

## From ethics to sociology of morality

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**Abstract.** The sociology of moral, as any sociological theory, contains three levels of analysis: the general methodological level, the theory of the average level and the empirical level of examination. The general methodical level lies within the framework of social philosophy and requires the distinction of the leading contradiction to explain the moral regularities in the spiritual development of the society, while the verification of the theoretical providing should be conducted by the methods of empirical examination of moral consciousness. The theory of average level develops institution of morality.

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### Introduction

Object of sociology of moral is socium. Socium is super-biological level of substance. Society is the aggregate of social relations and communications. The subject of sociology of moral is the type of moral consciousness, *method* – quality and quantitative methods of development. Gender, temporal, socio-group, territorial comparisons are used. It contains the horizontal and the vertical dynamics of moral consciousness. In basis the main problem of ethic lies: what is the good and what is the evil. The controlling principle of this is what we take as the good. That is why the excursus into the history of ethics is rightful. Sociology studies values of socium. The interpretation of the good and the evil in the group consciousness is the subject of sociology of moral. The quality of moral consciousness is measured by patterns or by the types of moral consciousness. We can measure the dynamics of moral consciousness with their help of types of moral consciousness.

Moral consciousness is one of the most difficult objects of the empirical sociological examination. It is the most complicated object to fix in an operational form. The normative moral is realized clearly (at the level of easily fixed postulates), but the real moral, which substantially defines the choice, remains latent, not realized.

### The orethical background

The process of globalization has the economic character and leads to the unexpected social consequences. The worlds of values of society are changing. Value worlds are the communicative way of self-preservation and self-development of a society. The bearers of worlds of values in the modern society have been grouped by the types of moral consciousness.

The individual levels of the types of moral consciousness are called: 'communitarist', 'the transitional type', 'hedonist', 'pragmatist' [1]. The basis of the structure is the active human nature (creative, pragmatic and hedonic activity), the social nature (collectivism – individualism), the priority values of the 'civilized' and the 'traditional' society, which are comprehended by the individual in terms of evil and good.

During 30 years the author has been researching different branches of industry and its infrastructure in one of the Russian industrial regions, which is typical of the Russian society. A small number of hedonists in working groups prove that the Russian society is not traditional. The Russian society isn't characterized by individualism like the American one, or by collectivism like the Japanese society. Now, at the beginning of 2010s there's a dangerous tendency to the dominance of hedonic values in young people groups. In monograph of author called 'The Dynamics of Moral Consciousness' the following problems are revealed: 1) The statics and the dynamics of moral consciousness in various social-historical periods of the modern Russian society; 2) Moral as an institute of the transforming society; 3) One of the sections of the sociology of moral – the social-ethical typology of a person – is regarded [2].

The sociology of moral contains the value worlds of society, and the processes of ethic-creation that influence the quality of political elites, the type of culture, the stratification of the society, the type of economic communications. At the same time, all concrete processes of the change of moral are defined by the degree of maturity of the society and the level of development of its material and spiritual forces.

Ethic-creation, as 'causa sui' of Spinoza, is based on its natural initial foundation of self-movement of the moral relations. The unification of contrasts –

freedom and necessity, free will and fatality, altruism and utilitarianism, creation and reproduction, exploit and conformality, ascetism and hedonism – and preserving them in unity indicate the universal system of ethic-creation. 'Ethic-creation' is considered by us as a qualitative process of the modification of moral in the organic and the transforming societies.

Pifagor, Democrit, Plato, Aristotle mostly appreciated a contemplative (creative), then a practical (pragmatic) and only after that a hedonic way of life, chosen by a person. The basic ethical imperative of Augustine lies on the intersection of the concepts of pleasure and utility: 'Be pleased with God, but do not use him, use earthly blessings, but be not pleased with them' [3]. Asceticism for him is the inhibition of human pride, self-abdication for God's sake. In accordance with the expansion of the sphere of individual interests in the New Time. Spinoza identified the good with usefulness, and the evil – with different obstacles on the way of reaching it. Human nature exhibits its essence in a wise man (who follows a measure and approves of the priority of common well-being). Spinoza's dialectical formula is: 'Freedom is cognized necessity' [4].

The categorical imperative of Kant is not the expression of a formal, but of a substantial (real) collectivity. The duty of love (charity, gratitude, commitment) and the duty of respect form friendship as the supreme moral phenomenon. The origin of pragmatics, according to Kant, is in the appearance of social conditions for the satisfaction of natural manifestations of life: hunger, predisposition to laziness, thirst for life, sexual love. As a result the primary needs become the aspiration to make mammon, to dominate, to be ambitious. Thus subjective motives are accepted by the individual, as a socially and morally justified objective process.

Kant believed, that evil became the power that moved historical process. It was incorporated in human nature it was the irrational and immoral element of pride, vanity, self-interest. The principle of refusal from war was proclaimed in Kant's treatise 'To the Everlasting Peace'. However 10 years later Fichte and Hegel demanded that war was a source of progress. Up to now the public consciousness has been fighting in these antinomies of the denial and the assertion of the role of war in the life of the society.

Kant suggested three stages of the activity of the subject: technical-mechanical, due to which mankind raised itself above the nature, pragmatic exhibiting the social way of life, different from natural life, and moral, where mankind cultivated, civilized and perfected itself morally. In the process of a person's self-perfecting the kingdom of freedom was developed and the society overcame greed and hatred, which were restrained only by external violence [5].

Thought is free, according to Hegel, moral is the obedience in freedom, and right is the realization of freedom. Hegel understood, that right protected the individual, but, on the contrary, in the field of morality it was connected with the well-being of others. Speaking about the freedom of each individual, Hegel noted, that absolute freedom and absolute equality were self-denying: the evolution of equality was the invasion in to one's own dignity. In 1813 A. Schopenhauer came to a principle change of the philosophical paradigm: that not a person was from the world and in the world, but that the world was from a person and in the person [6]. All great thinkers, who explicated the doctrine about the sense of life, there by created the system of values. And the very social sphere itself is man's creation and this sphere creates the social character.

The concept of observation has become one of the most essential concepts in modern sciences. The exactness of observation makes the forming of knowledge dependent on the results of the examination.

F. Nietzsche made a 'breakthrough' in the new European public consciousness, having declared: 'God has died' [7]. This change doesn't simply include the reevaluation of values, but it means that the very need in the values of the past loses its roots. The metaphysics turns into new forms: thinking in values. O. Spengler [8] approaches the comprehension of moral differently: in the world feeling of Faust's soul forms the ethics: will to live, will to power and pragmatism based on atheism and rationalism. Spengler believed that the transitional epochs do not generate a new quality. He states, that any myth of a major style is at the beginning of the waking spiritual powers. The periods of nihilism in ethic-creation come to 'freezing before Nothing', after which, according to M. Heidegger, 'the silence of Beginning' extends. M. Heidegger [7] didn't give the answer to how the system comes out of the crisis, from the transitional to the organic condition.

The purpose of ethic-creation of the newest philosophy is the self-presence of a person in the world, the concentration of attention on the non-rational sides of human existence, the richness of which hasn't been included into any complete classical conception. Ethic-creation, as a process of modification of the system of the worlds of values, becomes a part of the social technologies, shielding a person's survival from the dangers of the social and natural worlds and, therefore, contributing to the self-preservation and self-development of the society.

Antiquity had selected creation, pragmatism, hedonism as the ideal; Christianity –the individual's perfecting and the equality of all at the face of God, while industrialism assigned all hopes to reason,

science, and technique; freedom, equality and brotherhood were proclaimed as its valuable orientations. These different bases of the value worlds of the society reflect the search of the vector of history.

#### **From due to existent**

The ways of making the complete true moral and ethical conception are only being scheduled. Nobody can speak about the transformation or the traditional stability of moral consciousness, without having studied the dynamics of moral consciousness at the theory of average level. The meta-ethical generalizations can have a probable character with a huge scatter of accents from love through religion to keeping one's own interest up to egoism. S. Eisenstadt thought that the most humane democracy is in India [9].

Ethics studies empiricism speculatively, deductively, proceeding from the conventional systems of moral and also from their critical reviewing in the theory. On the contrary, the sociology of moral uses mainly the inductive method, because it deals with different social groups, measuring their values and the person's adherence to either this or that type of moral consciousness, therefore it is destined to make general conclusions from single facts. The differentiating grid of groups by the type of moral consciousness, applied to the social structure of the society, allows seeing the horizontal dynamics of the value worlds. Interactions, opposition, agreements, conflicts are caused by the distinctions between the groups of the society. The difference between the potentials of groups in the process of ethic-creation makes the dynamics of moral consciousness, which is the quintessence of the spirit of people, directing their energy to the creation of the foundations of life.

The horizontal and the vertical dynamics of moral consciousness create unique social-historical value worlds of the society. They cover large organic epochs, historically stipulated by the various types of labor till nowadays [10], by the military and economic interactions of 'worlds-empires' and 'worlds-economies', described by I. Wallerstein [11]. The heterogeneity of hierarchies of values determines the diversity of ways of life of groups inside the social strata of the society. The research of value worlds applying the theory of the average level is possible through hierarchization of the systems of morals of social groups by revealing the priority of one value over the others.

The value worlds of society, having been distributed along the axis of historical time, determine the change of social paradigms. According to P. Bourdieu [12], the political ambitions are passed as the methodological approaches in sociology. The changing views on the well-being of groups and individuals

different in their status, way of life, religion, have historically set the dynamics of moral consciousness of the society.

An individual often spontaneously takes part in the process of ethic-creation (measurement and transformation of customs, relations), as it is compelled to making actions, dictated by the interests of groups, he is in: families, student group, firms, private enterprises etc. The subject of moral does not give itself the report, in what ethical system the person's consciousness and behavior are acting. He is always a secret for himself. His intentions are realized in various mood swings and are expressed in the forms of moral not integrated consciousness. Such rich-in-the-variety-of-forms reality of consciousness and behavior is the empiricism of process of ethic-creation for a researcher.

The concept of 'the value worlds of society' represent itself as a basic one in the theory of knowledge in ethic-creation. Being the basic abstract, 'the worlds of values of society' comprise all other abstract moments of the explored phenomenon in the internal possibility of development. Since the connection of the abstract moments into a system is realized through a contradiction, the basic abstract comprises the system of the following basic contradictions: communitarity and individualism, communitarism and civilization; orientations-to-another, orientations-to-oneself and orientations-to-tradition.

The value worlds develop their qualitative modification in different spheres of life activity is designated in the concept 'ethic-creation', and its quantitative modification in the 'dynamics of moral consciousness'. The value worlds of society are defined by the dynamics, which is set by the groups with a different quality of moral consciousness.

If the value worlds are destroyed, life itself will lose its sense for a person. The value worlds are a communicative method of self-preservation and self-development of the society. They constitute the aura, which stipulates the background expectations of an individual's conduct in the society. Their destruction is the loss of the former quality of the society [13].

The idea of progress became almost a symbol of faith at the end of 19th century. Z. I. Feinbourg opposed 'pessimism' of the inertness of socio-cultural process, which created such forms of power, as the cult of a personality, which did not correspond to the historical stage of the development of the society, and stopped its development, to the social optimism of the world historical tendency of the development of labor [14]. The historical 'running away' was accompanied by a 'rollback' first gradual, then a powerful one. Z. Bauman presented the appearance of new form of division of labor [15]. A. Tangyan offered traditional

and non-traditional pressure of work in modern West counties in period of transition to new technology [16].

The search of the vector of history by the society is being conducted and will be always conducted in the transition to expedient reason. The scientifically-justified knowledge based on the comparison of the change of priorities of the types of moral consciousness, should give orientations to the public consciousness and to the concrete politics. We share the position of R. Robertson in the classification of typologies 'of the images of the global order', which are quoted by P. Stompka [17].

Thus the value worlds of society are a quintessence of conditions of moral consciousness, taken in the qualitative and in the quantitative description of the dominant types of moral consciousness in the historical retrospection and the situational reality, related with it, in the homeostatic conditions of the society.

A fruitful prospect of the co-evolutional-with-nature development of mankind we connect with the line of collectivity, rooted in the theories of K. Marx, E. Durkheim, F. Tönnies, I. Wallerstein. During the reforms collectivity was subject to ideological beating both in scientific and fiction literature, and periodical press. In the concept of collectivity such modern authors put only one meaning – traditionalism. The positive sense of individuality was opposed to denying collectivity: activity, innovation, modernization. In that situation it was necessary to resort to the concept of the so-called 'communitarity' as a category expressing developed collectivity, connected with the developed sociality, according to Berdyaev. The concept of collectivity is wider than the concept of communitarity, because the first concept includes all historical forms of social communication: a simple togetherness, a totalitarian organized unity, the corporate solidarity and, finally, the opposite-to-them developed collectivity.

From the conceptions of postmodernism, aimed at showing that the old doesn't work it is only apparent that the former values have been lost in the crisis of the world civilization. Postmodernism only puts the problem of the priority of the dialogic character of management over the monological one, of the preference of synergetic interpreting approaches to a multiform world instead of the rigid monocausal determination.

The tendency to communitarity should become the basic one in the directed development of historical process, as the rationality in the development of the society, determined by M. Weber for XX century, in the author's point of view, has exhausted itself, in the depreciation of human life owing to the celebration of rationalism in the struggle against the idea of God, the result of which has been drawn by F.

Nietzsche. This destruction of Gods in the consciousness of the elites and the masses, was considered by P. Sorokin [18], H. Arendt [19], K. Mannheim [20], E. Fromm [21]. Problems of personal dignity in conditions of social inequality are mentioned by A. Martinelli. These are problems of opposite interests of national state and transnational capital in conditions of globalism, when strong union behave as varangian on territories of weak counties, if laws do not confront them. [22].

The acting subject of the society, representing different groups, in the philosophical analysis is determined by ancient Greeks in three uncrossing ideas: contemplation, activity, communication. According to it Aristotle has qualitatively allocated various kinds of activity: creativity, pragmatism and hedonism. P. Sorokin has added 'horizontal dynamic of values', distinguished by Stagirit, to a temporary vertical, using them to determine cultural-historical circles of epochs. He called his cultural-historical circles ideational, ideal and hedonic systems. The unity of logical and historical in the analysis of the problems of social-ethical types of personality guarantees the revealing of essential properties of groups different by the type of moral consciousness which influence the development of the society. Reproduction but not the equivalence of types of socio-ethical consciousness is obvious for everyone, from Greeks to nowadays postmodernists.

### Conclusion

Ethics always was a crown of philosophic, historical, sociological, economic systems. Some thinks that ethics is being bring only to a choice of collective or individual way of wealth distribution. Others do not bring the role of ethics to utilitarian economic point of view. Besides, all other kinds of activity are full of ethical content. Our political choice becomes more moral than a hundred years ago.

The application of the sociological method in various humanitarian and public sciences, public sociology, and the revealing in them the conformity to some special laws within the framework of the traditional subject are the tasks of general sociology. The description and ordering of the pure forms of customs in the conditions of the transforming society is the concretization of sociology to the theory of the average level – the sociology of moral.

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