



THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITUALITY: SPIRITUAL NEEDS, INTERESTS, VALUES AND THE CONTENT OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the structure of society, four areas of public life - economic, social, political and spiritual are determined. The purpose of this article is a systematic examination of the essence and content of the spiritual life of both society and the individual. Consideration of the spiritual life of society, it is advisable to start with clarifying the essence of the phenomenon of spirituality.

KEY WORDS: *Spirituality, society, development, improvement, values and traditions*

Spirituality, the presence of spiritual life is equivalent to life itself. A person who renounces spirituality can no longer be considered a man, but becomes an ordinary animal. Therefore, it is clear that it is the presence of spirituality, spiritual life that distinguishes man from animals that have neither culture, nor morality, nor art, nor science, nor religion.

In the secular tradition, a highly spiritual person can be called one who, firstly, has a broad outlook, understands literature and art, is interested in science and philosophy, is oriented in politics, knows history and honors the traditions of his Fatherland; secondly, it is distinguished by a highly moral way of life, possesses such moral qualities as justice, honesty, decency, kindness, mercy, tolerance, spiritual sensitivity; thirdly, it has a developed aesthetic taste, love for beauty, and creative abilities.

According to V.G. Fedotova, four dimensions of spirituality can be distinguished - theorism, aestheticism, ethism and religiosity - each of which is associated with one of the fundamental spiritual needs of a person. Aestheticism is associated with the need for beauty, more broadly with aesthetic needs, ethism - with the need for a highly moral lifestyle, in particular, with the need for justice, love, doing good, theorism - with the need for knowledge and information, religiosity, from the point of view of a believer, satisfies the need for communication with the source of being, religiosity is associated with the need to find psychological support, distraction from the hardships of personal and social life. Of particular note is such a spiritual need as the need for communication.

Only the person who has all four dimensions at the proper level of development can be considered highly spiritual. In our opinion, the dominant place in the spiritual image of a person belongs to the moral component, so spirituality can be defined as morally oriented, i.e. directed towards good, will, reason, aesthetic and religious feelings of a person.



Spiritual interests are formed on the basis of spiritual needs, and the satisfaction of needs is associated with the concept of spiritual values.

Let us dwell on the meaning of the terms “need”, “interest” and “value”. A need is usually understood as a state of need for something, a lack (frustration) of something that an individual experiences and which acts as an incentive (engine, motive) of his activity. Interest is a form of manifestation of a need, its concretized and conscious expression. Finally, the concept of “value” expresses the significance of the objects of the surrounding world for a person, a social group, society as a whole.

In the system of philosophical knowledge there is a whole section devoted to the study of values, called axiology (from the Greek *axia* - value and *logos* - word, doctrine). The focus of axiology is questions about the nature of values, their varieties, role in the life of society and man.

At the level of an individual, values manifest themselves as value orientations of a person - these are a person's ideas about what is valuable and important for him, what is important for his life, what he strives to realize.

Finishing the conversation about the spiritual life of a person, it should be emphasized that the most important thing in spirituality is not only the supremacy of morality, serving the ideals of good, but also the harmonious development of all aspects of a person's spiritual life, equal attention to all the main dimensions of spirituality and spiritual needs.

The spiritual life of a society is a set of all the processes of the life of the society for the creation, exchange, distribution, storage and assimilation of spiritual values and information. The spiritual life of society is made up of everyday communication between people, from such forms of their activity as knowledge (science), artistic creativity (art), religious worship and communion with god (religion), and manifestations of morality.

Whereas the spiritual sphere is a narrower concept, namely, only a side of spiritual life associated with specialized (professional) spiritual production, with the functioning of institutions and organizations (ideological, scientific, artistic, religious), within which spiritual values and information. The main elements of the spiritual sphere are science, education, morality, religion, art, ideology, mass media.

Let us dwell in more detail on the three most important elements of the spiritual life of society - religion, art and morality, each of which is associated with the dimensions of spirituality that we identified in the first part of the lecture (the fourth dimension, theorism, corresponds to science and philosophy, each of which was devoted to a separate lecture).

Religion, art, morality are the most important forms of the spiritual culture of society, each of which acts as a special way of spiritual and practical development of the world, its knowledge and transformation.

The word “religion” of Latin origin, it goes back to the verb *religare* - to connect. This refers to the connection of a person with the other world, with other dimensions of being. According to V.S. Solovyov (1853 - 1900), “religion is the connection between man and the world with the unconditional beginning and center of everything that exists.”



The most important, central sign of religion is the belief in the supernatural existence of any creatures, things or relations to them. Back in the 18th century, Denis Diderot wrote: "The more enlightened and developed the people, the faster the faith in the supernatural weakens and disappears in it." But what is the supernatural?

The second important sign of religion is the presence of faith, the latter is usually understood as incomplete, insufficient knowledge, as acceptance of something as true without prior verification and evidence. Faith is a special state of the psyche, in which both rational (judgment about the truth of this or that information) and emotional (experience, feeling of confidence) elements are mixed.

The next sign of religion is the presence of cult activities, i.e. rites and rituals designed to propitiate supernatural forces, to achieve their goodwill.

Art is a kind of spiritual assimilation of reality by a person, which aims to form and develop his ability to creatively transform the world around him and himself according to the laws of beauty. Art is usually understood as artistic creativity as a whole, including literature, architecture, sculpture, painting and other varieties of human activity, combined as artistic and imaginative forms of world exploration.

The study of both art and the laws of aesthetic development of the world as a whole is carried out by aesthetics (Greek *aisthetikos* - feeling, sensual) - a philosophical science that studies the sphere of aesthetic as a specific manifestation of the value relationship between man and the world. The main problem of the philosophical and aesthetic thought of antiquity, the Middle Ages and, to a large extent, modern times is the problem of beauty.

Artistic activity has always been considered as one of the highest (along with scientific, philosophical) forms of spiritual exploration of the world. Its most important distinguishing feature, in comparison with scientific and philosophical creativity, is a sensory-figurative (rather than conceptual) character: feelings and images are the main material with which the artist works, and therefore the addressee of the impact of art is not so much the mind as emotions and human feelings.

Summing up the conversation about the essence of art, we note that its originality in the spiritual life is determined by the sensual-figurative character, the desire to make a person's life saturated with emotions and experiences, to transform the world around according to the laws of beauty.

Traditionally, the problems of morality are comprehended within the framework of a special philosophical discipline - ethics. Ethics (from the Greek *ethos* - custom, disposition, character) as a science appeared in the era of antiquity. The very word "ethics" was first introduced into philosophical use by Aristotle, he also wrote, in essence, the first textbook on ethics, which was called "Nicomachean Ethics".

In philosophical literature, morality is interpreted in different ways. It is defined both as a way of self-fulfillment and self-government of the individual, and as a measure of a person's dominance over himself, and as a form of social consciousness that reflects the world from the standpoint of good and evil, proper and improper, fair and unfair. However, most often, morality is understood as a way of streamlining (regulating) relations between



people on the basis of generalized ideas about the norms, principles and ideals that lead to the value of good.

Moral regulation is carried out with the help of a system of norms and rules, which are either prescriptions (for example, “Love your neighbor as yourself”) or prohibitions (“Do not commit adultery”).

The most important imperative mechanisms of morality are debt conscience. The first is the realization by the individual of the unconditional need to fulfill what is commanded by the moral ideal. In its most general form, duty is following the path of virtue, usually against one's own benefit. Conscience implies the ability to critically evaluate one's actions, thoughts and desires, requires a person to be honest "in the dark", i.e. when no one else can control his actions and motives. Duty and conscience are closely related: an act of conscience is an act out of a sense of duty.

The question of the functions of morality is the question of why, what is morality for, what is its role in society? Despite the fact that above we defined morality as a way of regulating relations between people, its social role is not limited to this. Morality is multifunctional, i.e. performs various interrelated functions. A.I. Titarenko notes the following functions of morality: regulatory, educational, cognitive, evaluative-imperative, orienting, motivational, communicative (providing communication between people), prognostic. To them, in our opinion, one can also add ideological functions. However, in our opinion, the main function of morality is humanistic, its purpose is to make a person more humane.

In the native tradition, spiritual life is also analyzed using the category of “public consciousness.” Social consciousness is transpersonal, it is within itself a specially organized ideal-objective reality, with the requirements and will of which the individual is forced to reckon with the same way as he reckon with natural phenomena and laws. The carriers of social consciousness are not only and not so much individuals as social groups and communities.

An important characteristic of public consciousness is public opinion - this is a statistically average estimated attitude of various social strata or society as a whole to current events in public life.

Further clarification of the essence of social consciousness is associated with the allocation of its levels and forms. The levels include ordinary practical consciousness and theoretical consciousness. The first reflects social reality directly, unsystematically and spontaneously, the second - conceptually, in the form of theories. Ordinary consciousness to a greater extent operates with images, is of a sensual-visual nature, theoretical consciousness operates with concepts, and is distinguished by a rational-logical character. Wisdom is the highest form of everyday consciousness, while science is the highest form of theoretical consciousness.

A private analogue of everyday consciousness is social psychology - a set of social feelings, emotions, moods. The attitude to the phenomena of social life contained in social psychology finds its expression in their various feelings, moods, customs, mores, traditions, manifestations of fashion, as well as in their aspirations, goals and ideals. Social psychology



acts as a unity of the emotional and intellectual attitudes of people to the conditions of their life, to their social existence.

An important component of theoretical consciousness is ideology as a theoretical expression of the interests of a particular group of people (class, community) in relation to the existing social reality and ways of its possible transformation. Ideology is always biased, far from objectivity, and therefore distorts reality to one degree or another, although it often mimics science.

Forms of social consciousness differ from each other in the subject of reflection, as well as in the ways of reflection and social role. Traditionally, scientific, religious, moral, philosophical, aesthetic, political and legal consciousness were attributed to the forms of social consciousness. Today, in our opinion, economic and ecological consciousness should be added to this list, expressing, respectively, the attitude of people to the sphere of economy and to nature.

In conclusion, we must define that:

1. Spirituality is an integral quality, an attribute of a person that radically distinguishes him from animals. Spirituality can be defined as morally oriented, directed towards the good, will and mind, religious and aesthetic feelings of a person.

2. There are four main dimensions of spirituality: theorism, aestheticism, ethism and religiosity.

3. The spiritual life of society is a combination of all the processes of life of the society for the creation, exchange, distribution, storage and assimilation of spiritual values and information.

4. The spiritual sphere is a narrower concept, namely, only a side of spiritual life associated with specialized (professional) spiritual production.

5. The main elements of the spiritual sphere are science, education, morality, religion, art, ideology, mass media.

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