultural societies, since their absolute value was conventionalism, which was understood as the respect to traditions, dependence on circumstances. It is necessary to notice that value system of self-devotion along with the value systems of ethic and conventionality, which were dominant in pre-industrial society, contributed to preservation and reproduction of goals and norms of life, formed in it. Self-devotion is understood as the readiness to help other people, first of all relatives and countrymen and fellow villagers, even in prejudice of oneself.

Thus, the above mentioned value systems (ethic, conventionality, self-devotion) fulfilled an important function in traditional society-preservation of physical safety of the members of society; they were being implemented as the absolutes, usually in the form of suggestions, which displayed the will of god.

While transferring from pre-industrial to industrial society, the traditional value systems underwent significant changes. In industrial (modern) society all the main social-economic characteristics underwent qualitative changes comparing to pre-industrial
are displayed in this world view. Post-modernization systems, oriented for the preservation and reproduction of society, create a range of possible changes and methods of material production increasing in labour productivity. Industrial society is built on the cooperation of a human and the nature, modified by a technological progress, on the values of individual freedom and independence. Thus, in modern, developing society the character of basic technologies, which are determined as knowledge-intensive in post-industrial society.

The production process is the main content of social life. The above mentioned changes define main value systems of modern society, which have changed in the direction from physical safety to the achievement of material benefits; it is provided by the sociocultural reality of industrial society, which allows a human to live alone: all the social institutions and way of life in modern conditions are oriented on solitary individual. Respectively, one of the main guides for industrial society is the human life as a supreme value, inherent worth.

The main criteria of "modernity" culture are rationalism, orientation on economic growth and technology progress, on the values of individual freedom and independence. Thus, in modern, developing society value orientations for freedom, independence, leadership role and legitimacy contribute to the increase of people's addiction to savings, investments, economic safety in general; all this opens the way to industrialization.

However, social changes do not have linear character. The fact that the transfer from traditional society to modern one creates a range of possible changes doesn't mean that this or that tendency can be continued in the same direction forever. Having reached a particular point in its development, it starts to recede. Modernization is not an exception. In recent decades mature industrial societies reached a turning point of their development and started to move in a new direction which R. Inglehart defined as "post-modernization" [10].

With the beginning of modernization the understanding of the world which prevailed in industrial societies from the times of the industrial revolution, is gradually pushed out by the new world view. The expectations of people who wish particular changes are displayed in this world view. Post-modernization changes the content of the basic value systems of the society, which are closely related to the changes in the social-economic sphere. However, post-modernization is a later stage of development, whose value systems differ from those of modernization.

Post-modern society stands against the modern one according to the three main parameters, which are mentioned above. Firstly, it is the main production resource. In post-industrial society this resource is information, i.e. knowledge (both a priori and applicative) which is extremely important in production process. Secondly, a significant characteristic of post-industrial society is a type of production activity. On this historical stage the main content of this activity are a social-technological process, which means the decrease of the role of material production and service industry development. Another one parameter of post-modern society is the character of basic technologies, which are determined as knowledge-intensive in post-industrial society. This means that the implementation of innovations more and more depends upon the achievements in the sphere of a priori knowledge.

We can say that the manifestation of creative activity becomes more and more characteristic in the process of labour activity for post-modern society. The development of human skills becomes very important; there prevail subject-subjective cooperation among people, which determines new features of all the elements of social structure.

The main tendency says that post-modern society foresees the waiving of the pointing out the economic efficiency and rationalism, which were characteristic for industrial society; this usher in the transfer to the more humane society where there are more opportunities for self-dependence, diversity and self-expression of a personality. In post-industrial society individuals pay a little attention to the economic success comparing to the quality of life and emphasize not so much comprehensive employment and large income in their personal sphere, as an interesting and meaningful job, that provide contact with soulmates. In other words, such features as value systems, which first of all contribute not to economic efficiency but to other benefits, such as status and quality of life, are characteristic for post-industrial society.

Thus, we can draw conclusion that the society transformations connected with the transfer from one civilization type to the other, are characterised by changes in types and structures of value systems. While in the era of pre-industrial society there prevailed traditional value systems, oriented for the preservation and reproduction of
of physical safety of the society members, during the transfer to industrial society modern value systems, connected with providing economic efficiency of the society gain widespread. Further in the process of post-industrial society formation post-industrial value systems are being formed, the main feature of which is the fact that they are aimed mainly at improvement of the quality of life and self-expression of a personality.

REFERENCES